

BOARD OF PUBLIC EDUCATION MEETING AGENDA

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

AGENDA

BOARD OF PUBLIC EDUCATION MEETING AGENDA

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

Thursday, September 24, 2026
8:30AM

CALL TO ORDER

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

PUBLIC COMMENT

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

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

CONSENT AGENDA – page #9

(Items may be pulled from Consent Agenda upon request)

- A. July 22-24, 2026, Meeting Minutes
- B. Financials

ADOPT AGENDA

❖ REPORTS – Dr. Tim Tharp (Items 1-5)

- Item 1 **CHAIRPERSON REPORT – 15 Minutes, page #23**
Dr. Tim Tharp
 - Welcome from Superintendent Stephen Schreiber, Glendive Public Schools
 - Board Committee Assignments**ACTION ITEMS:**
 - Bylaws
 - 2027 Meeting Calendar and Agenda
- Item 2 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT – 15 Minutes, page #30**
McCall Flynn
- Item 3 **STATE SUPERINTENDENT REPORT – 1 Hour, page #32**
State Superintendent Susie Hedalen
 - Assessment Update
 - Federal Update

- Intensive Assistance Update
- Content Standards Update
- Accreditation Update
- Annual Special Education Report

Item 4 COMMISSIONER OF HIGHER EDUCATION REPORT – 15 Minutes, page #64
Dr. Angela McLean

Item 5 STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT – 15 Minutes, page #67
Lydia Comstock

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

Item 6 INFORMATION AND REVIEW OF MONTANA SCHOOL BUS STANDARDS
RULEMAKING – 30 Minutes, page #68
Dr. Tim Tharp

Item 7 ANNUAL MONTANA DIGITAL ACADEMY REPORT – 45 Minutes, page #226
Dr. Jason Neiffer

❖ BOARD OF PUBLIC EDUCATION TOURS & ACTIVITIES

12:00PM LUNCH WITH DAWSON COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS
Dawson County High School

12:45PM VISIT ART CLASS
Dawson County High School

1:45PM COMMUNITY MURAL TOUR
Glendive Community

*****RECONVENE AT 2:30PM*****

❖ ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE – Dr. Hannah Nieskens (Items 8-9)

Item 8 ACTION ON THE CORRECTIVE PLANS FOR SCHOOLS IN DEFICIENT STATUS FOR
ACCREDITATION – 30 Minutes, page #229
Crystal Andrews

- Lame Deer High School
- Stanford K-12 Schools

Item 9 ACTION ON PROVISIONAL ACCREDITATION REQUESTS – 15 Minutes, page #260
Dr. Hannah Nieskens

❖ 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 – 15 Minutes, page #263
Matthew Bell

Item 11 UPDATE ON THE DAWSON COMMUNITY COLLEGE PARAPATHWAYS
PARTNERSHIP – 15 Minutes, page #267
Patrick Cates; Nick Staffileno, Dawson Community College; Val Hafele, Glendive
Special Education Director

Item 12 ACTION ON THE DRAFT COUNCIL FOR THE ACCREDITATION OF EDUCATOR
PREPARATION MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING – 15 Minutes, page #270
Dr. Julie Murgel, Crystal Andrews

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 – 5 Minutes, page #281**
Crystal Andrews

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 – 5 Minutes, page #298**
Crystal Andrews

*******TIME CERTAIN AT 4:30PM*******

Item 15 **ACTION ON SURRENDER AND MOTION TO DISMISS BPE CASE #2026-01, DAVIS – 10 Minutes, page #304**
Brenton Craggs

Item 16 **ACTION ON SURRENDER AND MOTION TO DISMISS BPE CASE #2026-06, WHITNEY – 10 Minutes, page #305**
Dr. Ron Slinger

RECESS

Friday, September 25, 2026
8:30AM

CALL TO ORDER

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

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

Item 17 **UPDATE ON COMMUNITY CHOICE SCHOOLS COMMISSION – 15 Minutes, page #307**
Cathy Kincheloe

Item 18 **ACTION ON MOUNT ASCENSION LEARNING ACADEMY AMENDMENT REQUEST – 15 Minutes, page #311**
McCall Flynn

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

Item 19 **MSDB REPORT – 30 Minutes, page #315**
Superintendent Paul Furthmyre

ACTION ITEMS:

- Action on Out of State Travel Request
- Action on Personnel Items

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

Item 20 **MACIE REPORT – 15 Minutes, page #340**
Jordann Lankford Forster

ACTION ITEM:

- Action on Montana School Boards Association
Indian School Board Caucus Member
- Action on MACIE Renewal

❖ **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 – 5**
Minutes, page #345
McCall Flynn

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

- Item 22** **WORK SESSION ON BOARD OF PUBLIC EDUCATION STRATEGIC PLAN – 1 Hour,**
page #351
McCall Flynn

*******TIME CERTAIN AT 11:00AM*******

❖ **LICENSURE COMMITTEE – Dr. Ron Slinger (Item 23)**

- Item 23** **ACTION ON CONTESTED CASE HEARING BPE CASE #2026-04, KNIGHT – 30**
Minutes, page #357
Dr. Ron Slinger

❖ **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE – Dr. Tim Tharp (Item 24)**

- Item 24** **ELECTION OF OFFICERS – 10 Minutes, page #358**
McCall Flynn

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

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ADJOURN

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

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

The Board of Public Education will make reasonable accommodations for known disabilities that may interfere with an individual’s ability to participate in the meeting. Individuals who require such accommodations should make requests to the

Board of Public Education as soon as possible prior to the meeting start date. You may write to Kris Stockton, PO Box 200601, Helena MT, 59620, kmstockton@mt.gov, 406-444-0302.

September 24, 2026

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. July 22-24, 2026, Meeting Minutes**
- B. Financials**

CONSENT AGENDA

MINUTES

BOARD OF PUBLIC EDUCATION MEETING MINUTES

July 22-24, 2026

Montana School Boards Association, First Floor Boardroom
863 Great Northern Blvd
Helena, MT

Wednesday, July 22, 2026

10:00AM

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Tim Tharp called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM. Chair Tharp led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance, Ms. Kris Stockton took Roll Call, and the Chair read the Statement of Public Participation and welcomed guests.

Board members: Dr. Tim Tharp, Chair; Dr. Ron Slinger, Vice Chair; Dr. Hannah Nieskens; Ms. Lisa Schmidt; Ms. Julia Maxwell; 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 (OCHE); 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. Larry Crowder, Montana Rural Education Association; Mr. Dylan Klapmeier, OPI; Ms. Audra Ahumada, ACT Education Corp; Mr. Joey Hedger, National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE); Mr. Paola DeMaria, NASBE.

❖ STRATEGIC PLANNING SESSION – Dr. Tim Tharp

10:00AM STRATEGIC PLANNING ITEMS – 00:00:00

Chair Tim Tharp reviewed the schedule for the morning, and Ms. McCall Flynn led the Board in a review of Board Bylaws, Committee Assignments, 2027 Meeting Calendar, Agenda Calendar, and a review of the Open Meeting Laws.

1:00PM REVIEW DRAFT STRATEGIC PLANNING ITEMS

1:30PM DISCUSS RELATED METRICS FOR SUCCESS

2:00PM REVIEW LAYOUT AND FORMATTING

3:00PM IDENTIFY STAKEHOLDERS FOR FEEDBACK

3:30PM WRAP UP AND NEXT STEPS

PUBLIC COMMENT ON STRATEGIC PLANNING ITEMS -

No public comment was made.

RECESS

The Board recessed for the day at 3:30 PM.

Thursday, July 23, 2026

8:30AM

CALL TO ORDER – 0:07:42

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: Mr. Dylan Klapmeier, OPI; Dr. Angela McLean, OCHE; Mr. Manish Bhatt, Governor's Office. Staff: Ms.

McCall Flynn, Executive Director; Ms. Kris Stockton, Administrative Specialist; Ms. Julie Balsam, Administrative Assistant; Mr. Rich Batterman, Board Legal Counsel. Guests: Ms. Tyler Capece, OPI; Mr. Brenton Craggs, OPI; Dr. Julie Murgel, OPI; Ms. Marie Judisch, OPI; Ms. Crystal Andrews, OPI; Ms. Elsie Workman, OPI; Mr. Mike Krout, Majestic Transportation; Mr. Neal Ullman, Department of Environmental Quality; Ms. Jordann Lankford Forster, Chair, Montana Advisory Council on Indian Education (MACIE); Ms. Christy Mock-Stutz, OPI; Dr. Brooke Gondara, OPI; Ms. Cedar Rose, OPI; Ms. Audra Ahumada, ACT Education Corp; Ms. Kim Popham, Montana Federation of Public Employees (MFPE); Ms. Melissa Romano, MFPE; Deputy Superintendent Craig Barringer, OPI; Mr. Matthew Bell, OPI; Ms. Norma Bixby, MACIE; Ms. Dawn Bishop-Moore, MACIE; Ms. Iris Killeagle, MACIE; Ms. Jen Murphy, OPI; Ms. Michele Henson, OPI; Mr. Ivan Small; Ms. Billie Jo Juneau, MACIE; Mr. Ryan Schrenk, OPI; Mr. Lucas Rowsey, OPI.

PUBLIC COMMENT 0:10:09

No public comment was made.

CONSENT AGENDA – 00:10:19

Vice Chair Slinger moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Motion seconded by Board member Maxwell.

No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

ADOPT AGENDA – 00:11:05

Board member Rasmussen moved to approve the agenda. Motion seconded by Board member Schmidt.

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 – 00:11:35
Dr. Tim Tharp**

Chair Tim Tharp reviewed meetings and conferences he has attended since the May 2026 Board meeting, including the School Funding Interim Commission Meeting, the Forum on Education and Democracy, the National Association of School Boards of Education conference and the Education Commission of the States conference.

**Item 4 COMMISSIONER OF HIGHER EDUCATION REPORT – 00:17:00
Dr. Angela McLean**

Dr. Angela McLean discussed the Montana University System-Rural Talent Development and Attraction Lab Rural Montana Listening Sessions and Phase II of Montana's Future at Work. Dr. McLean discussed specific work with Miles Community College and Vice Chair Slinger discussed the program at Miles Community College. Dr. McLean answered Board members' questions.

**Item 2 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT – 00:36:53
McCall Flynn**

Ms. McCall Flynn thanked Montana School Boards Association for the use of their boardroom, updated the Board on rulemaking progress, shared information on committee work since the May Board meeting, and reviewed the upcoming Montana Association of School Superintendents fall meetings she will attend.

**Item 5 STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT – 00:44:07
Lydia Comstock**

Ms. Lydia Comstock shared efforts to help local school boards include student representation. Ms. Comstock noted the Montana Association of Student Councils will hold its state conference this fall and highlighted schools that are considering membership. Ms. Comstock offered to assist the Board with future projects to include student voice.

**Item 3 STATE SUPERINTENDENT REPORT – 00:48:33
Dylan Klapmeier**

Mr. Seth Whitney spoke on his own behalf and requested the Board move to a hearing so his case can be heard.

Dr. Hannah Nieskens clarified that the hearing will be a contested case hearing, not an investigative case hearing as stated by Mr. Whitney.

Mr. Rich Batterman explained the hearing process for Mr. Whitney.

Mr. Craggs clarified that both parties will present their case at the hearing and may call witnesses and present evidence.

No further discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

**Item 9 ACTION ON THE EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROVIDER ACCREDITATION HANDBOOK – 03:20:16
Crystal Andrews**

Ms. Crystal Andrews reviewed the presentation made at the May 2026 Board meeting of the Educator Preparation Provider Accreditation Handbook and answered Board members' questions.

Vice Chair Slinger moved to approve the Educator Preparation Provider Accreditation Handbook as presented. Motion seconded by Dr. Nieskens.

No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

**Item 10 ACTION ON THE SITE VISIT AND STATE EXIT REPORT OF THE CARROLL COLLEGE EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROVIDER IN THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION – 03:23:56
Crystal Andrews**

Ms. Crystal Andrews reviewed the presentation made at the May 2026 Board meeting of the State Exit Report for Carroll College and answered Board members' questions.

Vice Chair Slinger moved to approve the Site Visit and State Exit Report of the Carroll College Educator Preparation Provider in the Department of Education. Motion seconded by Board member Rasmussen.

No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

**Item 11 ACTION ON PRAXIS ITEMS – 03:26:06
Crystal Andrews**

Ms. Crystal Andrews reviewed the Praxis tests and qualifying scores and answered Board members' questions.

Vice Chair Slinger moved to approve the following Praxis tests and qualifying scores: Middle School Mathematics test #5164 with a score of 157; Middle School English Language Arts test #5047 with a score of 164; Middle School Social Studies test #5589 with a score of 149; Middle School Science test #5442 with a score of 152; Physical Education test #5091 with a score of 147; and Health test #5551 with a score of 154. Motion seconded by Board member Rasmussen.

Vice Chair Slinger stated his appreciation for the work done to bring this to the Board.

Chair Tharp stated his appreciation for the focus on Middle School endorsements.

No further discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

❖ ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE – Dr. Hannah Nieskens (Item 12)

**Item 12 INFORMATION AND REVIEW OF SPECIAL EDUCATION TECHNICIAN RULEMAKING – 03:31:31
Dr. Julie Murgel**

Dr. Julie Murgel presented the Chapter 55 rulemaking revisions for the newly created Special Education Technician License. Dr. Murgel answered Board members' questions and took suggestions about the proposal. Ms. McCall Flynn outlined the timeline for the rulemaking and public comment process.

❖ **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE – Dr. Tim Tharp (Item 13)**

Item 13 **INFORMATION AND REVIEW OF MONTANA SCHOOL BUS STANDARDS
RULEMAKING – 03:28:37**

Elsie Workman, OPI; Mike Krout, Majestic Transportation; Neal Ullman, DEQ

Ms. Elsie Workman, Mr. Mike Krout, and Mr. Neal Ullman reviewed and discussed the revisions to the Montana School Bus Standards noting where changes were made and reasons for the changes. The group answered Board members' questions.

*****TIME CERTAIN AT 2:00PM*****

❖ **JOINT MACIE MEETING AND TRIBAL CONSULTATION – Julia Maxwell (Items 14-17)**

Item 14 **MACIE REPORT – 05:38:08
Jordann Lankford Forster**

Ms. Jordann Lankford Forster presented the MACIE report and answered Board members' and MACIE members' questions.

Item 15 **INDIAN EDUCATION FOR ALL REPORT – 05:42:57
Christy Mock-Stutz, Dr. Brooke Gondara**

Ms. Christy Mock-Stutz and Dr. Brooke Gondara presented the Indian Education for All Report and answered Board members' and MACIE members' questions.

Item 16 **INFORMATION AND UPDATE ON INTENSIVE ASSISTANCE PROCESS – 06:07:38
Dr. Julie Murgel, Dr. Brooke Gondara**

Dr. Julie Murgel and Dr. Brooke Gondara reviewed the updated Intensive Assistance Process and addressed Board members' and MACIE members' questions, concerns, and suggested revisions.

Item 17 **WRAP UP AND FINAL THOUGHTS – 06:52:00
Dr. Tim Tharp, Jordann Lankford Forster**

The Board and MACIE members discussed how to best support schools that are not in Intensive Assistance but struggle with their accreditation status and how to help those schools as well.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON JOINT MACIE MEETING ITEMS

No public comment was made.

RECESS

The Board recessed for the day at 3:30 PM.

Friday, July 24, 2026
8:30AM

CALL TO ORDER – 00:02:00

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. Ex Officio members: Ms. Tyler Capece, OPI; Dr. Angela McLean, OCHE. Staff: Ms. McCall Flynn, Executive Director; Ms. Kris Stockton, Administrative Specialist; Ms. Julie Balsam, Administrative Assistant; Ms. Lea Ann Munkres, Program Officer; Ms. Cathy Kincheloe, Director of Planning, Community Choice Schools Commission; Mr. Rich Batterman, Board Legal Counsel. Guests: Mr. John Doran, Bridged Health Alliance; Ms. Sarah Music, OPI; Ms. Genie Zeeck, OPI; Mr. Lucas Rowsey, OPI; Ms. Kristi Steinberg, University of Montana (UM); Dr. Jen Snow, UM; Ms. Christy Mock-Stutz, OPI; Deputy Superintendent Craig Barringer, OPI; Dr. Julie Murgel, OPI; Ms. Kim Popham, MFPE; Ms. Crystal Andrews, OPI; Dr. Jason Nieffer, Montana Digital Academy (MTDA); Ms. Caitlin Byers, MTDA; Mr. Jeremy MacDonald, Stone Child College; Ms.

Marie Judisch, OPI; Dr. Carly Urban, Montana State University; Mr. Mike Paffhausen, National Association of Insurance and Financial Advisors; Ms. Shannon Boswell, OPI; Ms. Nicole Thuotte, OPI; Ms. Autumn Warren, OPI; Mr. Ryan Schrenk, OPI; Ms. Susan Sutherland, Stone Child College; Ms. Cory Sangrey-Billy, President, Stone Child College; Ms. Aislinn Brown, OPI; Ms. Kristal Smith, OPI; Superintendent Christopher Hess, Big Sandy Public Schools; Ms. Wilma Tyner, Stone Child College.

❖ **CHARTER SCHOOL COMMITTEE – Lisa Schmidt (Items 18-19)**

Item 18 UPDATE ON COMMUNITY CHOICE SCHOOLS COMMISSION – 00:05:40
Cathy Kincheloe

Ms. Cathy Kincheloe presented the Commission Guidebook for the Application Process and Oversight of Local District Authorizers and Community Choice Schools drafted by the Commission and answered Board members' questions.

Item 19 ACTION AND INFORMATION ON PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL AMENDMENT
REQUEST PROCESS – 00:17:11
McCall Flynn

Ms. McCall Flynn presented the Public Charter School Amendment Request Process to the Board. Ms. Lea Ann Munkres reviewed the document and explained why a school might request a contract amendment and answered Board members' questions.

Board member Schmidt moved to approve the Public Charter School Amendment Request Process. Motion seconded by Vice Chair Slinger.

No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

❖ **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE – Dr. Tim Tharp (Items 20-22)**

Item 20 PRESENTATION ON MONTANA BRIDGED HEALTH ALLIANCE – 00:39:14
John Doran

Mr. John Doran presented the Montana Bridged Health Alliance as a new Health Insurance option for school districts. Mr. Doran outlined the process for establishing this new health alliance and answered Board members' questions.

Item 21 INFORMATION ON THE YOUTH RISK BEHAVIOR SURVEY RESULTS – 01:00:37
Sarah Music, Genie Zeeck

Ms. Sarah Music and Ms. Genie Zeeck shared the results of the Youth Risk Behavior Survey for the Board and answered Board members' questions.

Item 22 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 –
01:26:46
Dr. Tim Tharp

Ms. McCall Flynn noted that, based upon the questions posed the prior day, the Board may not be ready to vote upon the proposed Notice until the September meeting. Chair Tharp requested volunteers to serve on an ad-hoc committee and review the proposed revisions. Chair Tim Tharp, Board member Rasmussen, and Dr. Nieskens will serve on the newly formed ad-hoc committee that will review the proposed revisions.

Board member Nieskens moved to table 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 until the September 2026 Board meeting. Motion seconded by Board member Rasmussen.

No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

❖ **ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE – Dr. Hannah Nieskens (Item 23)**

Item 23

PRESENTATION ON ARTIFICIAL TECHNOLOGY GUIDANCE – 01:29:39

Dr. Jason Nieffer, Montana Digital Academy, Tyler Capece, Lucas Rowsey

Ms. Tyler Capece, Dr. Jason Nieffer, Mr. Lucas Rowsey, and Ms. Caitlin Byers presented state guidance on Artificial Intelligence for schools. The presenters explained that the document aligns with best practices and guidelines from other states. The group answered Board members' questions.

❖ **LICENSURE COMMITTEE – Dr. Ron Slinger (Items 24-27)**

Item 24

ACTION ON THE DRAFT COUNCIL FOR THE ACCREDITATION OF EDUCATOR PREPARATION MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING – 02:09:39

Crystal Andrews

Ms. Crystal Andrews reviewed the May 2026 Board meeting presentation. Following, Dr. Julie Murgel outlined the CAEP accreditation process and requirements for programs to meet the accreditation standards.

Vice Chair Slinger moved to approve the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation Memorandum of Understanding as presented for a term of seven years. Motion seconded by Board member Nieskens.

Vice Chair Slinger explained that approving the memorandum for seven years will provide stability for the Educator Preparation Programs.

Board member Rasmussen stated she will not vote for a seven year cycle.

Board member Schmidt asked for Board member Rasmussen to explain her concerns with the seven year proposal.

Board member Rasmussen stated that the Association for Advancing Quality in Educator Preparation is a potential accrediting body the state could use and added that she is concerned that seven years may be too long.

Mr. Batterman stated that the draft states one year.

Ms. McCall Flynn stated that the proposal from the Office of Public Instruction is for one year but that the Board can revise the timeframe.

Chair Tharp noted Mr. Batterman's concerns and asked OPI if there were concerns with the seven year timeframe.

Ms. Tyler Capece noted that the OPI proposed one year because there are not any joint accreditations scheduled for the next year.

Ms. Julia Maxwell noted that the cycle may break up the accreditation process for programs.

Vice Chair Slinger noted that the University of Montana is the next program up for accreditation and their plan is due May 1, 2027. Dr. Slinger restated his concern that not approving an accrediting body could harm the schools.

Dr. Angela McLean noted that the Montana University System stance is that a multi-year agreement is most appropriate.

Dr. Nieskens stated that the motion could be amended to reject the one year memorandum and request OPI seek a multi-year contract.

Vice Chair Slinger asked if the memorandum could be approved at the September meeting.

Ms. Tyler Capece noted that the OPI is open to negotiating the timeframe.

Chair Tharp asked if waiting until September would be detrimental to any programs.

Dr. Murgel noted that it would not be detrimental to wait until September, but that September would be the latest timeframe with the least impact on programs.

Board member Rasmussen stated that she would be comfortable with a three year contract.

Board member Schmidt asked for a comparison of other possible accrediting bodies.

Dr. Nieskens stated that the Accreditation Committee will work with OPI to research other potential accrediting bodies.

Chair Tharp noted that the motion on the floor needs to be voted down or a new motion made.

No further discussion. Motion failed with Vice Chair Slinger voting in favor.

Chair Tharp requested OPI present a new proposal at the September 2026 meeting.

Item 25 **INFORMATION ON THE SITE VISIT AND STATE EXIT REPORT OF THE STONE CHILD COLLEGE EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROVIDER IN THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION – 02:44:01**

Crystal Andrews

Ms. Crystal Andrews presented the Site Visit and State Exit Report for the Educator Preparation Provider at Stone Child College. Ms. Andrews discussed the review process, and Mr. Jeremy MacDonald shared the report's findings and outlined the college's ongoing corrective actions to improve the program. Ms. Andrews noted this will be an action item at the September 2026 Board meeting and answered Board members' questions.

Item 26 **INFORMATION ON THE APPROVAL OF NEW CURRICULAR PROGRAM FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA PHYLLIS J. WASHINGTON COLLEGE OF EDUCATION – 02:55:20**

Crystal Andrews

Ms. Crystal Andrews presented a proposal for a new standalone Special Education curricular program at the University of Montana. Ms. Kristi Steinberg explained the need to transition from the current add-on model to a standalone program. Ms. Steinberg detailed how partnering with two-year colleges will allow students to complete the degree through a hybrid of local and online classes. Ms. Steinberg answered Board members' questions.

Item 27 **ACTION ON THE PROPOSED NOTICE OF ADOPTION PERTAINING TO RULEMAKING IN ARM TITLE 10, CHAPTER 57, EDUCATOR LICENSURE STANDARDS – DUAL CREDIT POSTSECONDARY FACULTY LICENSE AND AUTHORIZE FILING OF THE NOTICE WITH THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR PUBLICATION IN THE MONTANA ADMINISTRATIVE REGISTER – 03:07:27**

Dr. Ron Slinger

Vice Chair Slinger moved to approve the Notice of Adoption pertaining to rulemaking in ARM Title 10, Chapter 57, Educator Licensure Standards – Dual Credit Postsecondary Faculty License and authorize filing of the notice with the Secretary of State for Publication in the Montana Administrative Register. Motion seconded by Board member Nieskens.

Dr. Angela McLean expressed her appreciation to OPI and the Board for making this change.

Chair Tharp thanked Ms. McCall Flynn for her work revising the rules.

No further discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

❖ **ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE – Renee Rasmussen (Items 28-29)**

Item 28 INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION ON STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT THINK TANK – 03:11:49

Dr. Julie Murgel, Tyler Capece

Dr. Julie Murgel outlined the request from the Board at the May 2026 meeting to create an Assessment Task Force and reviewed the deliverables and outcomes the Task Force will develop. Dr. Murgel outlined the timeframe for the Task Force and Ms. Tyler Capece reviewed the members and how they were selected. Dr. Murgel noted a third party facilitator will be hired to manage the Task Force meetings.

Item 29 ACTION AND INFORMATION ON THE APPLICATION AND CRITERIA FOR THE LIST OF APPROVED EARLY NUMERACY SCREENING TOOLS – 03:22:14

McCall Flynn

Ms. McCall Flynn reviewed the work of the Early Numeracy Advisory Council and outlined the process used to select the approved screening tools. Ms. Flynn answered Board members' questions.

Board member Rasmussen moved to approve the Application and Criteria for the List of Approved Early Numeracy Screening Tools. Motion seconded by Board member Maxwell.

No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

*****TIME CERTAIN AT 1:00PM*****

❖ **ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE – Dr. Hannah Nieskens (Items 30-36)**

Item 30 INFORMATION ON FINANCIAL LITERACY AND ECONOMICS AS A GRADUATION REQUIREMENT – 04:32:04

Dr. Carly Urban, Montana State University; Mike Paffhausen, NAIFA; Dr. Julie Murgel

Dr. Julie Murgel reviewed the Administrative Rule change that added Financial Literacy as a graduation requirement and outlined the various options school districts offer students. Dr. Carly Urban shared state level data that shows how Montana compares to other states and discussed the benefits of the requirement. Dr. Urban answered Board members' questions, and Mr. Mike Paffhausen shared his perspective on his involvement in the creation of the requirement.

Item 31 INFORMATION ON ACCREDITATION PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK - COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS METRIC – 05:11:26

Shannon Boswell, Nicole Thuotte

Ms. Shannon Boswell and Ms. Nicole Thuotte presented the Accreditation Performance Framework College and Career Readiness Metric.

Item 32 INFORMATION ON THE PROPOSED CORRECTIVE PLANS FOR SCHOOLS IN DEFICIENT AND ADVICE STATUS FOR ACCREDITATION – 05:24:55

Crystal Andrews

Ms. Crystal Andrews discussed the proposed Corrective Plans for Schools in Deficient and Advice Accreditation Status and provided a status update on the affected schools. Ms. Andrews stated the schools that must submit corrective plans to the Board and stated those will be presented at the Board's September and November meetings. Ms. Andrews answered Board members' questions.

Item 33 ACCREDITATION UPDATE – 05:30:21

Crystal Andrews

Ms. Crystal Andrews presented the Accreditation Update and noted which schools will go through the Accreditation process for the 2026-2027 school year and answered members' questions.

Item 34 ACTION ON THE ACCREDITATION STATUS FOR NEW PUBLIC SCHOOLS – 05:36:32

Crystal Andrews

Ms. Crystal Andrews reviewed the presentation at the May 2026 Board meeting on the proposed process to accredit new schools and answered Board members' questions.

Dr. Hannah Nieskens moved to approve the Accreditation Status for new public schools: Creston 7-8, Provisional Status; Martinsdale Colony, Provisional Status; Meadow Lane Colony, Provisional Status. Motion seconded by Board member Rasmussen.

No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

**Item 35 INFORMATION ON OPENING AND CLOSING OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS – 05:43:52
Autumn Warren**

Ms. McCall Flynn reminded the Board about the conversation at the May Board meeting when questions were raised about how schools are opened or closed. Ms. Autumn Warren provided an overview of the process, provided examples of why a school might close and later reopen, and reviewed the protocols if a school needs to close mid-year. Ms. Warren answered Board members' questions.

**Item 36 ACTION ON THE PROPOSED NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING AND TIMELINE
PERTAINING TO RULEMAKING IN ARM TITLE 10, CHAPTER 55, SPECIAL
EDUCATION TECHNICIAN STANDARDS AND AUTHORIZE FILING OF THE NOTICE
WITH THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR PUBLICATION IN THE MONTANA
ADMINISTRATIVE REGISTER – 06:08:45
Dr. Hannah Nieskens**

Dr. Hannah Nieskens moved to approve the Notice of Public Hearing and Timeline pertaining to rulemaking in ARM Title 10, Chapter 55, Special Education Technician Standards with the following amendment to proposed rule 10.55.725(2): replace the phrase “under the direct supervision” with “under the direction”. I further move to authorize filing of the notice with the Secretary of State for publication in the Montana Administrative Register. Motion seconded by Board member Maxwell.

No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS September 24-25, 2026, Glendive, MT

Election of Board Officers
Action on Strategic Planning Items
MACIE Update
Montana Digital Academy Update
MACIE Renewal (Even Years)
Review Community Choice School Academic Performance and Financial Reports
Annual HiSET Report
Annual Special Education Report
Accreditation Update
Assessment Update
Federal Update
Content Standards Revision Update

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment was made.

ADJOURN

The Board adjourned at 2:42 PM.

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

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

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

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 03 (Sep)/2027

This report compares ORG Budgets (ORG_BD) to Actuals expended amounts

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	116,607.57	0.00	469,485.43
235H1 ADMINISTRATION						565,840.00	113,039.96	0.00	452,800.04
01100 General Fund						565,840.00	113,039.96	0.00	452,800.04
			1 BOARD OF PUBLIC EDUCATION			565,840.00	113,039.96	0.00	452,800.04
				61000 Personal Services		380,919.00	61,723.06	0.00	319,195.94
					61000 Personal Services	380,919.00	0.00	0.00	380,919.00
					61100 Salaries	0.00	41,968.60	0.00	(41,968.60)
					61300 Other Compensation	0.00	1,200.00	0.00	(1,200.00)
					61400 Employee Benefits	0.00	18,554.46	0.00	(18,554.46)
				62000 Operating Expenses		184,921.00	51,316.90	0.00	133,604.10
					62000 Operating Expenses	184,921.00	0.00	0.00	184,921.00
					62100 Other Services	0.00	15,820.92	0.00	(15,820.92)
					62200 Supplies & Materials	0.00	1,374.58	0.00	(1,374.58)
					62300 Communications	0.00	3,503.25	0.00	(3,503.25)
					62400 Travel	0.00	12,724.09	0.00	(12,724.09)
					62500 Rent	0.00	5,625.00	0.00	(5,625.00)
					62800 Other Expenses	0.00	12,269.06	0.00	(12,269.06)
235H4 STATE ITSD/RST						20,253.00	3,567.61	0.00	16,685.39
01100 General Fund						20,253.00	3,567.61	0.00	16,685.39
			1 BOARD OF PUBLIC EDUCATION			20,253.00	3,567.61	0.00	16,685.39
				62000 Operating Expenses		20,253.00	3,567.61	0.00	16,685.39
					62000 Operating Expenses	20,253.00	0.00	0.00	20,253.00
					62100 Other Services	0.00	544.34	0.00	(544.34)
					62200 Supplies & Materials	0.00	2,620.32	0.00	(2,620.32)
					62300 Communications	0.00	402.95	0.00	(402.95)
235Z1 WORKERS COMP. REDUCTION						0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
01100 General Fund						0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
			1 BOARD OF PUBLIC EDUCATION			0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
				61000 Personal Services		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
					61000 Personal Services	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Grand Total						586,093.00	116,607.57	0.00	469,485.43

❖ **REPORTS – (Items 1-5)**

Dr. Tim Tharp

ITEM 1

CHAIRPERSON REPORT

- **Welcome from Superintendent Stephen Schreibeis, Glendive Public Schools**
- **Board Committee Assignments**

ACTION ITEMS

- **Bylaws**
- **2027 Meeting Calendar and Agenda**

Dr. Tim Tharp



Board of Public Education

Board of Public Education Committee Assignments September 2026

STANDING COMMITTEES

Executive Committee

Tim Tharp, Chair
Ron Slinger, Vice Chair
McCall Flynn, Executive Director

Licensure Committee

Ron Slinger, Chair
Amanda Mills, Member
Tim Tharp, Member

Charter School Committee

Lisa Schmidt, Chair
Amanda Mills, Member
Tim Tharp, Member

MSDB Committee

Lisa Schmidt, Chair
Julia Maxwell, Member
Tim Tharp, Member

Legislative Committee

Renee Rasmussen, Chair
Ron Slinger, Member
Tim Tharp, Member

Assessment Committee

Renee Rasmussen, Chair
Hannah Nieskens, Member
Tim Tharp, Member

Accreditation Committee

Hannah Nieskens, Chair
Julia Maxwell, Member
Tim Tharp, Member

SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Artificial Intelligence and Technology Committee

Hannah Nieskens, Chair
Ron Slinger, Member
Tim Tharp, Member

ADVISORY GROUP LIAISONS

Montana Advisory Council on Indian Education – Julia Maxwell
Montana School Safety Advisory Committee – McCall Flynn

OTHER COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

Education and Workforce Data Governing Board – Tim Tharp
Montana Digital Academy Governing Board – Hannah Nieskens

**STATE OF MONTANA
BOARD OF PUBLIC EDUCATION**

BYLAWS

Article I. Name

The legal name of the Board is the Board of Public Education.

Article II. Objective

The objective of the Board is to carry out its constitutional and statutory responsibility to exercise general supervision, in cooperation with the Superintendent of Public Instruction, over the public school system and other such public educational institutions as may be assigned by law.

Article III. Membership

The Board consists of seven members appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate. Not more than four may be from each of the two commission districts per § 2-15-156, MCA, and not more than four may be affiliated with the same political party. The Governor, Superintendent of Public Instruction, and Commissioner of Higher Education are ex-officio, non-voting members of the Board. There is also a non-voting student member, appointed by the Montana Association of Student Councils. The term of members appointed to the Board shall be seven years. When a vacancy occurs, the Governor shall appoint a member for the remainder of the term of the incumbent. Members appointed to the Board, before discharging their duties, shall take and subscribe to the constitutional oath of office.

Article IV. Officers

The officers of the Board shall consist of a Chairperson and Vice Chairperson. The Chairperson and Vice Chairperson shall be elected among the appointed membership for the period of one year; annual reelection is permissible. Election of the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson shall be conducted by voice vote. The Chairperson-elect and Vice Chairperson-elect shall assume their respective office upon adjournment of the meeting at which they were elected. If the office of the Chairperson or Vice Chairperson is vacated prior to the expiration of the term, the Board will hold an election to fill the vacated office; the newly elected officer will serve for the remainder of the unexpired term and assume the gavel immediately. The duties of the Chairperson shall include presiding at meetings, participating in the construction of meeting agendas, and appointing all committees. The Chairperson shall vote on all matters. In the absence of the Chairperson, the Vice Chairperson shall preside and shall perform such duties as are prescribed for the Chairperson.

Article V. Executive Director

The Board shall appoint, prescribe the term and duties, and establish the salary of the Executive Director. The Executive Director shall serve as administrator to the Board and also as liaison between the Board and the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the Commissioner of Higher Education, the Legislature, and the Governor's office.

Article VI. Meetings

According to § 20-2-112, MCA, the Board shall meet at least quarterly. When necessary, the Board may hold meetings for resolution of specific agenda items either by a meeting in person, virtually, or by a combination of both. Board members shall attend all scheduled meetings in person. If a Board member is unable to attend in person, the chairperson may allow participation virtually.

Special meetings may be called by the Governor, the chairperson of the Board, the Executive Director, or a request in writing of four regular appointed members. In the case of a special meeting, the Executive Director shall provide notice to each regular and ex-officio member at least 48 hours in advance.

The Board of Public Education and the Board of Regents shall meet yearly as the State Board of Education per § 20-2-101, MCA.

Meetings of the Board shall be open to the public. The Chairperson may close the meeting to the public if he or she determines:

- a. That the demand of individual privacy clearly exceeds the merits of public disclosure;~~;~~~~or~~
- b. That an open meeting would have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or the litigating position of the Board~~;~~ or
- c. Any other authority provided by applicable law.

The Chairperson shall read for the minutes the reason for the closing, or the minutes will show that the person in question requested a closed session.

Article VII. Quorum

A majority of the appointed members shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

Article VIII. Organization

Section A. Officers

The Board shall select, by a majority vote, a Chairperson and Vice Chairperson from its appointed members each September. The term of elected office shall be for one year. The Chairperson shall be the presiding officer and shall preside over all regular, special,

and public meetings of the Board. The Vice Chairperson shall perform the functions of the Chairperson in their absence.

Section B. Committees

Standing committees shall be as follows:

1. An Executive Committee: composed of the Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, and the Executive Director
2. An Accreditation Committee
3. A Licensure Committee
4. A Montana School for the Deaf and Blind Committee
5. A Legislative Committee
6. An Assessment Committee
7. A Charter School Committee

The Board may create special committees as deemed necessary to carry out the responsibilities of the Board. Members of the special committees shall be appointed by the Chairperson.

Duties of the committees shall be to review, report on, and make recommendations concerning any item referred to them and alert the Chairperson and Executive Director on any matters which should be placed on the agenda for Board discussion or action. The Chairperson shall serve as a member of all committees, unless otherwise determined by the Chairperson. The Executive Director shall attend all committee meetings and provide support as determined by the committee chairperson.

The Board shall establish a Montana School for the Deaf and Blind Committee. Due to the uniqueness of the operations of the Montana School for the Deaf and Blind, the Committee is expected to meet more regularly than other committees of the Board. As required under § 20-8-101, MCA, the Montana School for the Deaf and Blind is under general supervision, direction, and control of the Board. This relationship requires more regular oversight and involvement in the maintenance and governance of the school.

Article IX. Order of Business

The regular order of business shall be as follows:

1. Call to Order
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Roll Call

4. Statement of Public Participation
5. Welcome Visitors
6. Public Comment
7. Consent Agenda Adoption
8. Agenda Adoption
9. Date and Place of Next Meeting
10. Public Comment
11. Adjournment

Article X. Communications

All official communications should come to the attention of the Board through the Executive Director of the Board.

Article XI. Parliamentary Procedure

The Board will use Robert's Rules of Order as a guide on questions of parliamentary procedure.

Article XII. Amendments

These bylaws may be added to or amended by a majority vote at any meeting of the Board of Public Education provided that a quorum is present and provided that the proposed amendment is sent in writing to members of the Board of Public Education at least seven days in advance.

Article XIII. Professional Development

The Board of Public Education offers professional development opportunities for Board members whenever possible. Board members may attend at least one professional development conference each year, when funding is available. All requests must be submitted to the Executive Director at least one month prior to the conference. Board members should submit the request using the Request and Justification for Travel Form. All out of state travel and travel that exceeds \$1,000 must be approved by the Executive Committee prior to participation.

[Request and Justification for Travel Form \(mt.gov\)](https://mt.gov/education/boards/bope/Request-and-Justification-for-Travel-Form.pdf)



Board of Public Education

ANNUAL AGENDA CALENDAR

January 2027 – November 2027

(Proposed items from OPI in italics)

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
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

March 18-19, 2027 – Stevensville, MT

MACIE Update
Action on MSDB School Calendar
Action on Early Literacy Screening Tools (Odd Years)
Action on Executing Public Charter School Contracts
Assessment Update
Federal Update
Accreditation Report
Annual School Food Services Report
Review Draft CAEP MOU
Content Standards Revision Update

May 20-21, 2027 – Great Falls, MT

Student Representative – Last Meeting & Recognition
MACIE Update
Review Public Charter School Performance Reports
Action on K-12 Schools Payment Schedule
Assessment Update
Accreditation Update
Action on CAEP MOU
Federal Update
Content Standards Revision Update
Action on Accreditation Status of All Schools
Executive Director Performance Evaluation

July 21-23, 2027 – Helena, MT

Joint MACIE Meeting and Tribal Consultation
Strategic Planning Meeting
MACIE Update
Action on MSDB/Golden Triangle Co-op
Indian Education for All Report
Assessment Update
Federal Update
OPI Staffing Report
Accreditation Report
Content Standards Revision Update

September 23-24, 2027 – Lewistown, MT

Election of Board Officers
Action on Strategic Planning Items
MACIE Update
Montana Digital Academy Update
MACIE Renewal (Even Years)
Review Community Choice School Academic Performance and Financial Reports
Annual HiSET Report
Annual Special Education Report
Accreditation Update
Assessment Update
Federal Update
Content Standards Revision Update

November 17-19, 2027 – Missoula, MT

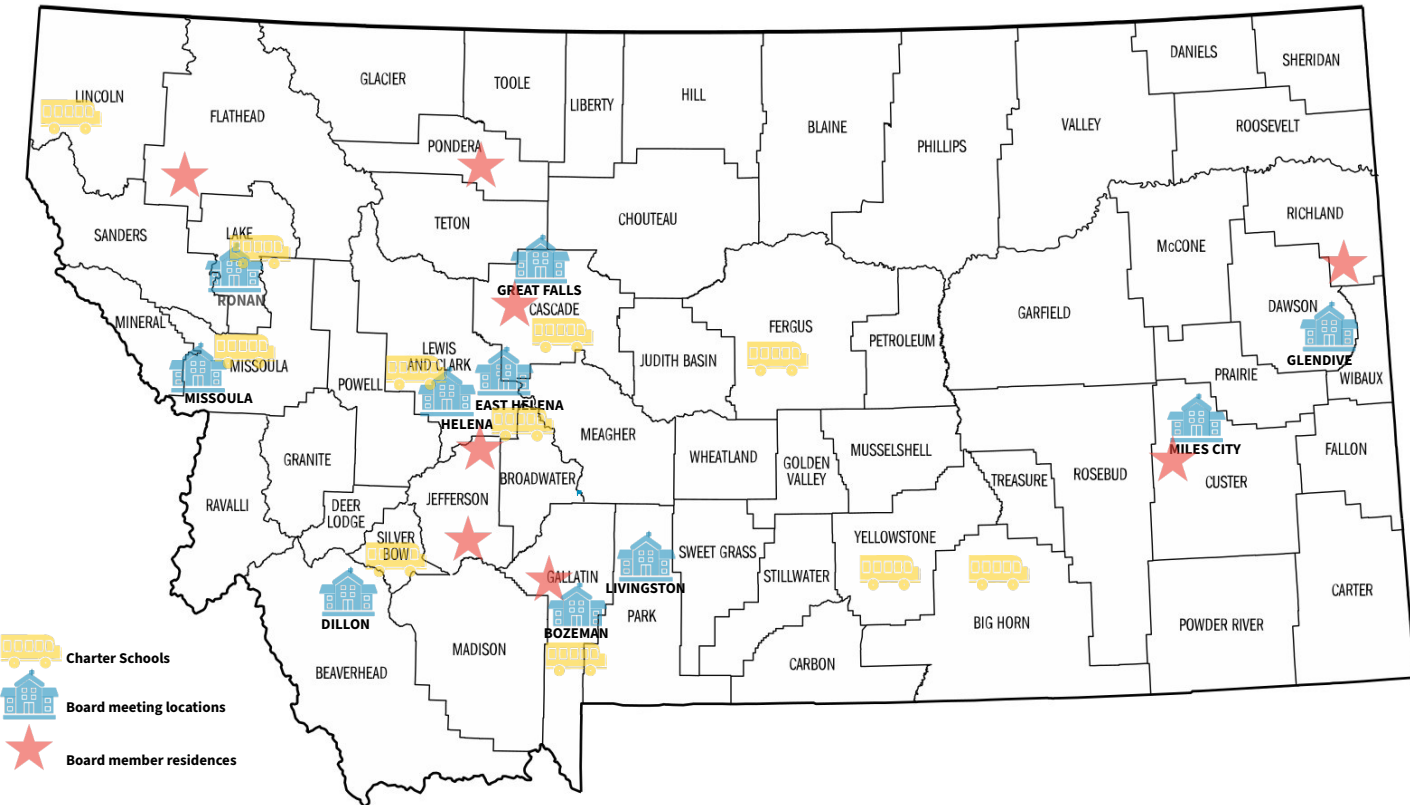
Board of Education Meeting
Joint Montana Council of Deans of Education Meeting
MACIE Update
Assessment Update
Federal Update
Annual Data Collection
Action on Variance to Standards Requests & Renewals
Accreditation Report
Youth Risk Behavior Survey Update (Odd Years)
Annual Professional Development Unit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

ITEM 2

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

McCall Flynn

BOARD OF PUBLIC EDUCATION



ITEM 3

STATE SUPERINTENDENT REPORT

- **Assessment Update**
- **Federal Update**
- **Intensive Assistance Update**
- **Content Standards Update**
- **Accreditation Update**
- **Annual Special Education Report**

State Superintendent Susie Hedalen



September 2026 BPE Assessment Update

General Update:

- **Introduction and Update:** Dr. Ryan Schrenk - Assessment Director
- **Upcoming Dates and 2026-2027 Testing Windows**
 - **MAST Math - District/School Testlet Scheduling due September 14**

Montana Office of Public Instruction
Published Test Windows for All Required Statewide Assessments
2026–2027 School Year



Anticipated SY2026-27 Test Windows		Required Subjects	Student Group	Grades Tested	Window Period
Montana Aligned to Standards Through-Year (MAST)	<u>Window 1</u> October 19-December 11	Math and ELA	General	Grades 3–8	3 windows: 8 weeks each
	<u>Window 2</u> January 11-March 5				
	<u>Window 3</u> March 29-May 21				
Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM) Alternate ELA and Math	<u>Fall Window</u> September 14- December 18	Math and ELA	SwSCDs	Grades 3-8, 11	2 windows: 15 weeks each
	<u>Spring Window</u> 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	<u>Window 1</u> March 23-April 2	Math, ELA, and Science	General	Grade 11	3 windows: 2 weeks each
	<u>Window 2</u> April 6-16				
	<u>Window 3</u> 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.

Note: SwSCDs is an acronym for student with significant cognitive disabilities.

- **MAST District Data Release:**
 - On August 27, Montana school districts gained access to individual district, school, and student-level reports via the Kite Educator Portal
- **MAST Support Resources:**
 - To help educators translate through-year data into targeted classroom instruction, comprehensive interpretive guides and post-testing resources have been made available at the [MAST Portal](#).
- **Statewide Data- Public Launch:**
 - A full statewide public release and preview of aggregate Math, ELA and Science assessment data is scheduled for mid-November.
 - Timeline:
 - Embargoed Data available to Districts: ~ November 3, 2026
 - Data becomes available to the public on GEMS: ~ November 11, 2026
- **Professional Learning**
 - **MAST Peaks of Practice**
 - 145 Registrations and 70+ Active Attendees
 - Crossover Professional Learning with Assessment and Content Specialists
 - **MAST Virtual Cohort**
 - The **MAST Virtual Teacher Cohort** is an opportunity for Montana educators to learn, connect, and deepen their understanding of effective instructional practice through a collaborative professional learning experience.
 - [Interest Form](#)

2026-2027

OPI Assessment

**MAST Training, Professional Learning,
and Administration Resources**



LEARNING SESSIONS	
AUG. 3 (9-10 AM) SCHEDULING RECORDING & SLIDES PREPARING TO TEST WEBINARS (3:30 - 4:30 PM) OCT. 7 BEFORE TESTING TASKS OCT. 14 DURING/AFTER TESTING TASKS OCT. 21 DURING/AFTER TESTING TASKS; OPEN Q&A	MAST PROFESSIONAL LEARNING (3:30 - 4:30 PM) OCT. 28 SCORE REPORTS NOV. 4 MATH MISCONCEPTIONS NOV. 11 ELA PERFORMANCE TASK

VIRTUAL EVENTS

AUG. 20 (8:30 AM - 3:30 PM) PEAKS OF PRACTICE

[VIDEOS & SLIDES](#)

SEPT. 10 (9 AM - 2 PM) MAST SUMMIT

[LINK TO SESSIONS](#)

RESOURCES

MAST FOR EDUCATORS [Slides](#) and [Quick Page](#)

MAST FOR TEST COORDINATORS [Slides](#) & [Quick Page](#)

VISIT THE [OPI ASSESSMENT BULLETIN](#) FOR
TIMELY TASKS & RESOURCES

VISIT THE [MAST PORTAL](#) & [OPI STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT](#) FOR ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Use this link (updated as new sessions are scheduled)

- **STC Workshop Series** (photo is linked to this page):

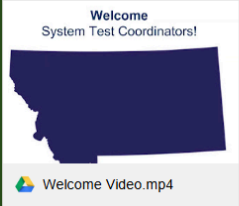


**STC
Workshop
Website**

- Home: Landing Page
- ✓ Workshop and Site Overview
- ✓ Interactive Workshop Schedule
- ✓ Sessions
 - Presenter Bios
 - Acronyms in Assessment
 - References
 - Glossary of Terms



2026-2027 STC Workshop Series



Welcome
System Test Coordinators!

Welcome Video.mp4

Welcome STCs!

Save the dates! The STC Workshop will be held September 3, 10, 17, and 24 2026.

View this short 3 minute video to orient you with the STC Workshop Series.

NOTICE regarding DLM Training (Session 3: September 3, 2026)

Only attendees with an active DLM Kite Educator Portal account will be allowed into the session. Complete [this registration form](#) to confirm your account no later than September 2, 2026.



[Workshop and Site Overview](#)



[Interactive Schedule](#)



[Workshop Sessions](#)

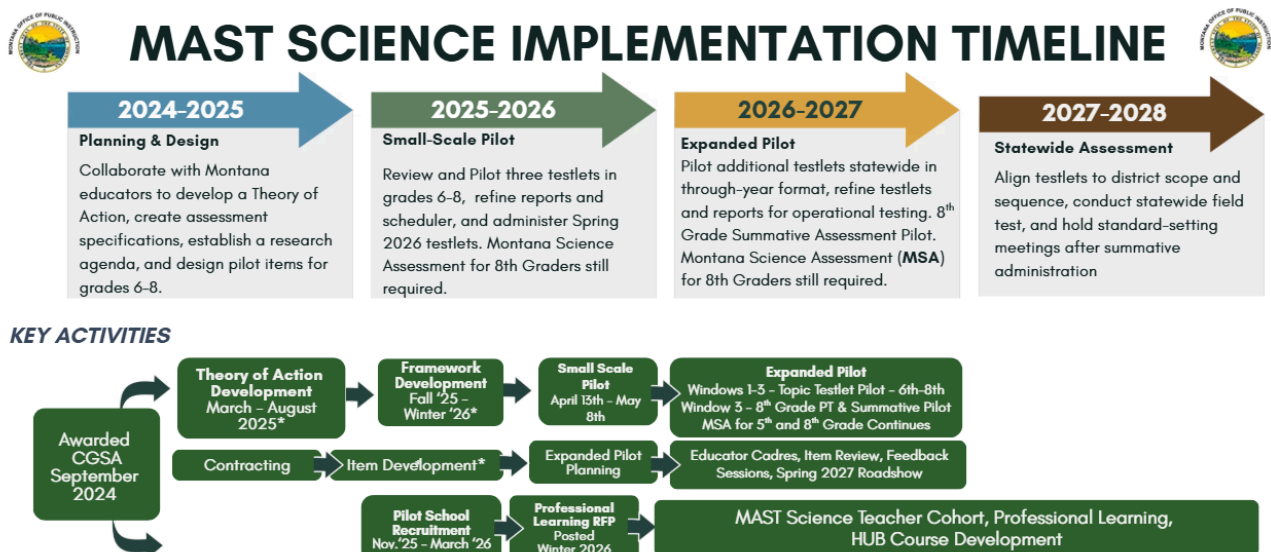


[Checklist & Questions](#)



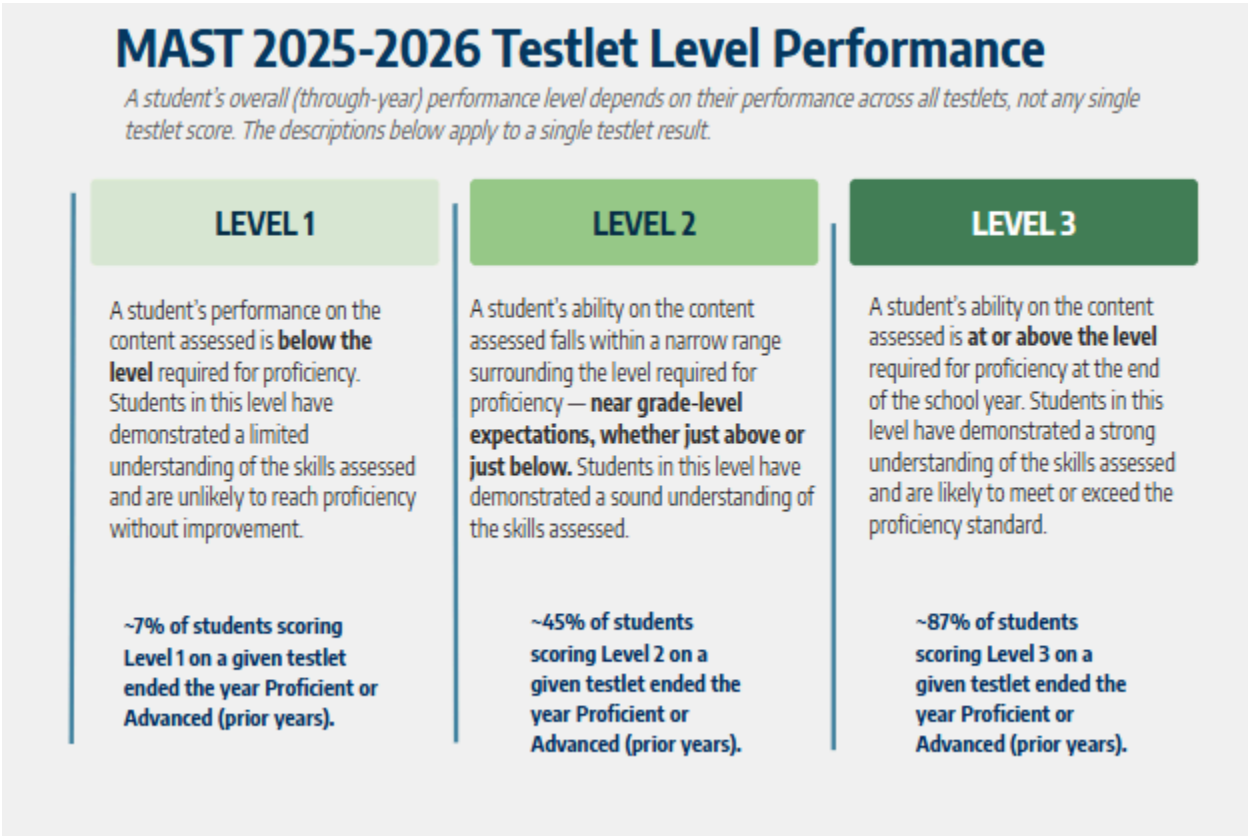
[Presenter Biographies](#)

- **MAST Science**
 - [MAST Science Homepage](#)
 - MAST Science Stakeholder Engagement
 - Score Reports, Item Development and Review, Pilot Experience, Cognitive Labs
 - MAST Science Roadshow - April 2027

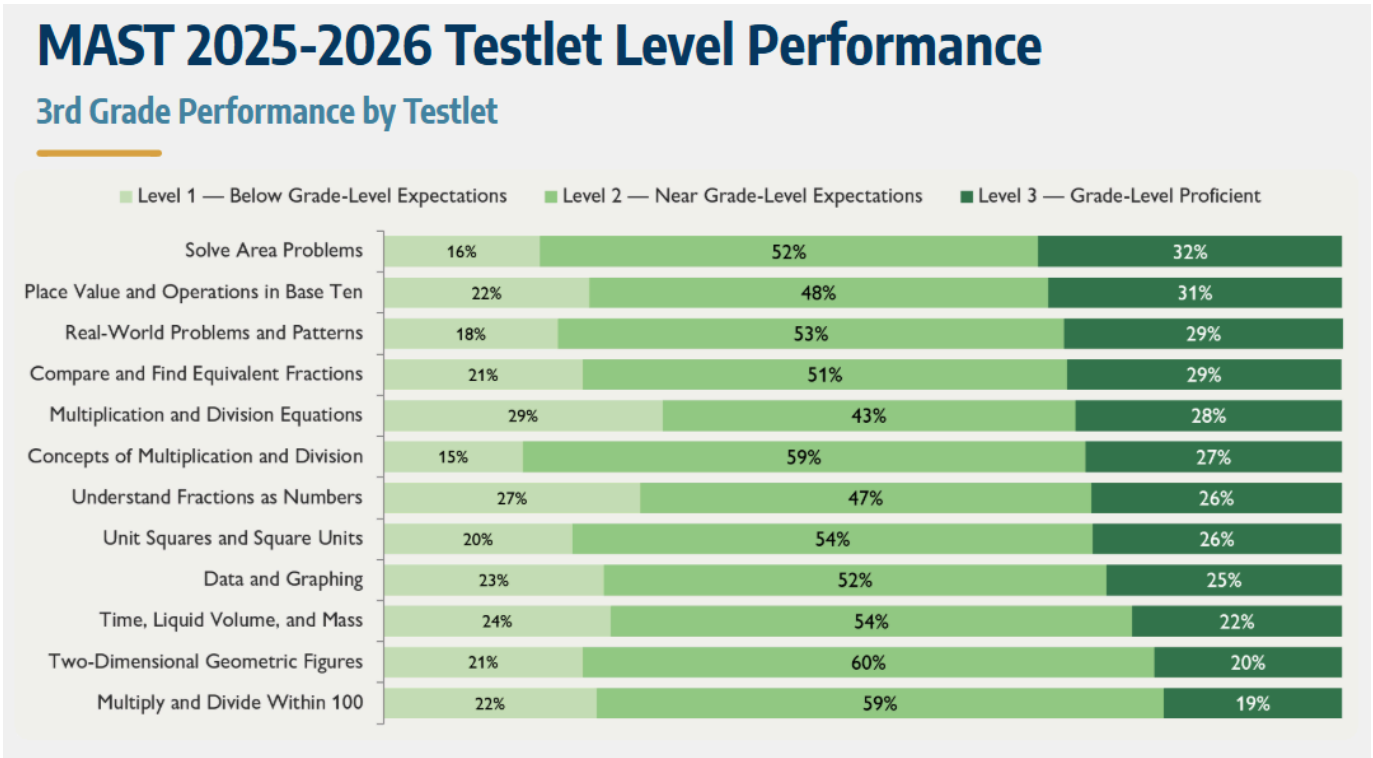


Instructional Utility

- Testlet Data
 - Update to testlet level specifications to support classroom instruction

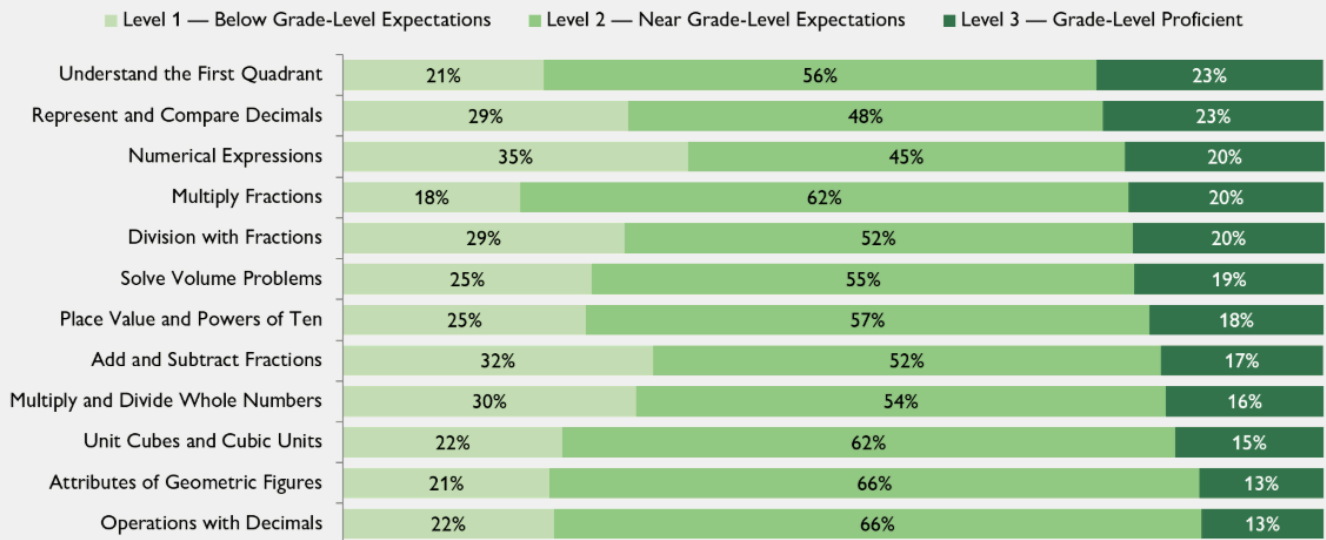


Examples of Testlet Level Performance by Math Standard Domains - 2025-2026



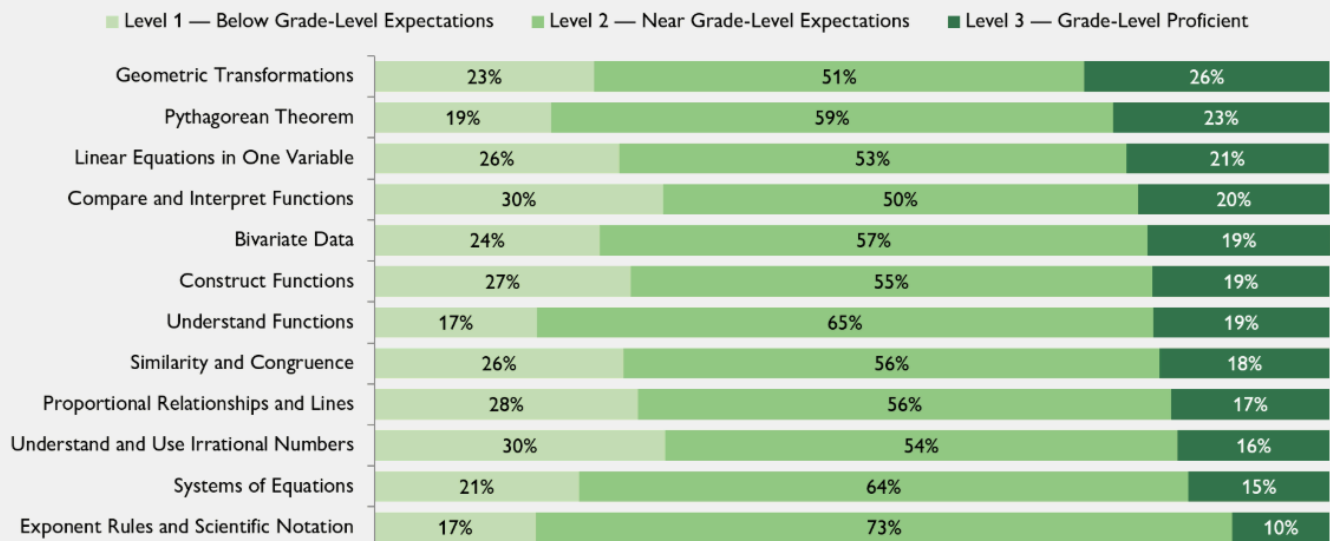
MAST 2025-2026 Testlet Level Performance

5th Grade Performance by Testlet



MAST 2025-2026 Testlet Level Performance

8th Grade Performance by Testlet



- **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:**



- **Sample Math Testlet Planners for One of the Five Most Used Curriculum**

- Generated with the MAST Testlet Planner
 - Schedule assumes default pacing-dates adjusted as needed

Sample Mathematics MAST Testlet Schedule · Mathematics · 2026–27

Start Aug 24, 2026 · 165-day school year · 2-day test cushion · Give each testlet on or near its date, within its window.
Window 3 also includes the end-of-year Math anchor testlet.

	Window 1 Oct 19 – Dec 11	Window 2 Jan 11 – Mar 5	Window 3 Mar 29 – May 21
Grade 3	5 TESTLETS Concepts of Multiplication and Division Oct 19 · 11-17 min Multiplication and Division Equations Oct 28 · 8-15 min Multiply and Divide Within 100 Nov 11 · 6-11 min Unit Squares and Square Units Dec 1 · 9-14 min Solve Area Problems Dec 1 · 11-19 min	3 TESTLETS Data and Graphing Jan 11 · 11-17 min Place Value and Operations in Base Ten Feb 8 · 13-21 min Real-World Problems and Patterns Feb 18 · 12-19 min	4 TESTLETS Understand Fractions as Numbers Mar 29 · 8-12 min Compare and Find Equivalent Fractions Mar 31 · 9-14 min Time, Liquid Volume, and Mass Apr 19 · 9-13 min Two-Dimensional Geometric Figures May 12 · 8-14 min
Grade 4	4 TESTLETS Place Value in the Base Ten System Oct 19 · 11-17 min Addition and Subtraction Algorithms Oct 19 · 16-24 min Multi-Digit Multiplication Oct 27 · 13-22 min Multi-Digit Division Nov 17 · 15-26 min	4 TESTLETS Extend Concepts of Multiplication Jan 11 · 12-19 min Compare and Find Equivalent Fractions Jan 14 · 11-20 min Add and Subtract Fractions Feb 4 · 12-20 min Multiply Fractions Feb 17 · 10-18 min	4 TESTLETS Decimal Fractions Mar 29 · 8-13 min Solve Measurement Problems Apr 5 · 12-20 min Real-World Problems and Patterns Apr 14 · 14-21 min Angles and Geometry May 12 · 8-12 min
Grade 5	4 TESTLETS Place Value and Powers of Ten Oct 19 ·	3 TESTLETS Add and Subtract Fractions Jan 11 ·	5 TESTLETS Unit Cubes and Cubic Units Mar 29 ·

	11-17 min Represent and Compare Decimals Oct 19 · 6-10 min Multiply and Divide Whole Numbers Nov 16 · 14-22 min Operations with Decimals Dec 2 · 9-15 min	15-23 min Multiply Fractions Jan 28 · 14-22 min Division with Fractions Feb 16 · 10-16 min	10-16 min Solve Volume Problems Mar 29 · 14-22 min Numerical Expressions Apr 13 · 11-17 min Understand the First Quadrant May 3 · 7-11 min Attributes of Geometric Figures May 12 · 5-9 min
Grade 6	5 TESTLETS Divide Fractions Oct 19 · 11-16 min Computational Fluency Oct 19 · 18-27 min Rational Numbers and Absolute Value Oct 19 · 6-9 min Algebraic Expressions and Exponents Nov 11 · 11-16 min Equivalent Expressions Nov 11 · 10-16 min	3 TESTLETS Variables in Expressions and Equations Jan 11 · 12-18 min Write and Interpret Inequalities Jan 11 · 7-11 min Concepts of Ratios and Unit Rates Feb 12 · 14-20 min	4 TESTLETS Percents and Measurement Conversions Mar 29 · 11-18 min Solve Problems with Area and Volume Apr 15 · 12-17 min The Coordinate Plane Apr 15 · 8-12 min Concepts of Statistics May 12 · 12-17 min
Grade 7	3 TESTLETS Add and Subtract Rational Numbers Oct 19 · 9-14 min Multiply and Divide Rational Numbers Oct 19 · 12-19 min Ratios and Proportional Relationships Oct 28 · 15-21 min	4 TESTLETS Expressions with Rational Numbers Jan 11 · 10-16 min Solving Equations Feb 9 · 16-23 min Solving Inequalities Feb 9 · 12-18 min Measures of Center and Variability Mar 3 · 12-18 min	5 TESTLETS Probability Apr 7 · 10-15 min Solve Problems with Ratio and Proportion May 12 · 14-20 min Solve Problems with Rational Numbers May 12 · 14-20 min Angle Relationships and Triangles May 12 · 11-17 min Solve Problems with Geometric Figures May 12 · 10-16 min
Grade 8	5 TESTLETS Exponent Rules and Scientific Notation Oct 19 · 11-17 min Linear Equations in One Variable Nov 9 · 16-24 min Proportional Relationships and Lines Nov 9 · 12-17 min Compare and Interpret Functions Dec 10 · 11-17 min Construct Functions Dec 10 · 12-18 min	3 TESTLETS Understand Functions Jan 11 · 10-14 min Bivariate Data Jan 19 · 8-11 min Systems of Equations Feb 10 · 10-15 min	4 TESTLETS Geometric Transformations Mar 29 · 9-13 min Similarity and Congruence Mar 29 · 9-13 min Pythagorean Theorem Apr 20 · 12-18 min Understand and Use Irrational Numbers May 12 · 5-8 min

OPI Assessment Team:

Dr. Ryan Schrenk, State Assessment Director

Dylan Conway, WIDA ACCESS, Alt ACCESS, & DLM Specialist

Marcy Fortner, ACT / MontCAS Specialist

Tressa Graveley, MAST Specialist

Shelby Holmes, MSA / MAST Science Specialist

Shantel Niederstadt, NAEP State Coordinator



Federal Update- as of September 11, 2026

FERPA & PPRA Compliance Notice

In August the Department of Education sent a compliance reminder to all State Education Agencies that outlined annual compliance obligations and key areas of concerns regarding the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA).

Key Areas of Concern and Policy Directives outlined include:

- Curriculum & Record Transparency: LEAs must allow parents to inspect instructional materials and all student records.
- Third-Party Data & App Use: Sharing student data with contractors or educational apps requires meeting strict FERPA outsourcing criteria (district control, employee function) or obtaining explicit consent.
- Notifications & Recruiters: Districts must effectively communicate annual FERPA/PPRA rights to parents and provide military recruiters with student contact info unless parents opt out.
- Strict PPRA Written Consent Standards: The U.S. Department of Education considers any school survey, evaluation, or analysis that addresses any of the eight protected categories (such as mental health, political/religious beliefs, or sexual behavior/attitudes) as "required". Therefore, schools must provide advance notice and secure prior written parental consent.

Dear Colleague: Responsible Use of Educational Technology

In August the Department of Education sent a [Dear Colleague letter](#) addressing educational technology and screen time in schools. The letter focused on replacing screen-time bans or limits with clear standards for instructional quality.

Key Takeaways include:

- Recreational vs. Instructional Distinction: The guidance distinguishes harmful, recreational screen use (such as social media and cell phone distractions) from high-impact educational technology. States and schools are encouraged to curb recreational distractions while preserving purposeful tech use.
- Impact Over Screen Time: Policies should prioritize demonstrated learning outcomes rather than measuring total minutes of screen time. Technology should solve clear learning problems, broaden access to advanced courses, and support students with disabilities.
- Evidence-Based Selection: Districts and state agencies are advised to select and retain educational tech products based on rigorous, independent evidence of effectiveness (such as randomized controlled trials). Tools that fail to deliver measurable learning gains should be phased out.



- Educator-Led & Human-Centered: Technology must complement and support—not replace—educators. Implementation should preserve teacher judgment, prioritize human connection, and include comprehensive professional development.
- Transparency & Parent Engagement: Schools and technology vendors must provide clear transparency regarding screen time usage, tool implementation, and data privacy safeguards.

OPI Federal Programs Team Updates

This year the OPI has reorganized the Federal Programs technical assistance so that school leaders have one point of contact throughout the entire process of submitting their 2026- 2027 ESEA Applications. Additionally, the following resources have been created to assist school leaders with their applications:

- [Instructions for each section of the ESEA Consolidated Application](#)
- [2026–27 Budget Guidance](#)
- [Written instructions for correcting returned applications](#)
- [A tutorial video demonstrating how to make corrections to returned applications](#)

Federal Grants Unit Contacts:

- Zach Hawkins, Title I and Federal Programs Director, 406-444-3083
- Angela Branz-Spall, Title I Part C MEP Director, 406-444-2423
- Marisa Britton-Bostwick, Federal Programs Coordinator, Title I D, Title II A, Title III, Title V B. 406-444-0794
- Richard Hanley, The Title IV A Coordinator 406-444-3519
- Justine Guthrie, State Coordinator for Homeless Education, McKinney Vento 406-444-2036
- Kimberly Rebich, Federal Grants Coordinator, 406-410-4578



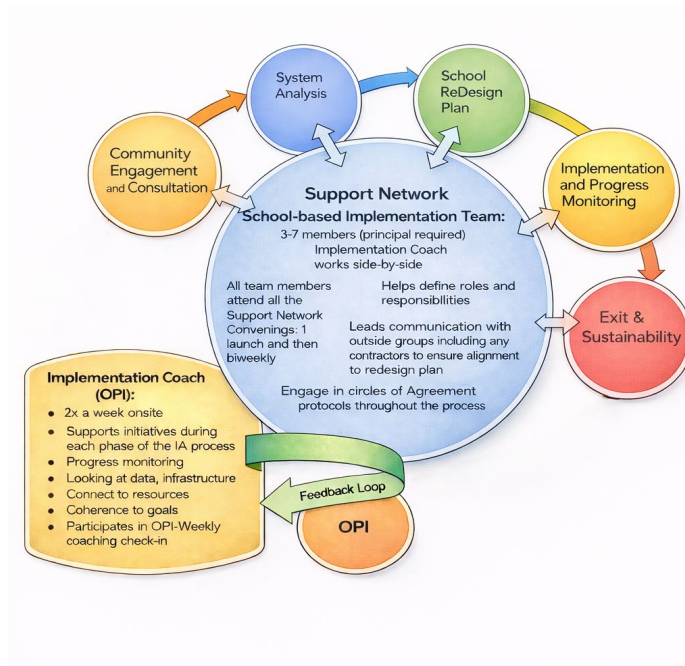
Intensive Assistance update

“Intensive Assistance” as defined by ARM 10.55.602 and outlined in ARM 10.55.605, is a required process for schools that remain in deficiency status and have failed to develop or implement an approved corrective plan to remedy accreditation deviations within the designated timeline. Deficiency means a school continues to have serious and/or numerous deviations or has substantially increased the seriousness of deviations over the previous year. Intensive Assistance centered on school redesign is a form of school turnaround that is an intensive three-year intervention directed by the Board of Public Education (BPE) and administered by the Office of Public Instruction (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



Intensive Assistance Timeline

February 2026 - Accreditation due

May 2026- July 2026 - Schools identified for Intensive Assistance

May 21-22, 2026, BPE meeting (where Accreditation status of schools are approved by the BPE)

Phase 1: Community Engagement and Consultation launches

- School district special school board meetings (tentative)
- OPI coordinates with SAM to contract with LEA to hire Implementation Administrator
- Launch RFI to identify 3rd party entities that schools may contract for specified services aligned to the process
- School Intensive Assistance Implementation team identified
- Circles of Agreement, with facilitation, meet, prepare, and finalize community agreements

July 2026 - January 2027

Phase 2: System Analysis launches

- August 3-5, 2026: Support Network Summer launch workshop week
- August 2026: Biweekly virtual Support Network meetings and OPI Implementation Coach weekly site visits begin
- 3rd party entities may be contracted by the school and begin scope of work for specific services to support components of the intensive assistance process.
- School presents system analysis results to stakeholders, local board of trustees, and BPE at January 2027 meeting.

February 2027- May 2027

Phase 3: Redesign Planning launches

- Support Network meetings, OPI Implementation Coach weekly meetings, and contracted work continue.
- Redesign plan is presented to stakeholders, local board of trustees, and BPE at May 2027 meeting

May 2027- August 2027:

Phase 4: Implementation of redesign plan launches

- Circles of Agreement reconvene to review community agreements and redesign plan
- Support Network convening year 2
- August 2027: Biweekly virtual Support Network meetings, OPI Implementation Coach weekly site visits, and contract work restart for the school year.

September 2027 - May 2028

Phase 4: Implementation continues and Progress Monitoring launches

- Implementing the Redesign Plan
- Progress Monitoring Commences
- Support Network meetings, OPI Implementation Coach weekly meetings, and contracted work continue.
- Progress reports are presented to stakeholders, local board of trustees, and BPE at November 2027 & May 2028 BPE Meetings

May 2028-August 2028**Phase 4: Implementation and Progress Monitoring continue****Phase 5: Exit & Sustainability launches**

- Circles of Agreement reconvenes to review community agreements and progress reports
- Implementation Team prepares Sustainability plan
- Support Network Convening Year 3

September 2028-May 2029

Implementation, progress monitoring, and preparation for Exit and Sustainability continue

- Progress reports and sustainability plan are presented to stakeholders, local board of trustees, and BPE at November 2028 and March 2029 BPE Meeting
- February 2029 Accreditation assurances and student performance components submitted to the OPI.
- May 2029 BPE meeting (where Accreditation status of schools will be approved by the Board). Schools either exit the school intensive assistance process or are designated as non-accredited.

Tasks Completed:

- Schools Identified and approved by BPE for Intensive Assistance (May 21, 2026)
- Notification letters sent to district superintendent, school board chair, and school board clerk. (May 30, 2026)
- Support team identified (May 2026)
 - 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)
- Held weekly planning meetings with EDNW to support the implementation
- RFI posted to identify 3rd party entities that schools may contract for specified services aligned to the process
- OPI staff capacity building with EDNW-lead by Mandy Smoker Broaddus
- Hosted August 3-5, 2026, Support Network Summer launch workshop
 - Data Analysis-Accreditation-What will it take to remain accredited
- Schools identified the School Intensive Assistance Implementation team members
- Support Network Launched-August 26th
- Leadership meetings for both districts with Superintendent Hedalen regarding Implementation Administrator budget

Next Steps:

- Execute the MOU with each district
- Hire and finalize the contracts for the Implementation Administrators through SAM

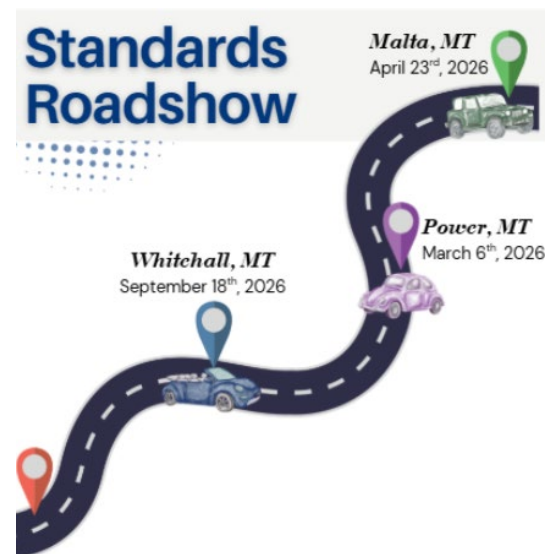
- Publish the approved external partner list from the RFI
- Conduct the Circles of Agreement process for Phase 1: Community Engagement and Consultation



September 2026 BPE Content Standards Update

General Update:

- **Statewide Standards Rollout Professional Learning**
 - 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](#)
- **Satchel Professional Learning Series**
 - This year-long professional learning series hosted by Professional Learning Manager, Aimee Konzen, is designed for Montana educators to explore, practice, and implement Satchel features while developing a collaborative community of practice.
 - The program is aligned with ARM 10.55.714 and focuses on:
 - **Core Alignment:** Integrating ISAP, Graduate Profiles, wellness, and evidence-based instructional practices.
 - **Format:** A monthly 90-minute virtual workshop structure, including "sandbox" exploration, optional office hours, community discussion boards, and implementation challenges between sessions.
 - **Success Goals:** Participants aim to build proficiency in Satchel tools, connect these features to district goals, collaborate on implementation, and measure the impact on both educator practice and student learning.
- **Montana's Content Standards Roadshow**
 - Specialists Katrina Engeldrum and Claire Mikeson will be conducting regional PD to support educators in their work to implement new Math and ELA content standards.
 - Each location district has graciously opened their doors to any regional educators seeking this support.
 - Register today for any of the three locations.
 - → [Whitehall, MT \(September 18th, 2026\)](#)
 - → [Power, MT \(March 6th, 2026\)](#)
 - → [Malta, MT \(April 23rd, 2026\)](#)



Montana Mathematics Content Standards Implementation

Kudos to Katrina Engeldrum on leading the standards implementation work, including bringing in vital partners for IEFA alignment!

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)
- [Satchel](#)
- [Recommended Pathways for HS Math - Public](#)
- [Math Family and Community Engagement Toolkit](#)
- [Appendix G High School Mathematics Course Recommendations 2025.07.02.pdf](#)

Resources in Development:

- 2nd - HS Expanded Guidance Documents
- High School IEFA-aligned math items developed with Education Northwest
- A new high school concepts clarification tool outlining required, new, and elective concepts
- Continued posting of expanded guidance documents on Satchel

Math Standards Implementation Professional Learning Series

• 2025-2026 Recorded Professional Learning Events

- 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](#)

• 2026-2027 Planned Professional Learning Events

- [Register Here](#)
- K-8 Webinars: 2nd Wednesday, 4:00 to 5:00 PM
- 9-12 Webinars: 3rd Wednesday, 4:00 to 5:00 PM



Math Standards IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORT

Turn standards into action. Collaborate, plan, and build practical strategies for meaningful math instruction with fellow educators across Montana.

Participants will:

- Build a clear plan for standards implementation
- Design and refine lessons aligned to new standards
- Analyze student thinking and adjust instruction
- Collaborate with educators across Montana

 **SCAN THE QR CODE OR CLICK HERE TO REGISTER**

Who Should Attend?

- K-12 Mathematics Teachers
- Instructional Coaches

What is the Structure?

- Monthly virtual sessions (Sep-April)
- Separate sessions for K-8 and 9-12
- Focus on one domain for deep, sustained learning

September 2026 - April 2027

- K-8 - Second Wednesday, Monthly
- 9-12 - Third Wednesday, Monthly

4:00 pm - 5:00 pm

Free & Virtual

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

- [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



Montana's ELA Standards



Monthly Implementation Webinars

Join OPI's free, statewide webinar series designed to support educators in implementing the 2027 Montana English Language Arts and Literacy Content Standards. **1 PDU** is offered per session. Sessions will include

- practical guidance
- job-embedded strategies and resources
- tips for alignment with your curriculum
- a community of professionals engaging in shared learning

[Calendar and Topics](#)

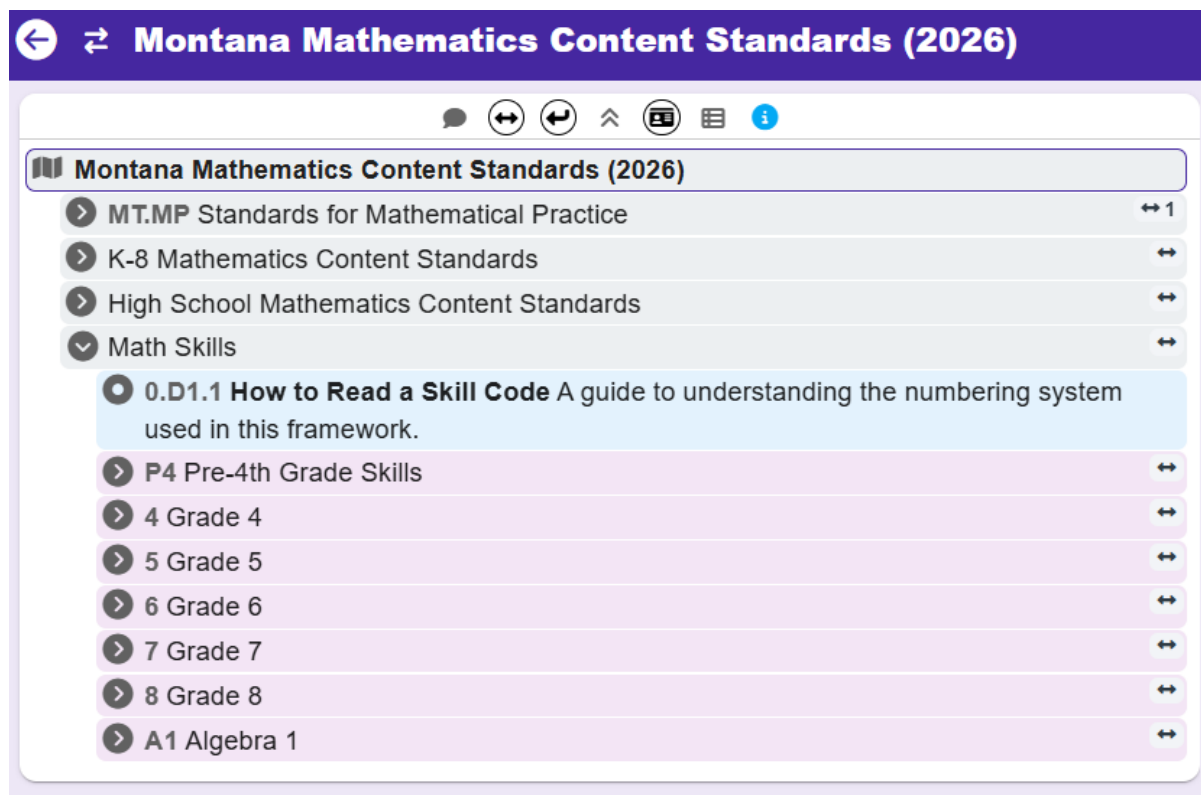


[Register here!](#)



Montana Math Skills Map

- [Montana Mathematics Content Standards \(2026\)](#)
- The Math Skills Map is officially LIVE!
 - We have shared this in several professional learning opportunities with the field and have been met with great excitement and enthusiasm for this powerful tool.



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



Superintendent's Report Accreditation Update

K-12 Accreditation

- Accreditation Portal (AccredMT) opened on September 8th
- Annual requirements due for ALL schools on December 18th
- On Cycle requirements due for Cycle 1 (Group A) on February 26th

EPP Accreditation

- Dual Credit Provider collection system is ready
 - Qualtrics survey with a built in excel template
- EPP's will complete Fall/Spring semester(s)



0% Survey Completion

Dual Credit Provider Survey

NEW RULE: Dual Credit Faculty License Exception

A new rule, **Dual Credit Faculty License Exception**, establishes annual reporting requirements for postsecondary institutions offering dual credit courses to Montana public school students.

Under this rule, postsecondary institutions offering dual credit courses must annually register with the Office of Public Instruction (OPI) prior to delivering dual credit courses. Institutions must also identify the Montana school districts they serve and provide information about the dual credit courses and instructors they provide.

For the current school year, each postsecondary institution offering dual credit courses is required to provide:

- The Montana school districts served
- The dual credit courses provided, including course titles, course codes, and credit values
- The names of instructors providing dual credit courses
- The professional area of specialization for each instructor

EPP Dual Credit Provider New Collection Process



Office of Public Instruction
Susie Hedalen, State Superintendent



MT OPI ACCREDITATION

IN-PERSON WORK SESSIONS

Collaborate. Clarify. Create Impact.
Every Student. Every Day.

Focused time. Expert support.
Stronger schools. *Together.*

Join OPI for **in-person** work sessions designed to support districts and schools through the accreditation process. Bring your team, your questions, and your evidence—leave with clarity, feedback, and next steps.

Let's build a culture of continuous improvement and student success—together.

GET SUPPORT
Receive guidance from OPI staff and connect with other districts.

MAKE PROGRESS
Work on your accreditation evidence, narratives, and improvement plans.

DRIVE IMPACT
Strengthen systems and improve outcomes for all students.

TOPICS MAY INCLUDE

- ✓ Evidence Collection and Documentation
- ✓ Standards for Accreditation
- ✓ Continuous Improvement Planning
- ✓ Data Use and Reporting
- ✓ Narratives and Reflection
- ✓ Preparing for the Accreditation Visit
- ✓ Resources and Support from OPI

Better Together for Montana Students.

SESSION DETAILS

SESSION ONE:
Friday, September 25th | 8:30 – 12:30
Dawson County HS, Glendive

SESSION TWO:
Friday, October 2nd | 8:30 – 12:30
Great Falls District Office, Great Falls

SESSION THREE:
Friday, October 23rd | 8:30 – 12:30
Robins Administration Building, Havre

REGISTER TODAY!
<https://forms.gle/QNGfMNin2P2jCNXW9>
Space is limited.
Registration is required.

QUESTIONS?
Contact the Accreditation Team
OPIAccred@mt.gov

Supporting excellence and continuous improvement across Montana

opi.mt.gov

K-12 In-Person Work Sessions for Cycle 1 MASS Regions

General Mathematics							
InstructorFirstName	InstructorLastName	CollegeCourseCode	CollegeCourseName	SubjectArea	CourseName	MTCourseCode	MTCourseDescription
Test	Test	Test101	Basic Math	Mathematics	General Mathematics	D02	General Mathematics courses reinforce and expand students' foundational mathematic skills, such as arithmetic operations using rational numbers; area, perimeter, and volume of geometric figures, congruence and similarity, angle relationships, the Pythagorean theorem, the rectangular coordinate system, sets and logic, ratio and proportion, estimation, formulas, solving and graphing simple equations and inequalities.
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Office of Public Instruction

Special Education Annual Report **for the** **Board of Public Education**

September 2026

Report prepared for the September 2026 Board of Public Education meeting by:

Patrick Cates - Senior Manager, Student Support Services
Kjersten Skatvold - Director of Special Education, Special Education



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Montana Office of Public Instruction - Special Education
Board of Public Education Annual Report
September 2026

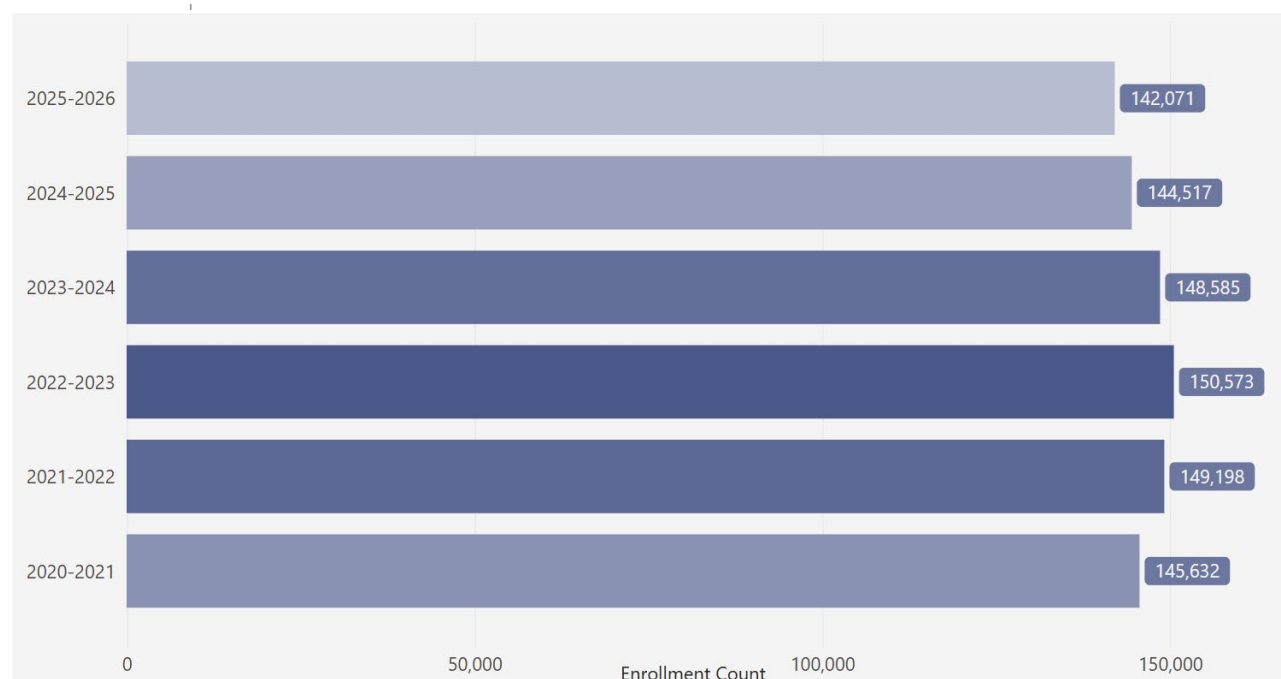
Who are Montana's Students with Disabilities?

Student Population

In 2022–23, the number of students ages 3–21 who received special education and related services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) was 7.5 million, or the equivalent of **15 percent** of all public school students. ([National Center for Education Statistics](#))

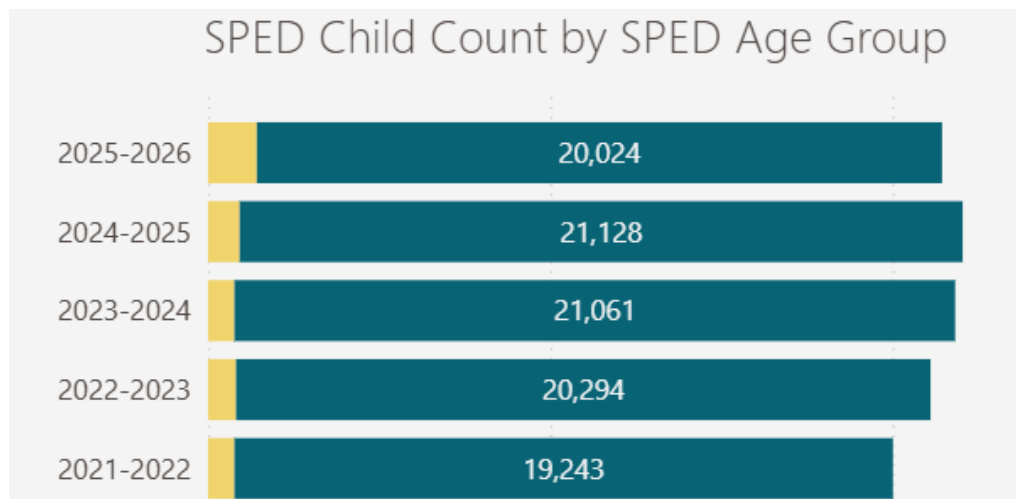
- **15%** of Montana's students are served under IDEA.
- Total student enrollment in 24/25 - 144,579 (2.73% decrease)
- Total student enrollment in 25/26 - 142,071 (1.72% decrease)
- Total enrollment of students with disabilities in 24/25 - 21,752 (.80% increase)
- Total enrollment of students with disabilities in 25/26 - 20,024 (7.94% decrease)

Montana Total Student Enrollment





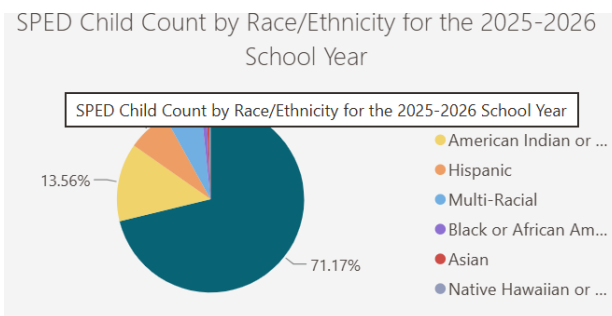
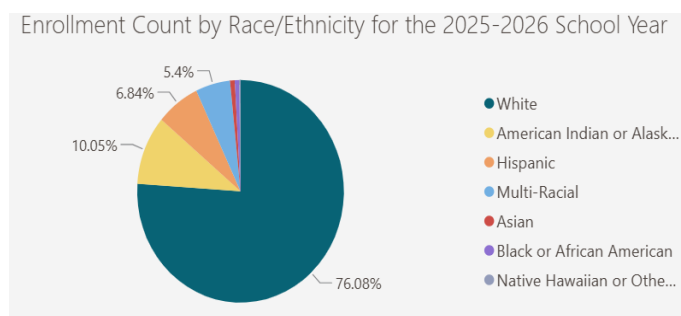
Montana Enrollment of Students with Disabilities



Special Education Demographics

Montana's students with disabilities are proportionally represented across the state, except for one area. American Indian students account for a 3% higher rate of the special education student population than the state student population. Conversely, a lesser percentage of the special education population is white.

SY2025 - 2026 Race/Ethnicity



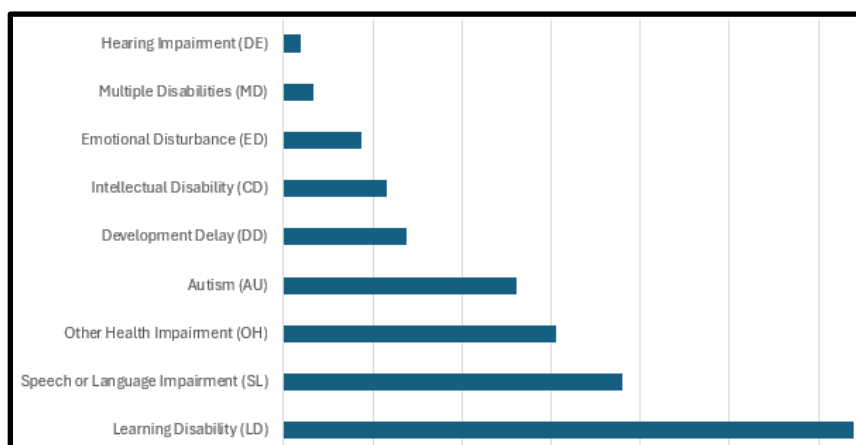


Student Disability Categories

- Students with more than one identified disability (not those reported as deaf-blind or developmental delay) must be listed as having multiple disabilities (MD) when federally reported.
- Montana does not have an MD category for eligibility, nor is a primary disability identified. The purpose of this is to recognize all disabilities that are reported.

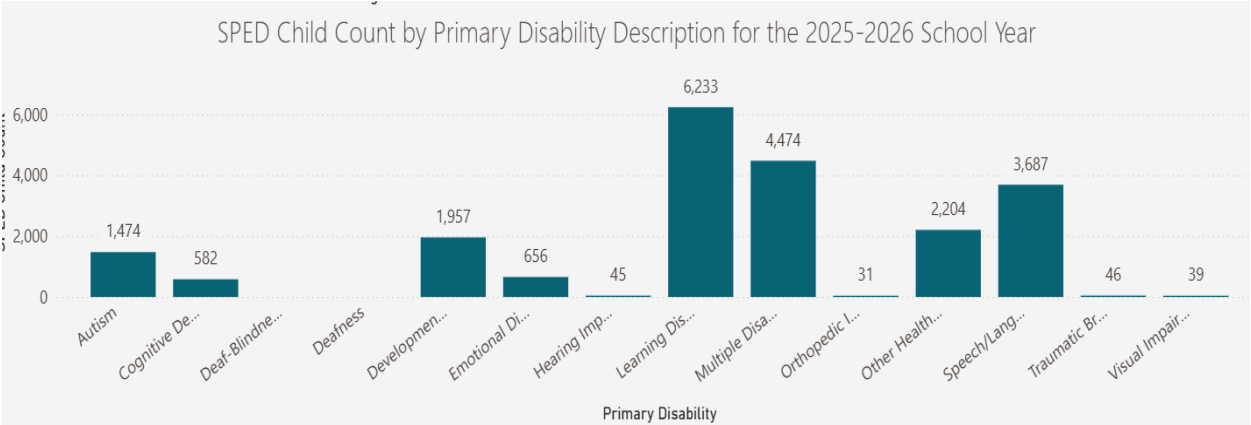
United States Special Education Child Count by Disability Category SY 2022-2023

*Students With Disabilities.
Annual Reports and
Information Staff (Annual
Reports). 2024. Accessed
August 14, 2024.*





Montana Special Education Child Count by Disability Category SY 2025 - 2026





SY2021 to SY2026	20-21	21-22	22-23	23-24	24-25	25-26
Autism (AU)	5.67%	5.70%	5.80%	6.03%	6.48%	6.87%
Cognitive Delay (CD)	2.87%	2.69%	2.53%	2.44%	2.56%	2.71%
Deaf-Blindness (DB)	0.04%	0.03%	0.05%	0.05%	0.05%	0.05%
Developmental Delay (DD)	6.51%	8.14%	9.34%	9.30%	9.15%	9.11%
Deaf (DE)	0.06%	0.06%	0.07%	0.06%	0.06%	0.06%
Emotional Disturbance (ED)	4.47%	4.08%	3.74%	3.60%	3.44%	3.09%
Hearing Impairment (HI)	0.34%	0.30%	0.28%	0.24%	0.22%	0.21%
Learning Disability (LD)	29.61%	29.72%	29.26%	28.92%	28.92%	29.07%
Multiple Disabilities (MD)	21.03%	21.13%	20.80%	20.90%	20.72%	20.87%
Other Health Impairment (OH)	11.23%	10.66%	10.31%	10.06%	10.38%	10.30%
Orthopedic Impairment (OI)	0.20%	0.19%	0.18%	0.15%	0.15%	0.14%
Speech-Language Impairment (SL)	17.39%	16.81%	17.18%	17.82%	17.45%	17.12%
Traumatic Brain Injury (TB)	0.29%	0.23%	0.21%	0.21%	0.23%	0.22%
Visual Impairment (VI)	0.29%	0.24%	0.26%	0.24%	0.19%	0.18%



Special Education Cooperatives

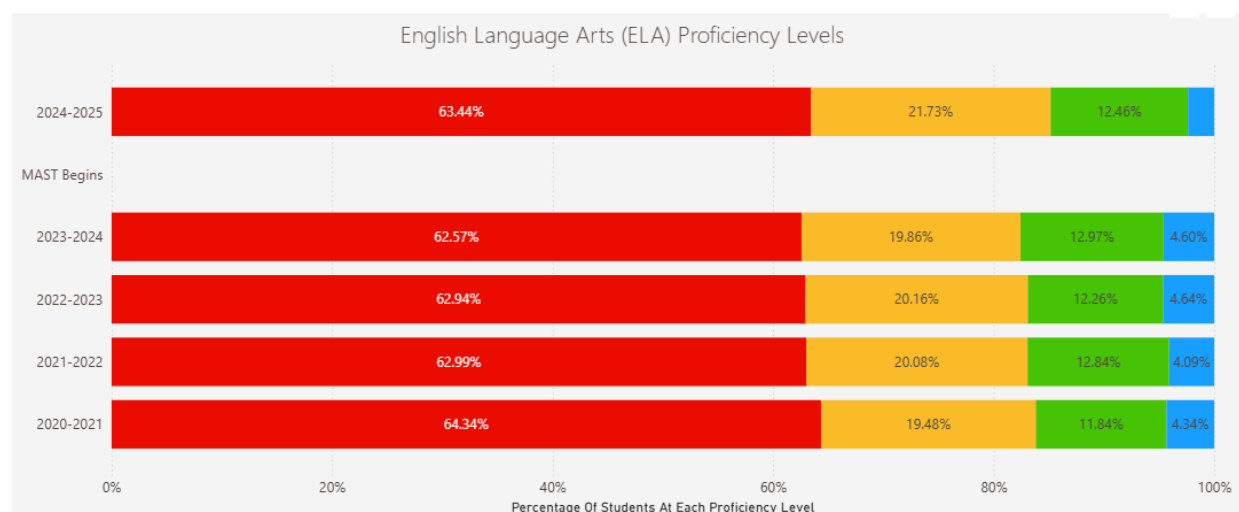
Special Education Cooperatives play a vital role in providing services to Montana's students with disabilities. Approximately 80% of those districts utilize the cooperative structure. The districts contract with their local cooperative for assistance in providing related services personnel such as school psychologists, speech pathologists, and physical therapists, amongst others.

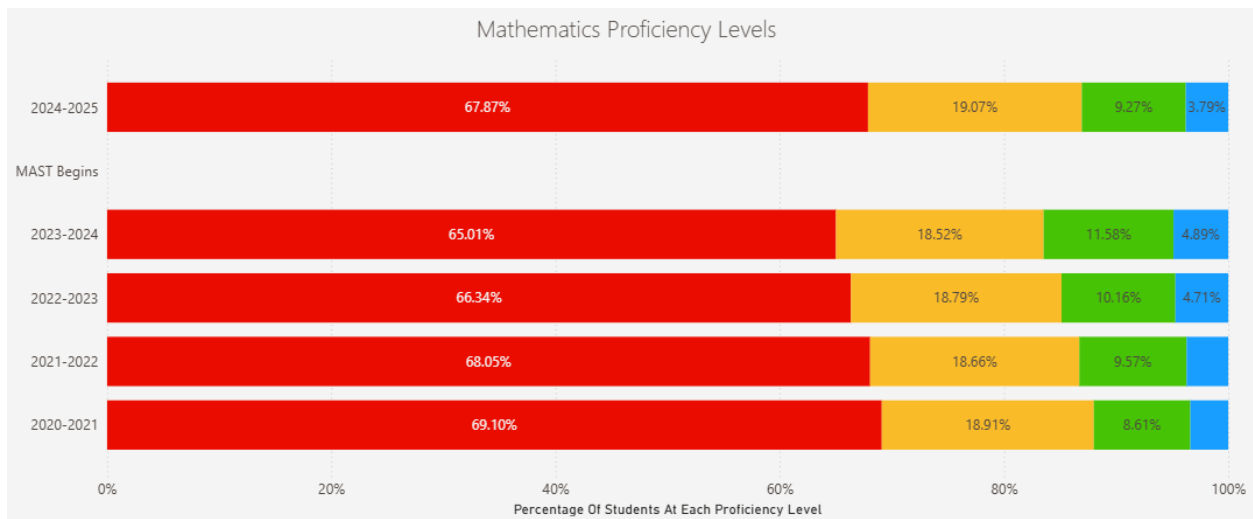
- Number of Cooperatives - 21
- [Special Education Directors in Montana](#)
- [Special Education Cooperatives & Directors in Montana](#)

Special Education Achievement

Montana Special Education Proficiency Rates

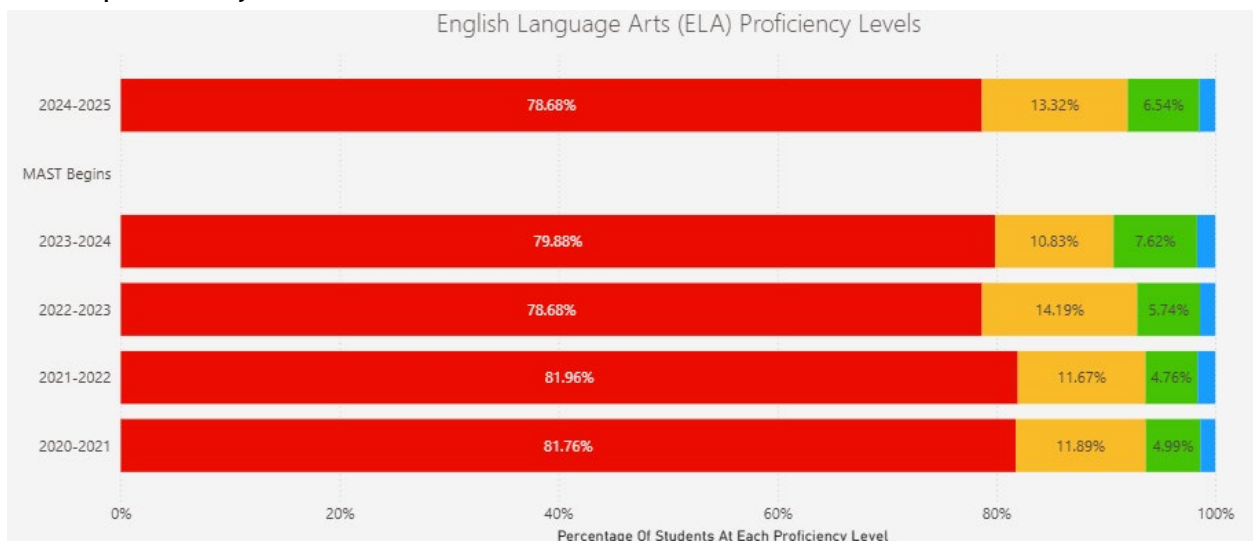
- The 2024-2025 school year brought the first year of Montana Aligned to Standards Through Year (MAST).
- ELA Proficiency Levels and Math Proficiency Levels both saw a slight increase in assessment data in 2024-2025 than previous years.

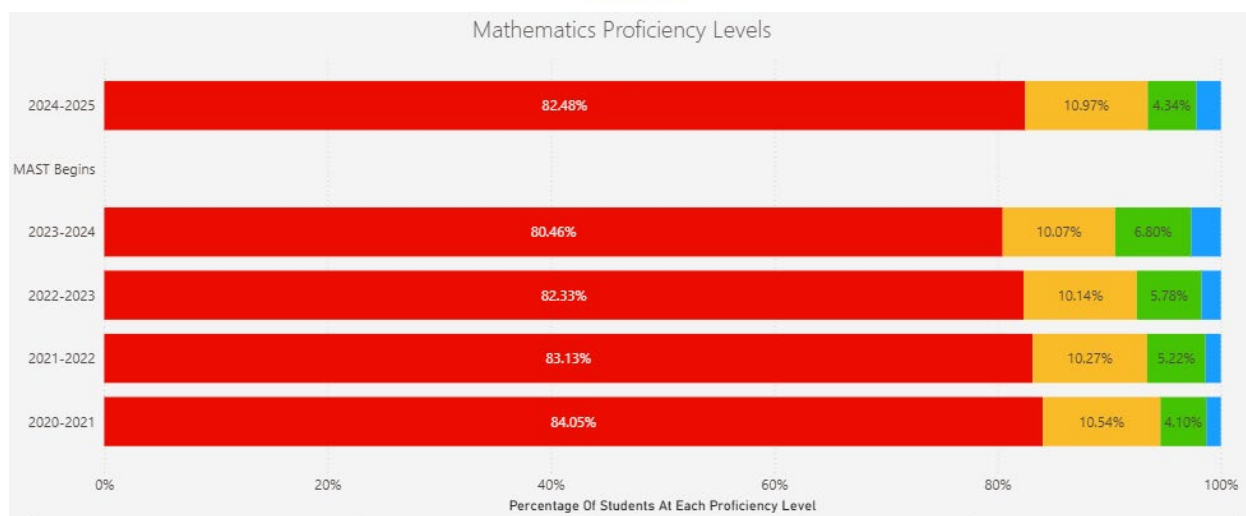




Montana Special Education Proficiency Rates for American Indian Students

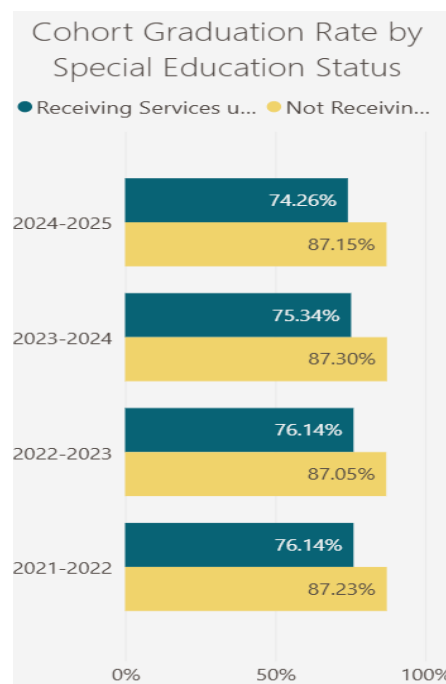
- ELA - a 2.49-percentage-point increase in students nearing proficiency
- Math -0.9% increase in Special Education American Indian Students nearing proficiency





Special Education Graduation Rates

Montana's special education students are graduating at a slightly higher rate (74.26%) than the national average as of the 21-22 school year (71%), according to NCES.





Federal Funding for Montana's Special Education Students

In FFY 2026, Montana was awarded \$46,432,766 in IDEA funds (\$45,978,367 in FFY 2025).

- \$6,077,281 (13.09%) is reserved for state-level activities:
 - Staffing and administration of IDEA at the OPI
 - Technical Assistance
 - Dispute Resolution
 - Monitoring of LEAs
 - Infinite Campus - Student Information System
 - Alternate Assessment for students with severe needs
 - Recruitment and Retention stipend programs - Special Education Endorsement Project, School Psychologists, Speech Language Pathologists
 - Para Pathways Project.
 - Leader Services for data collections, monitoring, and SPP/APR.
- \$40,355,485 is allocated to eligible districts and state-supported programs in Montana's 398 districts, Montana School for the Deaf & Blind, Yellowstone Academy, and Department of Corrections - Youth.
 - The 2026 district level allocation is an increase of \$330,000 due to supplementary funds awarded to the state to support Part C to Part B from the federal government.

In FFY 2026, Montana was awarded \$1,368,947 in IDEA preschool funds (a \$53,000 increase).

- 100% of these funds are passed on to the LEAs and State-Supported Programs.

State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG)

The SPDG has been instrumental in providing Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) training and coaching to Montana's school districts for the past 5 years. The current grant ends at the end of September 2026. Montana was recently awarded another SPDG by the Department of Education to continue our work around MTSS. Also included in the new SPDG is continued development of Level 3 of the Para Pathways Project (supporting paras through teacher licensure). Grant funds have been budgeted for scholarships to paras that have a desire to pursue their teaching licensure in special education. The application for the scholarships will be available by the end of September.



Montana Parapathways Report

Project Overview

The Montana Parapathways Program is a sequenced professional development program that includes three levels of training. It is designed for paraprofessionals, but can also support and train administrators, teachers, aides, and other school staff.

Level 1 Update

Level 1 consists of training modules through a program called LRP. Each takes ~ 1 hour to complete, and participants learn a wide range of topics in special education. Level 1 contains training modules that are 100% free to anyone who works in education in all of Montana. Additionally, teachers can complete certain Level 1 modules for renewal units.

- 1,052 total Level 1 users across all positions (paras, teachers, administrators, etc.)
- Over 20,000 training modules completed
- 500+ Special Education paraprofessionals enrolled in the Sped tech track
- This includes 233 Level 1 completers who mastered all 40 required modules
- This represents 53 of the 56 Montana counties

Level 2 Update

Level 2 entails 4 college-level courses that are customized for working educators and intended to enhance educator effectiveness. Each course is part of most Bachelor-degree programs across the US.

- In May 2026, 42 students officially finished Level 2
- Of these, 22 have already obtained class 9 Licensure and are working as Special Education Technicians in Montana schools
- DCC currently has 45 more Special Education technician students enrolled in Level 2 classes

Level 3 Update

Level 3 is focused on helping individuals work towards a teaching license. DCC helps each student through advising, whether at DCC or another college in Montana.

- Of the 42 Level 2 completers, 30 hope to become certified teachers
- 23 indicate that they want to earn a special education endorsement as well
- Several completers are working as emergency-licensed teachers
- One student was accepted into the Montana Teacher Apprenticeship Program



Montana Autism Education Project (MAEP)

The Montana Autism Education Project (MAEP) is a statewide initiative housed within the Special Education Professional Development Unit at the Montana Office of Public Instruction. Launched in 2010, the MAEP was created in response to a growing number of technical assistance and training requests from schools supporting students with autism spectrum disorder (ASD).

MAEP partnered with MSU Billings in August 2026 to host the 2nd Mountain West Neurodiversity Conference. The Conference featured nationally recognized speakers, Michelle Garcia Winner, Ben Hartranft, and Dr. Ross Greene. Key notes covered a wide range of topics associated with Neurodiversity including making sense of the spectrum, one kind person can change the world, and kids do well if they can.



[OPI 2026 Special Education Team](#)

ITEM 4

COMMISSIONER OF HIGHER EDUCATION
REPORT

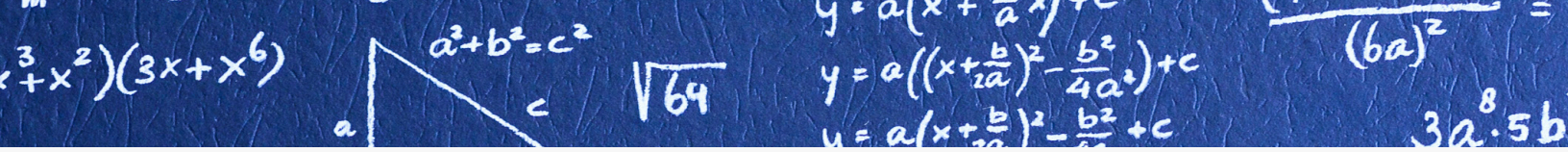
Dr. Angela McLean



Montana University System Report Montana Board of Public Education

September 2026

- Montana's Future at Work Grantees
- K-8 Licensed Middle School Math Professional Development
- MASS Meeting Attendance



STRENGTHEN YOUR MATH TEACHING

The MSUB College of Education offers opportunities for K-12 educators to deepen or refresh their content knowledge, explore effective teaching strategies, strengthen pedagogy, and bring new engaging ideas into the classroom.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR EDUCATORS

Math Methods K-8

Strengthen your mathematics instruction and explore practical, research-informed strategies for teaching math to K-8 learners.

Math Practicum

Support with concepts, problem-solving, and instructional approaches that can help build confidence in the classroom.

Elementary Math

Build and strengthen foundational knowledge while developing a deeper understanding of the concepts you teach.

Math Circle

An emerging opportunity designed to bring educators and learners together through collaborative and creative experiences.

**Connect with us
to explore which
opportunity is
right for you!**



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ITEM 5

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT

Lydia Comstock

❖ **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE – (Items 6-7)**

ITEM 6

**INFORMATION AND REVIEW OF
MONTANA SCHOOL BUS STANDARDS
RULEMAKING**

Dr. Tim Tharp



2022 Montana School Bus Standards Revisions

The OPI has updated the 2022 Montana School Bus Standards to align with the National Congress on School Transportation (NCST) standards, which are revised every five years. Under 20-10-111, MCA Montana reviews and adopts these standards for student transportation. These revisions are being submitted to the Board of Public Education for review.

The following information provides a detailed summary of revisions including individual pages that reflect these revisions.

General Updates:

Title Page: Update publication year to 2025

Title Page: Replacing the OPI logo with the Montana State Seal

Title Page: Updated the cover image

Acknowledgments: To be updated

Table of Contents: To be updated

Introduction:

- Updated language for clarity, consistency, and accuracy.
- Revised terminology and references to align with current standards.
- Refined wording throughout the Introduction.
- Updated content to reflect current practices.

Bus Rules Matrix

- Removed the Bus Rules Matrix to eliminate redundant information and improve document organization.

Bus Body and Chassis Systems:

- Formatting updated throughout the section consistency and readability.
- Applied formatting updates throughout the document.
- Standardized formatting throughout the document.
- Added Electric Vehicle (EV) requirements, including charging systems, high-voltage safety, vehicle identification, ignition systems, regenerative braking, DC-DC converters, and battery management system protections.

Electric Vehicle Requirements:

- Added new Electric Vehicle (EV) standards to establish requirements for electric school bus design, operation, and safety.
- Established charging system requirements, including compatibility with CCS, NACS, and SAE J1772 charging standards, as well as Level II AC and DC fast charging capabilities.
- Added requirements for high-voltage systems, including battery isolation, electrical protection, hazard labeling, and secure access to high-voltage components.
- Established requirements for DC-DC converters, ignition interlocks, regenerative braking, battery management system protections, and automatic system shutdowns.

- Added vehicle identification and battery disconnect labeling requirements to support emergency response and maintenance.

First Aid Kit /Body Fluids Clean up Inspection:

- Separated the First Aid Kit and Body Fluid Clean-Up Kit inspection forms from the standards to improve readability and reduce document length.

Mobile Data Device (Optional):

- Added standards for the optional use of Mobile Data Devices (MDDs), such as tablets or onboard electronic devices used for navigation, routing, communication, and other transportation-related functions.
- Included requirements for safe mounting and placement to prevent obstruction of the driver's view and vehicle controls.
- Required MDDs to be securely mounted to reduce safety hazards.
- Limited MDD functionality while the bus is in motion to minimize driver distraction.

Stop Arms:

- Renamed the section title from "Stop Signal Arm" to "Stop Arms."
- Consolidated all extended stop arm requirements into the Stop Arms section for improved organization and easier reference.

Specially Equipped School Buses:

- Updated the section to align with the National Congress on School Transportation (NCST) standards.
- Revised and reorganized language throughout the section to improve clarity and consistency while maintaining existing safety requirements.

Type E School Buses:

- Cleaned up language throughout the section to improve readability and consistency.

Alternative Fuels:

- Updated requirements for alternative fuel school buses, including CNG, LPG, biodiesel, and high-voltage battery-electric vehicles.
- Added standards for high-voltage battery-electric buses.
- Revised language for clarity and consistency.

Specification for School Bus Inspection:

- Retitled the section from Operations to Specification for School Bus Inspection to better reflect the section's focus on school bus inspection requirements.
- Relocated the section to follow Alternative Fuels, improving the organization and flow of the standards.

- Clarified inspection requirements and revised language for consistency and readability.

State Administration:

- Removed the State Administration section to keep the standards focused on school bus requirements and specifications.

Bus Driver Qualifications:

- Added the requirement that school transportation staff complete a fingerprint-based background check, in accordance with 20-3-323, MCA.

Limiting the Use of Electronic Devices:

- Clarified that school districts may not allow or require drivers to engage in texting while operating a school bus.
- Removed detailed definitions to simplify the section while retaining the emergency exception for communicating with law enforcement or emergency services.

Prohibition Against Using a Hand-Held Device:

- Clarified the prohibition on using hand-held electronic devices while operating a school bus.
- Added a prohibition on school districts allowing or requiring drivers to use electronic devices while driving.
- Simplified the section by removing detailed definitions and retaining exceptions for mounted route devices, emergencies, and two-way radios.

Prohibition Against Using Earphones:

- Expanded the prohibition to include earphones, headphones, earbuds, and other Bluetooth devices while operating a school bus.
- Removed detailed definitions to simplify the section.
- Retained the exception allowing the use of these devices when communicating with law enforcement or emergency services.

Drug and Alcohol Testing of Bus Drivers:

- Removed outdated references to specific FMCSA testing percentages, training requirements, and employer responsibilities.
- Simplified the section to focus on the federal drug and alcohol testing requirements applicable to school bus drivers.
- Updated references for clarity and consistency.

District Policy Guidelines:

- Added requirements for home parking of school buses, including written authorization, annual review, driver check-in procedures, fitness for duty, compliance with testing requirements, and audit documentation.
- Revised language throughout the section for clarity and consistency.

Transportation Special Circumstances:

- Updated the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act section to align with current federal guidance and requirements.
- Revised the section based on recommendations from OPI Federal Grants Coordinator Marisa Britton Bostwick.

Glossary of Terms and Definitions:

- Updated the glossary to add new terms, revise definitions, and remove outdated language.

National School Transportation Specification and Procedures:

- Removed sections containing outdated guidance and supplemental reference material, as this information is more appropriately maintained at the district level.

Human Resources Reference:

- Removed forms, checklists, and supplemental resources from the Montana School Bus Standards.
- Developed separate guidance documents so these resources remain available for school districts while keeping the standards focused on requirements.

Reference Locations:

- Removed reference links to prevent outdated or broken website links within the Montana School Bus Standards.

INTRODUCTION

The Montana Board of Public Education, with the guidance of the Office of Public Instruction and the Montana Department of Justice, promulgates these *School Bus Standards*, ~~with the advice of the Montana Office of Public Instruction and the Montana Department of Justice~~, in accordance with 20-10-111, MCA. The purpose of these School Bus Standards help is to promote ensure the safe, and efficient, and reliable transportation of students to and from school as well as to and from and on related school activities activity trips.

These ~~standards~~ are based on federal ~~regulation requirements~~, the 2015 National School Transportation Specifications and Procedures, ~~the specifications of the Society of Automobile Engineers~~, Montana Code Annotated (MCA), ~~Montana Administrative Rules of Montana (ARM)~~, and best practices outlined in the 2025 National School Transportation Specifications and Procedures.

These *School Bus Standards* apply to school buses and activity buses only and are ~~promulgated~~ guided with by the following guiding principles:

1. Ensure the construction and use of safe buses;
- ~~2.—Be consistent with the objectives of safety, security, and efficiency;~~
- ~~3.2.~~ Be consistent with Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSS);
- ~~3. —Be consistent~~ Align with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) Highway Safety Guideline ~~#17—Pupil Transportation Safety;~~
4. Promote safety, efficiency, and cost effectiveness;
5. Not unduly increase operation or production cost; and
6. Allow for state approval of ~~the use of~~ new technology and safety improvements. ~~consistent with safety, security, and efficiency.~~¹

~~School buses are the most regulated motor vehicle on the road.² School buses are designed differently than other motor vehicles increasing safety through the use of high visibility yellow, flashing lights, stop arms, and manufacturing requirements.³ The National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act requires the individual selling or leasing a new school bus to only sell or lease a vehicle that meets the Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards FMVSS. NHTSA defines a school bus as a vehicle with a capacity of 11 or more people, including the driving, that is sold or leased with the intent of transporting students to and from school or on activity trips.~~

~~It is appropriate to require higher levels of safety in transporting students to and from school, and school-related activities. Montana's School Bus Standards holds the highest level of safety and governs the requirements of the safest vehicle for transporting children—a school bus.~~

A school bus is the only primary authorized method of ~~transportation to~~ transporting children to and from school. Although ~~not recommended by~~ the Board of Public Education does not recommend the use of other vehicles, ~~School districts have historically used motor coaches to transport children on for school-school-related trips. In 2021, the Montana Legislature authorized permitted school districts to use passenger vehicles meeting that meet the specific statutory requirements to transport for transporting children on school trips.~~

NOTE:

1. The ~~National Highway Traffic Safety Administration NHTSA~~ regulates the manufacture and sale of new vehicles used to transport ~~preprimary early childhood education~~, primary, or secondary ~~school~~ students to ~~or and~~ from school or related events, ~~u~~ Unless the vehicle complies with the FMVSSs prescribed for school busses or Multifunction School Activity Buses (MFSABs), it cannot be used for student transportation. A school in Any violation of this requirement may ~~be subject to result in~~ substantial civil penalties under the National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act.

¹ ~~These guiding principles are based on the National Congress on School Transportation's Guiding Principles~~

<https://nasdpts.org/Guiding-Principles>

² National Highway Traffic Safety Administration <https://www.nhtsa.gov/road-safety/school-bus-safety>

³ National Highway Traffic Safety Administration <https://www.nhtsa.gov/road-safety/school-bus-safety>

2. ~~Local~~^{SS}School ~~D~~^districts must determine if the purchase of a new vehicle meets the federal requirements of a school bus and whether they may subject themselves to civil penalties.
3. ~~Local~~^{SS}School ~~d~~^Districts must carefully review the transportation options available to them and make the best decision to transport children safely.

These *School Bus Standards*:

1. Apply to *school buses* transporting children to and from school and on activity trips;
2. Do *NOT* apply to any vehicle transporting children that is not a school bus, including ~~Multi-Function School- and Activity Buses~~^{MFSAB}, Charter Buses, and passenger vehicles;

The Office of Public Instruction:

1. May assist school districts in understanding the *School Bus Standards*;
2. *CANNOT* provide legal advice, including
 - a. Who to hire as a school bus driver;
 - b. Whether a particular vehicle complies with the School Bus Standards; and
 - c. Whether using a motor coach or passenger vehicle to transport students complies with federal regulation.

Our ~~student's~~^{students'} safety during transportation is of utmost importance and we are committed to collaborating with local school districts, schools, law enforcement, and others to ensure the safe transportation of every child to and from school and on activity trips.

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MONTANA SCHOOL BUS TYPES



A **Type “A”** school bus is a van conversion or bus constructed utilizing a cutaway front-section vehicle with a left side driver’s door. The entrance door is behind the front wheels. The definition includes two classifications:

Type A-1, with a Gross Vehicle Weight Rating (GVWR) less than or equal to 10,000 pounds.



Type A-2, with a GVWR greater than 10,000 pounds.



A **Type “B”** school bus is constructed utilizing a stripped chassis. The entrance door is behind the front wheels. This definition includes two classifications: Type B-1, with a GVWR less than or equal to 10,000 pounds; and Type B-2, with a GVWR greater than 10,000 pounds



A **Type “C”** school bus is constructed utilizing a chassis with a hood and front fender assembly. The entrance door is behind the front wheels.



A **Type “D”** school bus is constructed utilizing a stripped chassis. The entrance door is ahead of the front wheels.



A **Type “E”** school bus is district-owned, is designed to carry 10 or fewer passengers, has an overall safety rating of five stars from the National Highway Traffic Ssafety Aadministration at the time of purchase, is insured in accordance with minimum coverage requirements set forth in 20-10-109, MCA, and is purchased after 7/1/2017.

BUS RULES MATRIX

The following matrix is designed to be a guide to using the document as it relates to each school bus type. If an area listed in the document is not specific to the bus type, please refer to this matrix when determining what rules apply.

Note: *The mechanical and equipment standards are in effect for all school buses manufactured on or after official adopted date, unless specifically stated otherwise. All operational standards are in affect for all school buses as of the effective date of these standards, unless specifically stated otherwise*

Section of Standards	Type-A	Type-B	Type-C	Type-D	Type-E
REPLACEMENT PARTS	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
AIR CLEANER	YES	YES	YES	YES	NA
AIR CONDITIONING SYSTEMS (OPTIONAL)	OPTIONAL	OPTIONAL	OPTIONAL	OPTIONAL	OPTIONAL
AISLE	YES	YES	YES	YES	NA
AXLES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NA
BACKUP WARNING ALARM	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
BRAKES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NA
BUMPER	YES	YES	YES	YES	NA
CEILING	YES	YES	YES	YES	NA
CERTIFICATION	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
CHAINS/TIRE	YES	YES	YES	YES	NA
COLOR	YES	YES	YES	YES	NA
CONSTRUCTION	YES	YES	YES	YES	NA
CROSSING CONTROL ARM	YES	YES	YES	YES	NA
DEFROSTERS	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
DOORS	YES	YES	YES	YES	NA
DRIVE SHAFT	YES	YES	YES	YES	NA
ELECTRICAL SYSTEM	YES	YES	YES	YES	NA
EMERGENCY EXITS	YES	YES	YES	YES	NA
EMERGENCY EQUIPMENT	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
EXHAUST SYSTEM	YES	YES	YES	YES	NA
FENDERS, FRONT	YES	YES	YES	YES	NA
FLOORS	YES	YES	YES	YES	NA
FRAME	YES	YES	YES	YES	NA
FUEL SYSTEM	YES	YES	YES	YES	NA
GOVERNOR	YES	YES	YES	YES	NA
HANDRAILS	YES	YES	YES	YES	NA
HEATING SYSTEM PROVISION	YES	YES	YES	YES	NA
HEATING AND AIR CONDITIONING SYSTEMS	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
HORN	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
HINGES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NA
IDENTIFICATION	YES	YES	YES	YES	NA
INSIDE HEIGHT	YES	YES	YES	YES	NA
INSTRUMENTS AND INSTRUMENT PANEL	YES	YES	YES	YES	NA

Section of Standards	Type-A	Type-B	Type-C	Type-D	Type-E
INSULATION	YES	YES	YES	YES	NA
INTERIOR	YES	YES	YES	YES	NA

LAMPS AND SIGNALS	YES	YES	YES	YES	NA
METAL TREATMENT	YES	YES	YES	YES	NA
MIRRORS	YES	YES	YES	YES	NA
MOUNTING	YES	YES	YES	YES	NA
OIL FILTER	YES	YES	YES	YES	NA
OPENINGS	YES	YES	YES	YES	NA
OVERALL LENGTH	YES	YES	YES	YES	NA
OVERALL WIDTH	YES	YES	YES	YES	NA
PASSENGER LOAD	YES	YES	YES	YES	NA
PUBLIC ADDRESS SYSTEM	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
RETARDER SYSTEM (OPTIONAL EQUIPMENT)	OPTIONAL	OPTIONAL	OPTIONAL	OPTIONAL	NA
RETRO-REFLECTIVE MATERIAL	YES	YES	YES	YES	NA
RUB RAILS	YES	YES	YES	YES	NA
SEATS AND RESTRAINING SYSTEM					
PASSENGER SEATING	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
SEAT, LAP AND SHOULDER BELTS	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
SEAT—PRE-SCHOOL AGE SEATING	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
DRIVER SEAT	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
DRIVER RESTRAINT SYSTEM	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
SEAT BELT CUTTER	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
SHOCK ABSORBERS	YES	YES	YES	YES	NA
SIDE SKIRTS	YES	YES	YES	YES	NA
STEERING GEAR	YES	YES	YES	YES	NA
STEPS	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
STEP TREADS	YES	YES	YES	YES	NA
STIRRUP STEPS	YES	YES	YES	YES	NA
STOP SIGNAL ARM	YES	YES	YES	YES	NA
STORAGE COMPARTMENT	YES	YES	YES	YES	NA
SUN SHIELD	YES	YES	YES	YES	NA
SUSPENSION SYSTEM	YES	YES	YES	YES	NA
THROTTLE	YES	YES	YES	YES	NA
TIRES AND RIMS	YES	YES	YES	YES	NA
TOWING ATTACHMENT POINTS	YES	YES	YES	YES	NA
TRACTION ASSISTING DEVICES (OPTIONAL)	YES	YES	YES	YES	NA
TRANSMISSION	YES	YES	YES	YES	NA
TRASH CONTAINER AND HOLDING DEVICE	YES	YES	YES	YES	NA
TURNING RADIUS	YES	YES	YES	YES	NA
UNDERCOATING	YES	YES	YES	YES	NA
VENTILATION	YES	YES	YES	YES	NA
WARNING STATEMENTS	YES	YES	YES	YES	NA
WHEEL HOUSING	YES	YES	YES	YES	NA

Section of Standards	Type-A	Type-B	Type-C	Type-D	Type-E
WINDOWS	YES	YES	YES	YES	NA
WINDSHIELD WASHERS	YES	YES	YES	YES	NA
WINDSHIELD WIPERS	YES	YES	YES	YES	NA

SPECIALLY EQUIPPED SCHOOL BUSES SECTION					
AISLES	IF EQUIP	IF EQUIP	IF EQUIP	IF EQUIP	NA
COMMUNICATIONS	IF EQUIP	IF EQUIP	IF EQUIP	IF EQUIP	IF EQUIP
GLAZING	IF EQUIP	IF EQUIP	IF EQUIP	IF EQUIP	NA
IDENTIFICATION	IF EQUIP	IF EQUIP	IF EQUIP	IF EQUIP	IF EQUIP
PASSENGER CAPACITY RATING	IF EQUIP	IF EQUIP	IF EQUIP	IF EQUIP	IF EQUIP
POWER LIFTS	IF EQUIP	IF EQUIP	IF EQUIP	IF EQUIP	IF EQUIP
REGULAR SERVICE ENTRANCE	IF EQUIP	IF EQUIP	IF EQUIP	IF EQUIP	NA
RESTRAINING DEVICES	IF EQUIP	IF EQUIP	IF EQUIP	IF EQUIP	IF EQUIP
SEATING ARRANGEMENTS	IF EQUIP	IF EQUIP	IF EQUIP	IF EQUIP	IF EQUIP
SECUREMENT/RESTRAINT SYSTEM FOR WHEELCHAIR/MOBILITY AID AND OCCUPANT	IF EQUIP	IF EQUIP	IF EQUIP	IF EQUIP	IF EQUIP
SPECIAL LIGHT	IF EQUIP	IF EQUIP	IF EQUIP	IF EQUIP	NA
SPECIAL SERVICE ENTRANCE	IF EQUIP	IF EQUIP	IF EQUIP	IF EQUIP	NA
SPECIAL SERVICE ENTRY DOORS	IF EQUIP	IF EQUIP	IF EQUIP	IF EQUIP	NA
SUPPORT EQUIPMENT AND ACCESSORIES	IF EQUIP	IF EQUIP	IF EQUIP	IF EQUIP	IF EQUIP
TECHNOLOGY AND EQUIPMENT, NEW	IF EQUIP	IF EQUIP	IF EQUIP	IF EQUIP	IF EQUIP
TYPE E SCHOOL BUSES					
GENERAL VEHICLE REQUIREMENTS	NA	NA	NA	NA	YES
RECOMMENDED REQUIREMENTS	NA	NA	NA	NA	YES
OPERATIONAL REQUIREMENTS	NA	NA	NA	NA	YES
ALTERNATIVE FUELS	NA	NA	NA	NA	YES
OPERATIONS					
SCHOOL BUSES AND TRANSPORTATION	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
SEMI-ANNUAL BUS INSPECTIONS	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
SCHOOL TRAVEL CHOICES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
STATE ADMINISTRATION	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
USE OF BUS AUDIO/VIDEO MONITORING SYSTEMS	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
BUS DRIVER QUALIFICATIONS					
BUS DRIVER LICENSING	YES	YES	YES	YES	PARTIAL
DRUG AND ALCOHOL TESTING OF BUS DRIVERS	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
DRIVER IN SERVICE TRAINING PROGRAM	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
DISTRICT POLICY GUIDELINES					
ADVERTISING ON A SCHOOL BUS	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
SCHOOL BUS STOPS	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
DESIGNATED STOPS	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
PROHIBITED SCHOOL BUS STOPS	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES

Section of Standards	Type-A	Type-B	Type-C	Type-D	Type-E
SPEED LIMITS	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
TRANSPORTATION SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES					
MCKINNEY-VENTO HOMELESS ASSISTANCE ACT OVERVIEW	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
EVERY STUDENT SUCCEEDS ACT OVERVIEW	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
SEATING REQUIREMENTS					
SCHOOL BUS EVACUATIONS	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
EVACUATION PROCEDURES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
TRANSPORTATION FOR SCHOOL RELATED ACTIVITY FUNCTIONS					
GENERAL REQUIREMENTS OF TRANSPORTATION FOR SCHOOL RELATED ACTIVITIES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
PASSENGER VANS—ACTIVITY AND SCHOOL RELATED	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
TRAINING	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES

INTRODUCTION TO SCHOOL BUS SPECIFICATIONS

The School Bus Standards outline Bus Body and Chassis Specifications, Specially Equipped School Bus Specifications, Specifications for School Bus Inspection, Alternative Fuel and other related standards. These standards establish the requirements that manufacturers, school districts, and maintenance personnel must follow to ensure safety and compliance with state and federal regulations.

For new vehicles, manufacturers are responsible for meeting all applicable standards at the time of production. Once in service, it becomes the responsibility of school districts and operators to maintain compliance through inspections, proper repairs, and the use of quality parts.

BUS BODY AND CHASIS SYSTEMS

REPLACEMENT PARTS

The ~~Standards for School Buses in Montana~~ School Bus Standards apply to all new school buses to be used to transport students in Montana. Although it is recommended that used school buses be re-equipped with parts and supplies that meet the construction standards as they are replaced through periodic maintenance and repair, it is not intended that the requirements of these standards preclude the use of replacement parts or supplies that do not meet these higher standards when said parts and supplies are not readily available for emergency and/or roadside repairs. Further, it is not intended that the use of such regular parts, because of the lack of readily availability, should incur increased liability to the operator or district should damages or risk occur because of the use or failure of that part or supply when such district or operator has acted in good faith in making the emergency and/or roadside repair(s). If emergency and/or roadside repairs are made with regular standard parts, or supplies, it is recommended that said parts or supplies be replaced by parts or supplies which meet or exceed the standards for school buses in Montana within 60 days. ARM 10.64.342.

AIR CLEANER

1. ~~The engine intake A dry element~~ air cleaner ~~shall be provided. system shall be furnished and properly installed by the chassis manufacturer to meet engine manufacturer's specifications.~~
2. All diesel engine air filters shall include a latch-type restriction indicator that retains the maximum restriction developed during operation of the engine. The indicator should include a reset control so the indicator can be returned to zero when desired. The indicator should not reduce or replace the timing for

regular maintenance.

AIR CONDITIONING SYSTEMS (OPTIONAL)

The following specifications are applicable to all types of school buses that may be equipped with air conditioning. This section is divided into two parts. Part A covers performance specifications and Part B covers other requirements applicable to all buses.

1. Performance Specifications

- a. The installed air conditioning system should cool the interior of the bus down to at least 80 degrees Fahrenheit, measured at a minimum of three points, located four feet above the floor at the longitudinal centerline of the bus. The three points shall be:
 - i. near the driver's location;
 - ii. at the midpoint of the body; and
 - iii. two feet forward of the emergency door, or, for Type D rear-engine buses, two feet forward of the end of the aisle.
- b. The test conditions under which the above performance must be achieved shall consist of:
 - i. placing the bus in a room (such as a paint booth) where ambient temperature can be maintained at 100 degrees Fahrenheit;
 - ii. heat soaking the bus at 100 degrees Fahrenheit with windows open for at least one hour; and
 - iii. closing windows, turning on the air conditioner with the engine running at the chassis manufacturer's recommended low idle speed, and cooling the interior of the bus to 80 degrees Fahrenheit or lower within a maximum of 30 minutes while maintaining 100 degrees Fahrenheit outside temperature.
- c. Alternately, and at the user's discretion, this test may be performed under actual summer conditions, which consist of temperatures above 85 degrees Fahrenheit, humidity above 50 percent with normal sun loading of the bus and the engine running at the engine manufacturer's recommended low idle speed. After a minimum of one hour of heat soaking, the system shall be turned on and must provide a minimum 20 degrees temperature drop in the 30-minute time limit.
- d. The manufacturer shall provide facilities for the user or user's representative to confirm that a pilot model of each bus design meets the above performance requirements.

2. Other Requirements

- a. Evaporator cases, lines and ducting (as equipped) shall be designed in such a manner that all condensation is effectively drained to the exterior of the bus below the floor level under all conditions of vehicle movement and without leakage on any interior portion of bus.
- b. Any evaporator or ducting system shall be designed and installed to be free of injury-prone projections or sharp edges. Any ductwork shall be installed so that exposed edges face the front of the bus and do not present sharp edges.
- c. On specially equipped school buses, the evaporator and ducting (if used) shall be placed high enough that they will not obstruct occupant securement shoulder strap upper attachment points. This clearance shall be provided along the entire length of the passenger area on both sides of the bus interior to allow for potential retrofitting of new wheelchair positions and occupant securement devices throughout the bus.
- d. The body may be equipped with insulation, including sidewalls, roof, firewall, and rear, inside body bows and plywood or composite floor insulation to aid in heat dissipation and reflection.
- e. All glass (windshield, service and emergency doors, side and rear windows) may be equipped with maximum integral tinting allowed by federal, state, or [American National Standards Institute ANSI](#) standards for the respective locations, except that windows rear of the driver's compartment, if tinted shall have approximately 28 percent light transmission.
- f. Electrical generating capacity shall be provided to accommodate the additional electrical demands imposed by the air conditioning system.
- g. Roofs may be painted white to aid in heat dissipation.

- h. Air intake for any evaporator assembly (ies), except for front evaporator of Type A-1, shall be equipped with replaceable air filter(s) accessible without disassembly of evaporator case.

AISLE

All emergency exit doors shall be accessible by a 12-inch minimum aisle. The aisle shall always be unobstructed ~~always by any type of barrier, seat, wheelchair or tie-down~~, unless a flip seat is installed and occupied. The track of a track seating system is exempt from this requirement. A flip seat in the unoccupied (up) position shall not obstruct the 12-inch minimum aisle to any side emergency exit door.

AXLES

The front and rear axle and suspension systems shall have Gross Axle Weight Rating (GAWR) at ground commensurate with the respective front and rear weight loads of the bus loaded to the rated passenger capacity.

BACKUP WARNING ALARM

An automatic audible alarm shall be installed behind the rear axle and shall comply with the published Backup Alarm Standards of Society of Automotive Engineers (SAE) J994B, providing a minimum of 112 dBA for rubber-tired vehicles required on buses ordered after the effective date.

BACK-UP CAMERA (OPTIONAL)

A back-up camera may be installed to view the area of restricted visibility to the rear of the bus. If installed:

1. The back-up camera shall only activate when the bus is in reverse.
2. The monitor to view the back-up camera video:
 - a. May be integrated into the interior rearview mirror, or
 - b. May be integrated as part of the dashboard.

BRAKES

1. General Brakes

- a. The chassis brake system shall conform to the provisions of Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSS) No. 105, Hydraulic and Electric Brake Systems, No. 106, Brake Hoses, and No. 121, Air Brake Systems as applicable.
- b. All buses shall have either a parking pawl in the transmission or a park brake interlock that require the service brake to be applied to allow release of the parking brake.
- c. The anti-lock brake system (ABS), provided in accordance with FMVSS No. 105, or No. 121, shall provide wheel speed sensors for each front wheel and for each wheel on at least one rear axle. The system shall provide anti-lock braking performance for each wheel equipped with sensors. (Four-Channel System)
- d. All brake systems shall be designed to permit visual inspection of brake lining wear without removal of any chassis component(s).
- e. The brake lines, booster-assist lines, and control cables shall be protected from excessive heat, vibration and corrosion and shall be installed in a manner that prevents chafing.
- f. The parking brake system for either air or hydraulic service brake systems may be of a power-assisted design. The power parking brake actuator should be a push-pull device located on the instrument panel within seated reach of a 5th percentile female driver. As an option, the parking brake may be set by placing the automatic transmission shift control mechanism in the "park" position.
- g. The power-operated parking brake system may be interlocked to the engine key switch. Once the parking brake has been set and the ignition switch turned to the "off" position, the parking brake cannot be released until the key switch is turned back to the "on" position.

2. Hydraulic Brakes

Buses using hydraulic-assist brakes shall meet requirements of FMVSS No. 105.

3. Air Brakes

- a. The air pressure supply system shall include a desiccant-type air dryer installed per the manufacturers' recommendations. The air pressure storage tank system may incorporate an automatic drain valve.
- b. The chassis manufacturer should provide a necessary outlet for air-operated systems installed by the body manufacturer. This outlet shall include a pressure protection valve.
- c. For air brake systems, a dual air pressure gauge shall be provided in the instrument panel capable of complying with Commercial Driver's License (CDL) pre-trip inspection requirements.
- d. Air brake systems may include a system for anti-compounding of the service brakes and parking brakes.
- e. Air brakes shall have both a visible and audible warning device when the air pressure falls below the level where warnings are required under FMVSS No.121.

BUMPER

1. Front Bumpers

- a. All school buses shall be equipped with a front bumper. The front bumper shall be furnished by the chassis manufacturer as part of the chassis on all types of chassis unless there is a specific arrangement between the chassis manufacturer and body manufacturer that the body manufacturer will furnish the front bumper.
- b. The front bumper shall be of pressed steel channel or equivalent material (except Type A buses having a Gross Vehicle Weight Rating (GVWR) of 14,500 pounds or less which may be Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) supplied at least 3/16 inches thick and not less than eight inches wide (high). It shall extend beyond the forward-most part of the body, grille, hood, and fenders and shall extend to the outer edges of the fenders at the bumper's top line.
- c. The front bumper, except breakaway bumper ends, shall be of sufficient strength to permit pushing a vehicle of equal gross vehicle weight without permanent distortion to the bumper, chassis, or body.
- d. Tow eyes or hooks shall be furnished and attached so as not to project beyond the front bumper. Tow eyes or hooks attached to the frame chassis shall be furnished by the chassis manufacturer or by the body manufacturer. This installation shall be in accordance with the chassis manufacturer's standards. Note: Rear tow eyes are addressed in the Bus Body Specifications under Towing Attachment Points.
- e. The bumper shall be designed or reinforced so that it will not deform when the bus is lifted by a chain that is passed under the bumper (or through the bumper if holes are provided for this purpose) and attached to both tow eyes. To meet this standard, the bus shall be empty and positioned on a level, hard surface and both tow eyes shall share the load equally.
- f. Bumper Accessories (Grill Guards): Any addition to the front bumper such as grill guards shall not hinder or obstruct (FMVSS requirements) mirrors, signals, lights and/or license plates. The addition shall be painted flat black. The addition shall not be so substantial that it changes the Gross Vehicle Weight Rating (GVWR). The addition of a grill guard is prohibited on Type A buses.

2. Front Bumpers – Energy Absorbing

- a. On a Type "D" school bus, if the chassis manufacturer does not provide a bumper, it shall be provided by the body manufacturer. The bumper will conform to the standards in the chassis section.
- b. An optional energy-absorbing front bumper may be used, providing its design shall incorporate a self-restoring energy-absorbing system of sufficient strength to:
 - i. Push another vehicle of similar GVWR without permanent distortion to the bumper, chassis, or body; and
 - ii. Withstand repeated impacts without damage to the bumper, chassis, or body per the following performance standards:
 - 7.5 mph fixed-barrier impact (Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSS) cart and barrier test)
 - 4.0 mph corner impact at 30 degrees (Part 581, CFR Title 49)
 - 20.0 mph into parked passenger car (Type B, C, and D buses of 18,000 lbs. GVWR or more)
- c. The manufacturers of the energy-absorbing system shall provide evidence from an approved test

facility (capable of performing the above FMVSS tests) that their product conforms to the above standard.

3. Rear Bumpers

- a. The bumper shall be pressed steel channel at least 3/16-inch-thick or equivalent strength material (except for Type A buses). Type A-1 buses bumper shall be a minimum of 8 inches wide (high) and Type A-2, B, C and D buses shall be a minimum of 9.5 inches wide (high). The bumper shall be of sufficient strength to permit being pushed by another vehicle without permanent distortion.
- b. The bumper shall be wrapped around back corners of the bus. It shall extend forward at least 12 inches, measured from the rear-most point of the body at the floor line and shall be flush mounted to body side or protected with an end panel.
- c. The bumper shall be attached to the chassis frame in such a manner that it may be easily removed. It shall be so braced as to withstand impact from a rear or side impact. It shall be so attached as to discourage hitching of rides.
- d. The bumper shall extend at least 1 inch beyond rear-most part of body surface measured at the floor line.
- e. The bottom of the rear bumper shall not be more than 30 inches above ground level.

CEILING

See ~~INSULATION and INTERIOR~~. This specification requires inner lining on ceilings and walls. If the ceiling is constructed with lap joints, the forward panel shall be lapped by rear panel and exposed edges shall be beaded, hemmed, flanged or otherwise treated to minimize sharp edges. Buses may be equipped with a storage compartment for tools, tire chains and/or tow chains. (See BUS BODY AND BODY SPECIFICATIONS, Storage Compartment.)

CERTIFICATION

1. Body manufacturer shall, upon request, certify to the state agency having pupil transportation jurisdiction that their product meets state standards on items not covered by certification issued under requirements of the National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act.
2. The chassis manufacturer will, upon request, certify to the state agency having pupil transportation jurisdiction that their product meets minimum standards on items not covered by certification issued under requirements of the National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act.

CHAINS/TIRE

See WHEEL HOUSING.

COLOR

1. The chassis, including wheels and front bumper, shall be black. The Bus body, body cowl, hood, and fenders shall be in National School Bus Yellow (NSBY). The flat top surface of the hood may be non-reflective black or NSBY. (See ~~APPENDIX B – NATIONAL SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION SPECIFICATION AND PROCEDURES~~.)
2. The body exterior paint trim, bumper and bumper accessories, lamp hoods, rub rails, and emergency door lettering and arrow shall be black. The full width of the rub rails shall be painted black.
3. Optionally the roof of the bus may be painted white extending down to the drip rails on the sides of the body except that front and rear roof caps shall remain NSBY.
4. Multi-Function School Activity Buses (MFSABs) shall be exempt from these color requirements.

CONSTRUCTION

1. Side Intrusion Test: The bus body shall be constructed to withstand an intrusion force equal to the curb weight of the vehicle; but shall not exceed 20,000 pounds, whichever is less. Each vehicle shall meet this requirement when tested in accordance with the procedures set forth below.

- a. The complete body structure, or a representative seven-body section mock up with seats installed, shall be load-tested at a location 24 inches plus or minus two inches above the floor line, with a maximum 10-inch diameter cylinder, 48 inches long, mounted in a horizontal plane.
 - b. The cylinder shall be placed as close as practical to the mid-point of the tested structure, spanning two internal vertical structural members. The cylinder shall be statically loaded to the required force of curb weight or 20,000 pounds, whichever is less, in a horizontal plane with the load applied from the exterior toward the interior of the test structure. Once the minimum load has been applied, the penetration of the loading cylinder into the passenger compartment shall not exceed a maximum of 10 inches from its original point of contact. There can be no separation of lapped panels or construction joints. Punctures, tears or breaks in the external panels are acceptable but are not permitted on any adjacent interior panel.
 - c. Body companies shall certify compliance with this intrusion requirement, including test results, if requested.
2. Construction shall be reasonably dust-proof and watertight.

CROSSING CONTROL ARM

1. All school buses manufactured on/after January 1, 2010 may be equipped with a crossing control arm mounted on the right side of the front bumper. This arm, when opened, shall extend in a line parallel with the body side and positioned on a line with the right-side wheels.
2. All electrical components of the crossing control arm shall be potted and all exterior connections shall be weatherproofed.
3. The crossing control arm shall incorporate system connectors (electrical, vacuum, or air) at the gate and shall be easily removable to allow for towing of the bus.
4. The crossing control arm shall meet or exceed [Society of Automotive Engineers \(SAE\) Standard J1133](#).
5. The crossing control arm shall be constructed of noncorrosive or nonferrous material or treated in accordance with the body sheet metal standard (see [METAL TREATMENT](#))
6. There shall be no sharp edges or projections that could cause hazard or injury to students.
7. The crossing control arm shall extend approximately 70 inches (measured from the bumper at the arm assembly attachment point) from the front bumper when in the extended position. The crossing control arm shall not extend past the end of the bumper when in the stowed position.
8. The crossing control arms shall extend simultaneously with the stop arm(s) by means of the stop arm controls.
9. An automatic recycling interrupt switch should be installed for temporary disabling of the crossing control arm.
10. The assembly shall include a device attached to the bumper near the end of the arm to automatically retain the arm while in the stowed position. That device shall not interfere with normal operations of the crossing control arm.

DEFROSTERS

1. Defrosting and defogging equipment shall direct a sufficient flow of heated air onto the windshield, the window to the left of the driver, and the glass in the viewing area directly to the right of the driver to eliminate frost, fog and snow.
2. The defrosting system shall conform to [Society of Automotive Engineers \(SAE\) Standards J381 and J382](#).
3. The defroster and defogging system shall be capable of furnishing heated outside ambient air, except the part of the system furnishing additional air to the windshield; entrance door and step well may be of the recirculating air type.
4. Portable heaters shall not be used.

DOORS

1. A primary entrance door shall be in the driver's control, and designed to afford easy release and provide a

positive latching device on manual operating doors to prevent accidental opening. When a hand lever is used, no part shall come together that will shear or crush fingers. Manual door controls shall not require more than 25 pounds of force to operate at any point throughout the range of operation as tested on a 10 percent grade both uphill and downhill.

2. The primary entrance door shall be located on the right side of the bus, opposite and within direct view of the driver.
 - a. The entrance door shall have a minimum horizontal opening of 24 inches and a minimum vertical opening of 68 inches.
 - b. The entrance door shall be a split-type, outward opening type. (Split-type door includes any sectioned door, which divides and opens inward or outward.) If one section of a split-type door opens inward and the other opens outward, the front section shall open outward.
 - c. Lower, as well as, upper door panels shall be of approved safety glass with frost-free glazing. The bottom of each lower glass panel shall not be more than 10 inches from the top surface of the bottom step. The top of each upper glass panel when viewed from the interior shall not be more than three inches below the interior door control cover or header pad.
 - d. Vertical closing edges on split-type or folding-type entrance doors shall be equipped with flexible material to protect children's fingers.
 - e. There shall be no door to left of driver on Type B, C or D vehicles. All Type A vehicles may be equipped with chassis manufacturer's standard door.
 - f. All doors shall be equipped with padding at the top edge of each door opening. Padding shall be at least three inches wide and one inch thick and extend the full width of the door opening.
 - i. On power-operated entrance doors, the emergency release valve, switch or device to release the service door must be placed above or to the immediate left or right of the service door and clearly labeled. The emergency release valve, switch or device shall work in the absence of power.

DRIVE SHAFT

The drive shaft shall be protected by a metal guard or guards around the circumference of the drive shaft to reduce the possibility of whipping through the floor or dropping to the ground if broken.

ELECTRICAL SYSTEM

1. Battery
 - a. The storage battery shall have minimum cold cranking capacity rating equal to the cranking current required for 30 seconds at 0 degrees Fahrenheit (-17.80 C) and a minimum reserve capacity rating of 120 minutes at 25 amps. Higher capacities may be required depending upon optional equipment and local environmental conditions depending upon manufactures' recommendations.
 - b. The manufacturer shall securely attach the battery on a slide-out or swing-out tray in a closed, vented compartment in the body skirt or chassis frame so that the battery is accessible for convenient servicing from the outside. When in the stored position, the tray shall be retained by a securing mechanism capable of holding the tray [with battery (ies)] in position when subjected to a 5g load from any direction. The battery compartment door or cover if separate from the tray shall be hinged at the front. It shall be secured by a positive operated latching system or other type fastener. The door may be an integral part of the battery slide tray. The door or cover must fit tightly to the body, and not present sharp edges or snagging points. Any chassis frame mounted batteries shall be located in a battery compartment on Type A buses.
 - c. All batteries are to be secured in a sliding tray except that van conversion or cutaway front-section chassis batteries may be secured in accordance with the manufacturer's standard configuration. In these cases, the final location of the battery and the appropriate cable lengths shall be per the [School Bus Manufacturers Institute \(SBMI\)](#) Design Objectives Booklet, 1990 edition, or as mutually agreed upon by the chassis and body manufacturer. In all cases, however, the battery cable

provided with the chassis shall have sufficient length to allow some slack.

- d. Buses may be equipped with a battery shut-off switch. The switch is to be placed in a location not readily accessible to the driver or passengers.

2. Alternator

- a. All Type A and Type B buses with a Gross Vehicle Weight Rating (GVWR) up to 15,000 lbs. GVWR shall have a minimum 130-ampere alternator. Buses equipped with an electrically powered wheelchair lift and/or air Buses equipped with an electrically powered wheelchair lift and/or air conditioning shall be equipped with the highest rated capacity available from the chassis be Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM).
- b. All buses over 15,000 lbs. GVWR shall be equipped with a heavy-duty truck or bus-type alternator, having a minimum output rating of 160 200 amperes or higher and shall produce a minimum current output of 50 percent of the rating at engine idle speed.
- c. Buses not addressed in (a) above equipped with an electrically powered wheelchair lift and/or air conditioning, shall have a minimum alternator output of 240 amps and may be equipped with a device that monitors the electrical system voltage and advances the engine idle speed when the voltage drops to, or below, a pre-set level.
- d. A belt alternator drive shall handle the rated capacity of the alternator with no detrimental effect on other driven components. (See GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND DEFINITIONS).
- e. A direct/gear-drive alternator is permissible in lieu of belt drive.

3. Electrical Components

- a. Materials in all electrical components shall contain no mercury.

4. Wiring, Chassis

- a. All wiring shall conform to current applicable recommended practices of the Society of Automotive Engineers (SAE).
- b. All wiring shall use color and at least one other method of identification. The other method shall be either a number code or name code, and each chassis shall be delivered with a wiring diagram that illustrates the wiring of the chassis.
- c. Chassis manufacturer shall install a readily accessible terminal strip or plug on the body side of the cowl, or in an accessible location in the engine compartment of vehicles designed without a cowl. The strip or plug shall contain the following terminals for the body connections:
 - i. Main 100-amp body circuit;
 - ii. Tail-lamps;
 - iii. Right-turn signal;
 - iv. Left-turn signal;
 - v. Stop lamps;
 - vi. Backup lamps; and
 - vii. Instrument panel lights (rheostat controlled by dimmer switch).
 - viii. An appropriate identifying diagram (color and number coded) for electrical circuits shall be provided to the body manufacturer for distribution to the end user.
 - ix. Headlight system must be wired separately from the body-controlled solenoid.
 - x. A daytime running lamps system shall be provided.

5. Wiring, Body

- a. All wiring shall conform to current SAE Sstandards.
- b. All wiring shall have an amperage capacity exceeding the design load by at least 25%. All wiring splices are to be accessible and noted as splices on the wiring diagram.
- c. A body wiring diagram, sized to be easily read, shall be furnished with each bus body or affixed to an area convenient to the electrical accessory control panel.
- d. The body power wire shall be attached to the special terminal on the chassis.
- e. Each wire passing through metal openings shall be protected by a grommet.
- f. Wires not enclosed within the body shall be fastened securely at intervals of not more than 18 inches.

All joints shall be soldered or joined by equally effective connectors, which shall be water- resistant and corrosion-resistant.

- g. Wiring shall be arranged in circuits, as required, with each circuit protected by a fuse or circuit breaker. A system of color and number coding shall be used and an appropriate identifying diagram shall be provided to the end user along with the wiring diagram provided by the chassis manufacturer. The wiring diagrams shall be specific to the bus model supplied and include any changes to wiring made by the body manufacturer. Chassis wiring diagrams shall also be supplied to the end user. A system of color and number coding shall be used on buses. The following body interconnecting circuits shall be color-coded as noted:

<u>FUNCTION</u>	<u>COLOR</u>
Left Rear Directional Light	Yellow
Right Rear Directional Light	Dark Green
Stoplights	Red
Back-up Lights	Blue
Taillights	Brown
Ground	White
Ignition Feed, Primary Feed	Black

- i. The color of cables shall correspond to SAE J 1128, Low-Tension Primary Cable.
- ii. Wiring shall be arranged in at least six regular circuits as follows:
- Head, tail, stop (brake) clearance and instrument panel lamps;
 - Step well lamps (shall be actuated when service door is opened);
 - Dome lamps;
 - Ignition and emergency door signal;
 - Turn signal lamps; and
 - Alternately flashing signal lamps.
 - Any of the above combination circuits may be subdivided into additional independent circuits.
 - Heaters and defrosters shall be wired on an independent circuit.
 - When possible, all other electrical functions (such as sanders and electric-type windshield wipers) shall be provided with independent and properly protected circuits.
 - Each body circuit shall be coded by number or letter on a diagram of circuits and shall be attached to the body in a readily accessible location.
- h. Buses may be equipped with a 12-volt power port in the driver's area.
- i. There shall be a manual noise suppression switch installed in the control panel. The switch shall be labeled and alternately colored. This switch shall be an on/off type that deactivates body equipment that produces noise, including, at least, the AM/FM radio, heaters, air conditioners, fans and defrosters. This switch shall not deactivate safety systems, such as windshield wipers or lighting systems.
- j. The entire electrical system of the body shall be designed for the same voltage as the chassis on which the body is mounted.

EMERGENCY EXITS

All installed emergency exits shall comply with the requirements of [Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards \(FMVSS\) No. 217](#).

1. Emergency door requirements
 - a. The exposed area of the upper panel of emergency doors shall have a minimum of 400 square inches of approved safety glazing.
 - b. If installed, all other glass panels on emergency doors shall be approved safety glazing.
 - c. There shall be no steps leading to an emergency door.
 - d. The emergency door(s) shall be equipped with padding at the top edge of each door opening. Padding shall be at least three inches wide and 1 inch thick, and extend the full width of the door opening.

- e. There shall be no obstruction higher than 1/4 inch across the bottom of any emergency door opening. Fasteners used within the emergency exit opening shall be free of sharp edges or burrs.
 - f. The rear emergency window shall have an assisted lifting device that will aid in lifting and holding the rear emergency window open.
2. Roof hatches
 - a. Roof hatches shall be installed without the use of fasteners on the exterior of the bus.
 - b. The materials used in the construction of the exterior portion of the roof hatch lid shall be such type as to protect the lid from discoloration and degradation from the UV light.
 3. Emergency exit requirements
 - a. Type A, B, C, and D vehicles shall be equipped with a total number of emergency exits as follows for the indicated capacities of vehicles.
 - i. 0 to 42 Passengers = 1 emergency exit per side and 1 roof hatch.
 - ii. 43 to 78 Passengers = 2 emergency exits per side and 2 roof hatches.
 - iii. 79 to 90 Passengers = 3 emergency exits per side and 2 roof hatches.
 - b. Side emergency exit windows when installed may be vertically hinged on the forward side of the window. No side emergency exit window will be located above the stop arm.
 - c. Each emergency exit above shall comply with FMVSS No. 217. The emergency exits listed in 3 a above are in addition to the rear emergency door or rear emergency window.
 - d. In addition to the audible warning required on emergency doors by FMVSS No. 217, additional emergency exits may also be equipped with an audible warning device.

ELECTRICAL VEHICLE CHARGING PORT

1. The high-voltage batteries shall be equipped with a system that allows the batteries to be charged via a connection to the local electrical utility grid. This connection shall be a Combined Charging System (CCS), North American Charging Standard (NACS), or SAE J1772, compatible with the charging equipment.
2. The charging receptacle/port shall be mounted/located in accordance with the manufacturer standards. The receptacle shall accommodate the minimum requirements for Level II AC charging and DC fast charging.

ELECTRICAL VEHICLE DC-DC CONVERTER

1. A DC-DC converter shall be provided and deliver a minimum of 200 amps at 12 VDC.
2. The converter system shall incorporate a Ground Fault Interrupt (GFI) that disconnects/isolates the high-voltage batteries in the event of a short circuit or water intrusion.

ELECTRICAL VEHICLE HIGH-VOLTAGE SYSTEM

High Voltage-Powered Vehicles: Buses utilizing a high voltage propulsion system (60 VDC or 30 VAC) shall comply with the following:

1. The propulsion power source (batteries, fuel cells, etc.) shall be located outside the passenger compartment.
2. The propulsion power source enclosure shall be constructed to conform to the power source manufacturer's requirements and recommendations.
3. Wire, cable, and conductor insulation in the High Voltage System shall provide adequate insulation for the voltage used and for ambient temperatures ranging from -15°F to 120°F. All high voltage wiring/cabling shall be covered with bright orange loom or otherwise labeled as HIGH VOLTAGE.
4. All high voltage circuits shall provide adequate and automatic protection against electrical overload caused by short circuits or other excessive current conditions using fuses, circuit breakers, and ground fault interruption.
5. Each door, cover, or other panel that affords immediate access to any high voltage area shall be plainly marked with a hazard warning label which shall read WARNING—HIGH VOLTAGE or DANGER—HIGH VOLTAGE. This label shall be in a highly conspicuous place.

6. All high voltage access areas shall be secured to deter unauthorized access.

ELECTRIC VEHICLE IDENTIFICATION LABEL

1. Each Electric Vehicle school bus shall be identified with a permanent, diamond-shaped label located on the exterior vertical surface or near-vertical surface on the lower right rear of the school bus other than on the bumper of the vehicle.
2. The label shall be a minimum of 4.7 inches long x 3.0 inches high.
3. The marking in the label shall consist of a blue colored background, a border, and the letters "EV", one inch in height with the lightning bolt in the center.
4. In addition to the location on the right rear, labels shall be affixed to each side of the school bus, rear of the entrance door and beneath the driver's window.
5. Battery disconnect label:
 - a. A permanent label with black one-inch letters shall identify the location(s) of the battery disconnect switch or device.
 - b. Any instructions may be printed adjacent to the switch or device in letters ½ inch high.

ELECTRIC VEHICLE IGNITION SYSTEM

1. The ignition switch circuit shall be linked to the Battery Management System and shall prevent the driving of the vehicle while it is connected to an external battery charging source.
2. The high voltage system shall be designed so that when the ignition switch is off, the high voltage is disconnected.

ELECTRIC VEHICLE REGENERATIVE BRAKES

In addition to service brake specifications for combustion engine buses, Electric Vehicles shall be equipped with regenerative braking that utilizes the electric drive system in concert with the service brakes to slow the vehicle and return electrical energy to the battery system.

ELECTRIC VEHICLE SYSTEM PROTECTION

1. As part of the Battery Management System, Electric Vehicles shall be equipped with an automatic shutdown to protect system components from damage caused by malfunctions such as charging/discharging faults, battery overheating, electrical overheating, degraded battery health, etc.
2. Prior to automatic shutdown, a warning or maintenance indicator shall display in the driver's console to notify the driver of impending shutdown or the need for immediate maintenance and allow enough time to safely reposition and stop the bus. Gradual derating of propulsion shall occur prior to complete automatic shutdown

EMERGENCY EQUIPMENT

1. Fire Extinguisher
 - a. The bus shall be equipped with at least one five-pound or greater UL-approved pressurized, dry chemical fire extinguisher ~~complete with hose.~~ The extinguisher shall be mounted (and secured) in a bracket, located in the driver's compartment (shall not be in a closed compartment) and readily accessible to the driver and passengers, unless in a Type E school bus.
 - b. The extinguisher shall be mounted (and secured) in a bracket, located in the driver's compartment (shall not be in a closed compartment) and readily accessible to the driver and passengers with the exception of Type E schools buses. Type E school buses must have a fire extinguisher available in a secured bracket and accessible by the driver. This may include the trunk of a vehicle.
 - c. ~~A pressure gauge shall be mounted on the extinguisher and be easily read without moving the extinguisher from its mounted position.~~
 - d. The fire extinguisher shall have a total rating of 2-A:10-BC or greater. The operating mechanism shall be sealed with a type of seal that will not interfere with the use of the fire extinguisher.

~~e. A Halon extinguisher may be carried in addition to the dry chemical extinguisher.~~

2. First-Aid Kit

a. The bus shall have a removable moisture-proof and dust-proof first-aid kit in an accessible place in the driver's compartment. It shall be properly mounted and secured and identified as a first-aid kit.

b. Contents of first-aid kit shall follow state standards and shall include but is not limited to:

- i. 2 - 1" x 2.5 yards adhesive tape rolls
- ii. 24 - sterile gauze pads 3" x 3"
- iii. ~~10020~~ - 3/4" x 3" adhesive bandages
- iv. 8 - 2" bandage compress
- v. 10 - 3" bandage compress
- vi. 2 - 2" x 6' sterile gauze roller bandages
- vii. 2 - non-sterile triangular bandages approximately 40" x 36" x 54" with 2 safety pins
- viii. 3 - sterile gauze pads 36" x 36"
- ix. 2 - sterile eye pads
- x. 1 - rounded-end scissors
- xi. pair medical examination gloves
- xii. 1 - mouth-to-mouth airway

~~c. The Inspection Form must be completed and stored with the TR-13 form on the school bus.~~

~~c. School buses purchased on or before January 2027 shall only be required to include 20 - 3/4" x 3" adhesive bandages in the First-Aid Kit.~~

~~d. See Table 1 for inspection form~~

Table 1 – FIRST AID KIT INSPECTION FORM

First Aid Kit	Year:		Year:		Year:	
	Good	Replaced	Good	Replaced	Good	Replaced
2 - 1" x 2.5 yards adhesive tape rolls						
24 - sterile gauze pads 3" x 3"						
20 - 3/4" x 3" adhesive bandages						
8 - 2" bandage compress						
10 - 3" bandage compress						
2 - 2" x 6' gauze roller bandages						
2 - non-sterile triangular bandages with 2 safety pins						
3 - sterile gauze pads 36" x 36"						
3 - sterile eye pads						
1 - rounded-end scissors						
1 - pair medical examination gloves						
1 - mouth to mouth airway						
Inspected by:						
School Transportation Supervisor						
Sign:						
Date:						

3. Body Fluid Clean-up Kit

a. Each bus shall have a removable and moisture-proof body fluid clean-up kit accessible to the driver. It shall be properly mounted and identified as a body fluid clean-up kit. This standard shall apply _____

retroactively to all Montana school buses.

b. Contents of body fluid clean-up kit shall follow state standards and shall include but is not limited to:

- i. ~~2~~ — Sterile non-latex Gloves - 1 pr
- ii. 1 - Red Bio-hazard Waste Bag w/tie
- iii. ~~1~~ — Black/brown Plastic Bag w/tie
- iv. 1 - Liquid Treatment System – ¾ oz
- v. 2 - Disposable Microbial Towels
- vi. 2 - Antiseptic Microbial Wipe
- vii. 1 - Face Mask with Eye Shield
- viii. 1 - Pick up Scoop with Scraper
- ix. 1 - Surface Cleaning Wipe
- x. #10 Unit Poly White Storage Box

~~xi. — See Table 2 for Inspection Form~~

c. The A First-Aid Kit Inspection Form and Body Fluid Clean-up Kit Inspection Form must be completed and stored with the TR-13 form on the school bus.

~~d. — See Table 2 for inspection form.~~

Table 2 — BODY FLUIDS CLEAN-UP INSPECTION FORM						
Body Fluid Clean-Up Kit	Year:		Year:		Year:	
	Good	Replaced	Good	Replaced	Good	Replaced
2 — sterile non-latex gloves — 1 pair						
1 — red bio-hazard waste bag w/tie						
1 — black/brown plastic bag w/tie						
1 — liquid treatment system — 3/4 oz.						
2 — disposable microbial wipe						
1 — face mask with eye shield						
1 — pick up scoop with scraper						
1 — surface cleaning wipe						
Inspected by:						
School Transportation Supervisor						
Sign:						
Date:						

4. Warning Devices

- a. Each school bus shall contain at least three (3) reflectorized triangle road warning devices mounted in an accessible place that meet requirements in Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSS) No. 125.
- b. Any of the emergency equipment may be mounted in an enclosed compartment, provided the compartment is labeled in not less than ~~one-inch~~one-inch letters, identifying each piece of equipment contained therein.

EXHAUST SYSTEM (FOR INTERNAL COMBUSTION ENGINES ONLY)

1. The exhaust pipe, muffler, after treatment system and tailpipe shall be outside the bus body compartment and attached to the chassis so as not to damage any other chassis compartment. Entire system shall be free of leaks.
2. The tailpipe and after treatment system shall be constructed of a corrosion-resistant tubing material at least equal in strength and durability to 16-gauge steel tubing of equal diameter.

3. The tailpipe may be flush with, or shall not extend more than 2 inches beyond, the perimeter of the body for side-exit pipe or the bumper for the rear-exit pipe. The exhaust system shall be designed such that exhaust gas will not be trapped under the body of the bus.
4. The tailpipe shall exit to the left or right of the emergency exit door in the rear of the vehicle or to the left side of the bus in front of or behind the rear drive axle. The tailpipe may extend through the bumper. The tailpipe exit location on all Types A-1 or B-1 buses may be in accordance to the manufacture's standards. The tailpipe shall not exit beneath any fuel filler location.
5. Exhaust system on a chassis shall be adequately insulated from the fuel system.
6. Muffler shall be constructed of corrosion-resistant material.
7. The exhaust system on vehicles equipped with a power lift unit may be routed to the left of the right frame rail to allow for the installation of a power lift unit on the right side of the vehicle.

FENDERS, FRONT

1. Total spread of outer edges of front fenders, measured at fender line, shall exceed total spread of front tires when front wheels are in straight-ahead position.
2. Front fenders shall be properly braced and shall not require attachment to any part of the body.

FLOORS

1. Floor in under-seat area, including tops of wheel housing, driver's compartment and toe board, shall be covered with rubber floor covering or equivalent, having a minimum overall thickness of .125 inch and a minimum slip coefficient of .75 or better. All materials must meet a calculated burn rate of 0.1 mm per minute or less as required by [Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards \(FMVSS\) No. 302, Flammability of Interior Materials](#). The driver's area and toe board area on all Type-A buses may be manufacturer's standard flooring and floor covering.
2. Floor covering in aisles shall be of aisle-type rubber or equivalent, wear-resistant, ribbed and a minimum slip coefficient of .75 or better. All materials must meet a calculated burn rate of 0.1 mm per minute or less as required by FMVSS No. 302, Flammability of Interior Materials. Minimum overall thickness shall be .187 inch measured from tops of ribs.
3. Floor covering must be permanently bonded to floor and must not crack when subjected to sudden changes in temperature. Bonding or adhesive material shall be waterproof and shall be a type recommended by the manufacturer of floor-covering material. All seams must be sealed with waterproof sealer.
4. On Type B, C and D buses a flush-mounted, screw-down plate that is secured and sealed shall be provided to access the diesel or gasoline fuel tank sending unit and/or fuel pump. This plate shall not be installed under flooring material.

FRAME

1. The frame (or equivalent) shall be of such design and strength characteristics as to correspond at least to standard practices for trucks of the same general load characteristics which are used for highway service.
2. Any secondary manufacturer that modifies the original chassis frame shall guarantee the performance of workmanship and materials resulting from such modification.
3. Frames shall not be modified to extend the wheelbase.
4. Holes in top or bottom flanges or side units of the frame, and welding to the frame, shall not be permitted except as provided or accepted by chassis manufacturer.
5. Frame lengths shall be established in accordance with design criteria for the complete vehicle.
6. There shall be no trailer hitches, ball or pin type, attached to buses.

FUEL SYSTEM [\(FOR INTERNAL COMBUSTION ENGINES ONLY\)](#)

1. Fuel tank or tanks having a minimum 25-gallon capacity shall be provided by the chassis manufacturer. The tank shall be filled and vented to the outside of the body, in a location where accidental fuel spillage will

not drip or drain on any part of the exhaust system.

2. No portion of the fuel system, which is located outside of the engine compartment, except the filler tube, shall extend above the top of the chassis frame rail. Fuel lines shall be mounted to obtain maximum possible protection from the chassis frame.
3. Fuel filter with replaceable element shall be installed between the fuel tank and engine.
4. The fuel system shall comply with Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSS) No. 301 and all ~~Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards~~FMVSS in effect on the date of manufacture of the bus.
5. Fuel tank(s) may be mounted between the chassis frame rails or outboard of the frame rails on either the left or right side of the vehicle.
6. The actual draw capacity of each fuel tank shall be 83 percent of the tank capacity.
7. Installation of alternative fuel systems, including fuel tanks and piping from tank to engine, shall comply with all applicable fire codes and applicable ~~Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards~~FMVSS in effect on the date of manufacture of the bus.
8. Installation of Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) tanks shall comply with National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 58, Liquefied Petroleum Gas Code.
9. Installation of Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) containers shall comply with FMVSS No. 304, ~~Compressed-Natural-Gas-CNG~~ Fuel Container Integrity.
10. The CNG Fuel System shall comply with FMVSS No. 303, Fuel System Integrity of ~~Compressed-Natural-Gas-CNG~~ Vehicles.
11. For after treatment systems that require Diesel Exhaust Fluid (DEF) to meet federally mandated emissions:
 - a. The composition of ~~Diesel Exhaust Fluid (DEF)~~ must comply with International Standard ISO 22241-1. Refer to engine manufacturer for any additional DEF requirements.
 - b. The DEF supply tank shall be designed to meet a minimum ratio of 3 diesel fills to 1 DEF fill.

GOVERNOR

When the engine is remotely located from the driver, the governor shall be set to limit engine speed to maximum revolutions per minute recommended by engine manufacturer, and a tachometer shall be installed so the driver while seated in a normal driving position may know the engine speed.

HANDRAILS

~~At least one handrail shall be installed~~A handrail shall be installed on the left and right sides of the stepwell. The handrails shall be a minimum of 1" diameter and be constructed from corrosion resistant material(s). The handrails shall assist passengers during entry or exit, and be designed to prevent entanglement, as evidenced by the ~~passage-passing~~ of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) string and nut test.

HEATING SYSTEM PROVISION (FOR INTERNAL COMBUSTION ENGINES ONLY)

1. The engine shall supply water having a temperature of at least 170 degrees Fahrenheit at a flow rate of 50 pounds per minute at the return end of 30 feet of one inch inside diameter automotive hot water heater hose. (School Bus Manufacturers Institute (SBMI) Standard No. 001—Standard Code for Testing and Rating Automotive Bus Hot Water Heating and Ventilating Equipment)
2. Heater hose in the engine compartment and between the engine and the driver shutoff, or the first body heater, whichever comes first, shall be armored or reinforced hose such as Goodyear Hi Miler, or equivalent.

HEATING AND AIR CONDITIONING SYSTEMS

1. The heater shall be hot-water combustion type, electric heating element, or heat pump.
2. If only one heater is used, it shall be fresh-air or combination fresh-air and recirculating type.
3. If more than one heater is used, additional heaters may be recirculating air type.
4. The heating system shall maintain bus interior temperatures as specified in Society of Automotive Engineers (SAE) test procedure J2233.

5. Auxiliary fuel-fired heating systems are permitted, provided they comply with the following:
 - a. Except for electronic-powered school buses, the auxiliary heating system fuel shall utilize the same type fuel as specified for the vehicle engine.
 - b. Heater(s) may be direct hot air or connected to the engine's coolant system.
 - c. Auxiliary heating system, when connected to the engine's coolant system, may be used to preheat the engine coolant or preheat and add supplementary heat to the bus's heating system.
 - d. Auxiliary heating systems must be installed pursuant to the manufacturer's recommendations and shall not direct exhaust in such a manner that will endanger bus passengers and follow the existing guidelines of the exhaust system section of these standards.)
 - e. Auxiliary heating systems, which operate on diesel fuel, shall operate on No. 1, No. 2 or blended diesel fuel without the need for system adjustment.
 - f. The auxiliary heating system shall be low voltage; and
 - g. Auxiliary heating systems shall comply with all applicable Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSS), including FMVSS No. 301, Fuel System Integrity, and all other applicable FMVSS's, as well as with SAEJ2233 test procedures.
6. All forced air heaters installed by body manufacturers shall bear a nameplate that indicates the heater rating in accordance with School Bus Manufacturers Institute (SBMI) Standard No. 001 Standard Code for Testing and Rating Automotive Bus Hot Water Heating and Ventilating Equipment. The plate shall be affixed by the heater manufacturer and shall constitute certification that the heater performance is as shown on the plate.
7. Heater hoses shall be adequately supported to guard against excessive wear due to vibration. The hoses shall not dangle or rub against the chassis or any sharp edges and shall not interfere with or restrict the operation of any engine function. Heater hoses shall conform to SAE Standard J20c, Coolant System Hoses. Heater lines, cores and elements on the interior of bus shall be shielded to prevent scalding or burning of the driver or passengers.
 - a. The heater hose in the engine compartment and between the engine and the driver shutoff, or the first body heater, whichever comes first, shall be armored or reinforced hose such as Goodyear Hi Miler, or equivalent.
8. Each hot water system installed by a body manufacturer shall include one shut-off valve in the pressure line and one shut-off valve in the return line with both valves at the engine in an accessible location, except that on all Type A and B buses, the valves may be installed in another accessible location.
9. All heaters of hot water type in the passenger compartment shall be equipped with a device, installed in the hot water pressure line, which regulates the water flow to all passenger heaters. The device shall be conveniently operated by the driver while seated. The driver and passenger heaters may operate independently of each other for maximum comfort.
10. All combustion heaters shall follow current Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations.
11. Accessible bleeder valves of hot water type systems, shall be installed in an appropriate place in the return lines of body company installed heaters to remove air from the heater lines.
12. Access panels shall be provided to make heater motors, cores, elements, and fans readily accessible for service. Outside access panel may be provided for the driver's heater.

Passenger compartment Air Conditioning (Optional) Specific requirements are listed in the National Standards.

HORN

Bus shall be equipped with horn or horns of standard make with each horn capable of producing a complex sound in bands of audio frequencies between 250 and 2,000 cycles per second and tested in accordance with Society of Automotive Engineers (SAE) J-377, Horn-Forward Warning-Electric-Performance, Test, and Application.

HINGES

Exposed metal emergency door, lift door, and service door hinges which do not have stainless steel, brass or

nonmetallic hinge pins or other design that prevents corrosion or allows complete lubrication without disassembly, shall be designed to allow complete lubrication to be channeled to the center 75 percent of each hinge loop.

IDENTIFICATION

1. Body shall bear words "SCHOOL BUS" in black letters at least 8 inches high on both front and rear of body or on signs attached thereto. Lettering shall be placed as high as possible without impairment of its visibility. Letters shall conform to "Series B" of Standard Alphabets for highway signs. "SCHOOL BUS" lettering shall have a reflective background, or as an option, may be illuminated by backlighting. (See RETRO-REFLECTIVE MATERIAL.)
2. Lettering and numbering shall include:
 - a. The district or company name or owner of the bus shall be displayed at the beltline in 6-inch lettering and color shall be black.
 - b. The bus identification number shall be displayed on the sides, on the rear, and on the front in black.
3. Other lettering, numbering, or symbols, which may be displayed on the exterior of the bus, shall be limited to:
 - a. Bus identification number, minimum 12-inch high characters, on the top of the bus, in addition to required numbering on sides, rear, and front;
 - b. The location of the battery(ies) identified by the word "BATTERY" ~~or~~ "BATTERIES" or "12V BATTERIES", on the battery compartment door in 2-inch lettering;
 - c. Symbols or letters not to exceed 64 square inches of total display near the service door displaying information for identification by the students of the bus or route served;
 - d. Manufacturer, dealer or school identification or logos;
 - e. Symbols identifying the bus as equipped for or transporting students with special needs as noted in SPECIALLY EQUIPPED SCHOOL BUS SPECIFICATIONS;
 - f. Lettering on the rear of the bus relating to school bus flashing signal lamps or electronic warning sign. Lettering relating to railroad stop procedures, or wide turn information; and
 - g. Identification of fuel type in 1 inch lettering adjacent to the fuel filler opening.
4. Warning statements (see WARNING STATEMENTS) are also approved for school bus identification purposes.
5. Any type of advertising is prohibited (see ADVERTISING ON A SCHOOL BUS)

INSIDE HEIGHT

Inside body height shall be 72 inches or more, measured metal to metal, at any point on longitudinal centerline from front vertical bow to rear vertical bow. Inside body height of Type A-1 buses shall be 62 inches or more. Inside body height shall be 72 inches or more, measured metal to metal, at any point on longitudinal centerline from the front vertical bow to rear vertical bow. Inside body height of Type A-1 buses shall be 62 inches or more. This requirement does not apply to air conditioning equipment.

INSTRUMENTS AND INSTRUMENT PANEL

1. Chassis shall be equipped with the following instruments and gauges. (Telltale warning lamps in lieu of gauges are not acceptable, except as noted):
 - a. Speedometer;
 - b. Odometer, which will give accrued mileage (to seven digits), including tenths of miles, unless tenths of miles are registered on a trip odometer. Odometer must be readable without using a key;
 - c. Tachometer (Note: For ~~I~~types B, C and D buses, a tachometer shall be installed so as to be visible to the driver while seated in a normal driving position~~;~~);
 - d. Voltmeter (An ammeter with graduated charge and discharge indications is permitted in lieu of a voltmeter; however, when used, the ammeter wiring must be compatible with the current flow of the system~~;~~);

- e. Oil pressure gauge;
 - f. Water temperature gauge;
 - g. Fuel gauge;
 - h. High beam headlight indicator;
 - i. Brake air pressure gauge (air brakes); brake indicator lamp (vacuum/hydraulic brakes), or brake indicator lamp (hydraulic/hydraulic);
 - j. Turn signal indicator; ~~and~~
 - k. Glow-plug or grid heater indicator light, where appropriate;
 - l. High-Voltage battery state of charge (electric bus only);
 - m. Motor Temp (electric bus only);
 - n. Battery available range in miles (electric bus only);
 - o. Battery discharge and regeneration rate (electric bus only); and
 - ~~k-p.~~ Battery temperature (electric bus only).
2. All instruments shall be easily accessible for maintenance and repair.
 3. Instruments and gauges shall be mounted on the instrument panel so that each is clearly visible to the driver while seated in a normal driving position.
 4. Instrument and controls must be illuminated as required by Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSS) No. 101, Controls and Displays.
 5. Multi-function gauges (MFG) are not recommended in Montana; however, if they are used they must meet the following criteria:
 - a. The driver must be able to manually select any displayable function of the gauge on a MFG, when desired.
 - b. When an out-of-limits condition that would be displayed on one or more functions of a MFG occurs, the MFG controller should automatically display this condition on the instrument cluster. This should be in the form of an illuminated telltale warning lamp as well as having the MFG automatically display the out-of-limits indications. Should two or more functions display on the MFG simultaneously, then the MFG should sequence automatically between those functions continuously until the condition(s) are corrected.
 - c. The use of a MFG does not relieve the need for audible warning devices, where required.

INSULATION

1. Ceiling and walls shall be insulated. If thermal insulation is specified, it shall be fire-resistant, UL approved, and approximately 1.5-inch-thick with minimum R-value of 5.5. The insulation shall be installed to prevent sagging.
2. Floor insulation shall be either 5 ply nominal 5/8-inch-thick plywood, or a material of equal or greater strength and insulation R value, and it shall equal or exceed properties of the exterior-type softwood plywood, C-D Grade as specified in standard issued by U.S. Department of Commerce. When plywood is used, all exposed edges shall be sealed. Type A buses may be equipped with nominal 1/2-inch-thick plywood or greater insulation R-value, sound abatement, deterioration-resistant and moisture-resistant properties.

INTERIOR

1. Interior of bus shall be free of all unnecessary projections, which include luggage racks and attendant handrails, to minimize the potential for injury. This standard requires inner lining on ceilings and walls. If ceiling is constructed to contain lapped joints, forward panel shall be lapped by rear panel and exposed edges shall be beaded, hemmed, flanged, or otherwise treated to minimize sharp edges. Buses may be equipped with a storage compartment for tools, tire chains, and/or tow chains. ~~(see The following section on extended stop arm becomes effective on July 1, 2022.~~

EXTENDED STOP ARM

1. When a school bus route includes a bus stop that requires a child to cross a roadway, the school bus must be equipped with an extended stop arm that partially obstructs the roadway.
2. ~~SA~~-school child~~ren~~ may not cross a roadway to enter or exit from a school bus unless the roadway has been partially obstructed by the extended stop arm.
3. Extended Stop Arm must:
 - a. Be equipped with additional flashing red lights as specified in 61-9-402, MCA;
 - b. Be capable of extending a distance of at least 54 inches from the school bus; and
 - c. Be at a height of not less than 36 inches.
4. Extended Stop Arm should have an additional illuminated stop sign located at the furthest distance from the school bus.

STORAGE COMPARTMENT

1. Interior overhead storage compartments may be provided if they meet the following criteria:
 - a. Head protection requirements of Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSS) No. 222, School Bus Passenger Seating and Crash Protection, where applicable;
 - b. Be completely enclosed and equipped with latching doors. (Both the door and latch must be sufficient to withstand a force of 50 pounds applied at the inside center of the door);
 - c. Have all corners and edges rounded with a minimum radius of one inch or padded equivalent to door header padding;
 - d. Be attached to the bus sufficiently to withstand a force equal to twenty (20) times the maximum rated capacity of the compartment; and
 - e. Shall have no protrusions greater than 1/4 inch.
2. The driver's area forward of the foremost padded barriers will permit the mounting of required safety equipment and vehicle operation equipment.
3. Every school bus shall be constructed so that the noise level taken at the ear of the occupant nearest to the primary vehicle noise source shall not exceed 85 dBA when tested ~~per the procedure found in Appendix B.~~

LAMPS AND SIGNALS

1. Interior lamps shall be provided which adequately illuminate aisle and step well. The step well light shall be illuminated by a service door operated switch, to illuminate only when headlights and clearance lights are on, and service door is open.
2. Body instrument panel lamps shall be controlled by an independent dimmer switch or may be controlled by the dimmer that operates the gauge lighting.
3. School bus alternately flashing signal lamps shall be provided, as described by law. Multi-Function School Activity Buses (MFSAB's) are exempt from this requirement:
 - a. The school bus shall be equipped with at least two red lamps at the rear of vehicle and two red lamps at the front of the vehicle;
 - b. In addition to the four red lamps described above, four amber lamps shall be installed so that one amber lamp is located near each red signal lamp, at same level, but closer to vertical centerline of bus.
 - c. The system of red and amber signal lamps shall be wired so that amber lamps are energized manually, and red lamps are automatically energized (with amber lamps being automatically de-energized) when stop signal arms are extended or when bus service door is opened.
 - d. The above-mentioned activation sequence shall be sequential and include a master switch. An amber pilot light and a red pilot light shall be installed adjacent to the driver controls for the flashing signal lamp to indicate to the driver which lamp system is activated;
 - e. The area around the lens of each alternately flashing signal lamp and extending outward approximately three inches to the sides and top and a minimum one inch to the bottom, shall be black in color on the body or roof area against which the signal lamp is seen (from distance of 500 feet along axis of vehicle). Visors or hoods, black in color, with a minimum depth of 4 inches may be provided;

- f. Red lamps shall flash at any time the stop signal arm is extended;
 - g. All flashers for alternately flashing red and amber signal lamps shall be enclosed in the body in a readily accessible location;
 - h. LED lamps can be used, however, if more than 1/3 of the LED lights go out, the light will be deemed inoperable, and the bus must be taken out of service until repairs have been completed; Additional red lights may be installed at the rear of the vehicle and at the front of the vehicle as follows:
 - i. Mounted at a height of at least 36 inches and not more than 72 inches from the ground;
 - ii. Be automatically energized in the same manner as the original red lights;
 - iii. Must flash in synchronization with the top red lights; and
 - iv. Must match the red color of the top red lights;
 - v. Must be LED lights;
 - vi. May be a round, rectangle, or oblong shape;
 - vii. Cannot be a strobe light; and
 - viii. Cannot be light strip.
4. Turn signal and stop/tail lamps
- a. Bus body shall be equipped with amber rear turn signal lamps that are at least 7 inches in diameter or if a shape other than round, a minimum 38 square inches of illuminated area and meet [Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards \(FMVSS\) No. 108, Lamps, Reflective Devices, and Associated Equipment](#). These signal lamps must be connected to the chassis hazard-warning switch to cause simultaneous flashing of turn signal lamps when needed as vehicular traffic hazard warning. Turn signal lamps are to be placed as wide apart as practical and their centerline shall be approximately 12 inches below the rear window.
 - b. Buses shall be equipped with amber side-mounted turn signal lamps. The turn signal lamp on the left side shall be mounted rearward of the stop signal arm and the turn signal lamp on the right side shall be mounted rearward of the service door.
 - c. Signal lamps on Type B, C, and D buses shall include a left and right-side mounted turn signal lamp. They shall be located midway from the front axle and the rear of the bus and approximately twelve (12) inches from the bottom of the side windows. This lamp will be a standard manufacturer's design for this purpose and will have an amber color lens.
 - d. Buses shall be equipped with four combination red stop/tail lamps:
 - i. Two combination lamps with a minimum diameter of seven inches, or if a shape other than round, a minimum 38 square inches of illuminated area shall be mounted on the rear of the bus just inside the turn signal lamps.
 - ii. Two combination lamps with a minimum diameter of four inches, or if a shape other than round, a minimum 12 square inches of illuminated area shall be placed on the rear of the body between the beltline and the floor line. The rear license plate lamp may be combined with one lower tail lamp. Stop lamps shall be activated by the service brakes and shall emit a steady light when illuminated.
 - e. On buses equipped with a monitor for the front and rear lamps of the school bus, the monitor shall be mounted in full view of the driver. If the full circuit current passes through the monitor, each circuit shall be protected by a fuse or circuit breaker against any short circuit or intermittent shorts.
5. White flashing strobe lamp
- a. A mandatory white flashing strobe lamp shall be installed on the roof of a school bus, not closer than 12 inches or more than 6 feet, from the rear of the roof edge, clearly visible 50 feet or more from the rear of the bus. However, if the bus is equipped with a roof hatch, or other roof mounted equipment, falling within the above-mentioned measurements, the strobe lamp may be located directly behind the roof hatch.
 - b. The lamp shall have a single clear lens emitting light 360 degrees around its vertical axis meeting the requirements of [Society of Automotive Engineers \(SAE\) J845](#). It may not extend above the roof more than maximum legal height.

- c. A manual switch and a pilot light shall be included to indicate when light is in operation.
- d. When there is a home to school, school to home route, a strobe light shall be wired to activate with the amber alternately flashing signal lamps, continuing through the full loading or unloading cycle, with an override switch to allow activation of the strobe at any time for use in adverse conditions, effecting visibility, such as:
 - i. Snow
 - ii. Blizzards
 - iii. Rain
 - iv. Storms
 - v. Flooding
 - vi. Fog
 - vii. Smoke
 - viii. Dust
 - ix. Wind;

Note: ~~Multi-Functional School Activity Bus (MFSAB)~~ is are exempt from these requirements

- 6. Backup Lamps
 - a. Bus body shall be equipped with two white rear backup lamp signals that are at least four inches in diameter or, if a shape other than round, a minimum of 12 square inches of illuminated area and shall meet FMVSS No. 108. If backup lamps are placed on the same horizontal line as the brake lamps and turn signal lamps, they shall be to the inside.
- 7. Daytime Running Lamps (DRL) - A daytime running lamp(s) system shall be provided.
- 8. Outside Landing Light (Optional Equipment)
 - a. An optional outside landing light may be mounted near the entrance door to allow greater visibility when loading students in the dark.
 - i. This light shall be white and wired to activate when the entrance door is opened. A switch located near the driver would allow the driver to shut the light off during daylight hours.
 - ii. The outside landing light shall be a skirt-mounted exterior landing light.
 - iii. Upper portion of the light may be shielded to cast the light downward only.

METAL TREATMENT

- 1. All metal used in construction of bus body shall be zinc-coated or aluminum-coated or treated by equivalent process before the bus is constructed. Included are such items as structural members, inside and outside panels, door panels and floor sills. Excluded are such items as door handles, grab handles, interior decorative parts and other interior plated parts.
- 2. All metal parts that will be painted shall be, in addition to above requirements, chemically cleaned, etched, zinc-phosphate-coated and zinc-chromate or epoxy primed or conditioned by equivalent process. This includes, but is not limited to, such items as crossing control arm and stop arm.
- 3. In providing for these requirements, attention shall be given to lapped surfaces, welded connections of structural members, cut edges, punched or drilled hole areas in sheet metal, closed or boxed sections, unvented or un-drained areas and surfaces subjected to abrasion during vehicle operation.
- 4. As evidence that above requirements have been met, samples of materials and sections used in construction of the bus body shall be subjected to a cyclic corrosion testing as outlined in Society of Automotive Engineers (SAE) J1563.

MIRRORS

- 1. Interior mirror shall be either clear view laminated glass or clear view glass bonded to a backing which retains the glass in the event of breakage. The mirror shall have rounded corners and protected edges. All Type A buses shall have a minimum of a 6-inch x 16-inch mirror and Type B, C, and D buses shall have a minimum of a 6-inch x 30-inch mirror.
- 2. Each school bus shall be equipped with exterior mirrors meeting the requirements of Federal Motor

Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSS) No. 111, Rearview Mirrors. The right side rear view mirror shall not be obscured by the un-wiped portion of the windshield. Mirrors shall be easily adjustable, but shall be rigidly braced to reduce vibration. Bumper accessories may not obstruct driver's vision as required by FMVSS No. 111.

3. Heated external mirrors may be used.
4. Remote controlled external rear view mirrors may be used.

MOBILE DATA DEVICE (OPTIONAL)

1. If equipped, the Mobile Data Device (MDD) shall be mounted in an area that shall not block the driver's field of view through the windshield. The MDD shall not block the view of/or access to any gauges, mirrors, indicator lights, or safety controls.
2. The MDD shall be securely mounted as not to be a snagging hazard in the student-loading area of the service door.
3. Audio and/or visual turn-by-turn instructions from the MDD system are allowed while the bus is being operated. Audible directions shall not use the speakers within the passenger compartment.
4. While the bus is in motion, audio and visual instructions on the MDD may remain functional, but operational and tactile functions shall be disabled.

MOUNTING

1. The chassis frame shall support rear body cross member. The bus body shall be attached to the chassis frame at each main floor sill, except where the chassis components interfere, in such manner as to prevent shifting or separation of the body from the chassis under severe operating conditions.
2. Insulators shall be placed at all contact points between body and chassis frame on Type A-2, B, C, and D buses, and shall be secured by a positive means to the chassis frame or body that it will prevent shifting, separation, or displacement of the insulators under severe operating conditions.

OIL FILTER

An oil filter with a replaceable element shall be provided and connected by flexible oil lines if not a built-in or an engine-mounted design. The oil filter shall have a capacity in accordance with the engine manufacturer's recommendation.

OPENINGS

All openings in the floorboard or firewall between chassis and passenger compartment, such as for gearshift selector and parking brake lever, shall be sealed.

OVERALL LENGTH

Overall length of bus shall not exceed 45 feet, excluding accessories.

OVERALL WIDTH

Overall width of bus shall not exceed 102 inches, excluding accessories.

PASSENGER LOAD

1. Actual Gross Vehicle Weight (GVW) is the sum of the chassis weight, plus the body weight, plus the driver's weight, plus total seated pupil weight.
 - a. For purposes of calculation, the driver's weight is 150 pounds.
 - b. For purposes of calculation, the pupil weight is 120 pounds per pupil.
2. Actual ~~Gross Vehicle Weight (GVW)~~ shall not exceed the chassis manufacturer's Gross Vehicle Weight Rating (GVWR) for the chassis, nor shall the actual weight carried on any axle exceed the chassis manufacturer's Gross Axle Weight Rating (GAWR).

PUBLIC ADDRESS SYSTEM

1. Buses may be equipped with an AM/FM/audio and/or public address system having interior and exterior speakers.
2. No internal speakers, other than the driver's communication system, may be installed within four feet of the driver's seat back in its rearmost upright position.

RETARDER SYSTEM (OPTIONAL EQUIPMENT)

A retarder system, if used, shall maintain the speed of the fully loaded school bus at 19.0 mph or 30 km/hr. on a 7 percent grade for 3.6 miles or 6 km.

RETRO-REFLECTIVE MATERIAL

1. Front and/or rear bumper may be marked diagonally 45 degrees down to centerline of pavement with 2 1/4-inch-wide strips of non-contrasting reflective material.
2. Rear of bus body shall be marked with strips of Retro-reflective [National School Bus Yellow \(NSBY\)](#) material to outline the perimeter of the back of the bus using material, which conforms with the requirements of [Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards \(FMVSS\) No. 131](#), School Bus Pedestrian Safety Devices, Table 1. The perimeter marking of rear emergency exits per FMVSS No. 217, Bus Emergency Exits and Window Retention and Release and/or the use of retro- reflective "SCHOOL BUS" signs partially accomplish the objective of this requirement. To complete the perimeter marking of the back of the bus, strips of Retro reflective NSBY material, a minimum of 1" and a maximum of 2" in width shall be applied horizontally above the rear windows and above the rear bumper extending from the rear emergency exit perimeter marking outward to the left and right rear corners of the bus. Vertical strips shall be applied at the corners connecting these horizontal strips.
3. "SCHOOL BUS" signs, if not of lighted design, shall be marked with retro-reflective NSBY material comprising background for lettering of the front and/or rear "SCHOOL BUS" signs.
4. Sides of bus body shall be marked with retro-reflective NSBY material at least 1 3/4 inches in width, extending the length of the bus body and located (vertically) between the floor line and the beltline.
5. Signs, if used, placed on the rear of the bus relating to school bus flashing signal lamps or railroad stop procedures shall be of retro-reflective material which conforms with the requirements of FMVSS [No. 131](#), School Bus Pedestrian Safety Devices, Table 1 specified in No. 2 in this section.

RUB RAILS

1. There shall be one rub rail located on each side of bus approximately at seat cushion level which shall extend from the rear side of entrance door completely around bus body (except emergency door or any maintenance access door) to point of curvature near outside cowl on left side.
2. There shall be one additional rub rail located approximately 10 inches or less above the floor line. The rub rail shall cover the same longitudinal span as upper rub rail, except at wheel housing, and it shall extend only to longitudinal tangent of the right and left rear corners.
3. Rub rails shall be attached at each body post and all other upright structural members.
4. Rub rails shall be four inches or more in width in their finished form, shall be of 16-gauge steel or suitable material of equivalent strength, and shall be constructed in corrugated or ribbed fashion.
5. Rub rails shall be applied outside body or outside body posts. Pressed-in or Snap-On rub rails do not satisfy this requirement. For Type A-2 vehicles using chassis manufacturer's body, or for Type A-1, B, C and D buses using rear luggage or rear engine compartment, rub rails need not extend around rear corners.
6. There shall be a rub rail or equivalent bracing located horizontally at the bottom edge of the body side skirts.

SEATS AND RESTRAINING SYSTEM

PASSENGER SEATING

1. School bus design capacities shall be in accordance with 49 CFR, Part 571.3 Definitions, and [Federal Motor](#)

Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSS) No. 222, School Bus Passenger Seating and Crash Protection.

2. All seats shall have a minimum depth of 15 inches and must comply with all requirements of FMVSS No. 222. All seat backs shall be a minimum of 24 inches from the seating reference point. School bus design capacities shall be in accordance with 49 CFR, Part 571.3 and FMVSS No. 222. In addition to the fastener that forms the pivot for each seat retaining clip, a secondary fastener may be used in each clip to prevent the clip from rotating and releasing the seat cushion unintentionally.
3. All restraining barriers and passenger seats shall be constructed with materials that enable them to meet the criteria contained in the School Bus Seats Upholstery Fire Block Test, or ASTM E2574/E2574M – 12a Standard Test Method for Fire Testing of School Bus Seat Assemblies.
4. Each set leg shall be secured to the floor by bolts, washers to meet performance requirements of FMVSS No. 222. Flange-head nuts may be used in lieu of nuts and washers. All seat frames attached to the seat rail shall be fastened with 2 or more bolts, washers and nuts, or with flange-head nuts. Seats may be track-mounted in conformance with FMVSS No. 222.7. If track seating is installed, the manufacturer shall supply minimum and maximum seat spacing dimensions (applicable to the bus) which comply with FMVSS No. 222. This information shall be on a label permanently affixed to the bus.
5. All school buses (including Type A) shall be equipped with restraining barriers conforming to FMVSS No. 222.
6. A flip-up seat may be installed at any side emergency door if it conforms to FMVSS No. 222, and aisle clearance requirements of FMVSS No. 217, Bus Emergency Exits and Window Retention and Release. The flip seat shall be free of sharp projections on the underside of the seat bottom. The underside of the flip-up seat bottoms shall be padded or contoured to reduce the possibility of snagged clothing or injury during use. Flip seats shall be constructed to prevent passenger limbs from becoming entrapped between the seat back and the seat cushion when in upright position. The seat cushion shall be designed to rise to a vertical position automatically when not occupied.

SEAT – LAP AND SHOULDER BELTS FOR STUDENT SEATING

1. Any new school bus that is put into service after the effective date of this new standard may be ordered with a lap and shoulder belt system. The seat and lap and/shoulder belting system shall meet the requirement of Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSS) No. 222, Compartmentalization for the protection of students that may not be restrained. This seat and seat anchorage must meet or exceed all government safety standards
2. Used buses may not be retrofitted to include lap and/shoulder belts unless the bus was built "seat belt ready" or with removable restraints by the school bus manufacturer.
3. Lap belts shall not be installed on passenger seats in large school buses (over 10,000 pounds Gross Vehicle Weight Rating (GVWR)) ~~except in conjunction with child safety restraint systems that comply with the requirements of FMVSS No. 213, Child Restraint Systems.~~
4. Adhering with the requirements listed above, three-point lap and/shoulder seat belts may be installed in large school buses (over 10,000 pounds GVWR).
5. If a school bus is equipped with lap and shoulder belts for students in accordance with FMVSS No 222, then a child being transported in a seat with lap and/shoulder belt must be properly restrained with a lap and/shoulder belt.

SEAT – PRE-SCHOOL AGE SEATING

1. Passenger seats designed to accommodate a child or infant carrier seat shall comply with Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSS) No. 225, Child Restraint Anchorage Systems. These seats shall follow the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's (NHTSA) ~~NHTSA's~~ "Guideline for the Safe Transportation of Preschool Age Children in School Buses."
2. If a school bus is equipped with child restraint anchorage systems in accordance with FMVSS No 225, then any child who is under 6 years of age and weighing less than 60 pounds and is being transported in a seat with a child restraint anchorage systems must be properly restrained in a child safety restraint.

3. Generally, school buses are exempt from the requirement for a child under 6 years of age and weighing less than 60 pounds to be properly restrained in an appropriate child safety restraint. See 61-9-420 and 61-9-421, MCA.

DRIVER SEAT

The driver's seat supplied by the body manufacturer shall be a high back seat. The seat back shall be adjustable to 15 degrees minimum, without requiring the use of tools. The seat shall be equipped with a head restraint to accommodate a 5th percentile female to a 95th percentile adult male, as defined in [Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards \(FMVSS\) No. 208, Occupant Crash Protection](#).

Type A buses may utilize the standard's driver's seat provided by the chassis manufacturer.

DRIVER RESTRAINT SYSTEM

A Type 2 lap [and](#) /shoulder belt shall be provided for the driver. On buses where the driver's seat and upper anchorage for the shoulder belt are both attached to the body structure, a driver's seat with an integrated Type 2 lap [and](#) /shoulder belt may be substituted. On buses where the driver's seat and upper anchorage for the shoulder belt are separately attached to both the body and chassis structures (i.e., one attached to the chassis and the other attached to the body) a driver's seat with an integrated Type 2 lap [and](#) /shoulder belt should be used.

The assembly shall be equipped with an Emergency Locking Retractor (ELR) for the continuous belt system. On all buses except Type A equipped with standard chassis manufacturer's driver's seat, the lap portion of the belt shall be guided or anchored to prevent the driver from sliding sideways under the belt system. The lap [and](#) /shoulder belt shall be designed to allow for easy adjustment to fit properly and effectively protect drivers varying from 5th percentile female to 95th percentile male. The belt shall be of a high visibility contrasting color.

SEAT BELT CUTTER

Each bus shall be equipped with a durable webbing cutter having a full width handgrip and a protected, replaceable or non-corrodible blade. The required belt cutter shall be mounted in a location accessible to the seated driver in an easily detachable manner regardless of the condition of the bus

SHOCK ABSORBERS

The bus shall be equipped with double-action shock absorbers compatible with manufacturer's rated axle capacity at each wheel location.

SIDE SKIRTS

The bus body side skirts between the front and rear axles shall extend down to within 2 inches plus or minus, of the horizontal line from the center of the front spindle to the center of the rear axle. The manufacturer may offer optional side skirt lengths that extend lower than this requirement. This measurement shall apply to a new unloaded school bus located on a flat, level surface.

STEERING GEAR

1. The steering gear shall be approved by the chassis manufacturer and designed to ensure safe and accurate performance when the vehicle is operated with maximum load and at maximum speed.
2. If external adjustments are required, steering mechanism shall be accessible to adjust.
3. No changes shall be made in the steering apparatus, which are not approved by the chassis manufacturer.
4. There shall be a clearance of at least two inches between the steering wheel and cowl, instrument panel, windshield, or any other surface.
5. Power steering is required and shall be of the integral type with integral valves.
6. The steering system shall be designed to provide a means for lubrication of all wear-points, if wear- points

are not permanently lubricated

STEPS

1. The first step at the service door shall be not less than 10 inches and not more than ~~14~~16 inches from the ground when measured from the top surface of the step to the ground, based on standard chassis specifications, except that on Type D vehicles, the first step at the entrance door shall be 12 inches to 16 inches from the ground. On chassis modifications, which may result in increased ground clearance (such as four-wheel drive) an auxiliary step may be provided to compensate for the increase in ground-to-first-step clearance. The auxiliary step is not required to be closed.
2. Step risers shall not exceed a height of 10 inches. Exception is when plywood is used on a steel floor or step, the riser height may be increased by the thickness of the plywood.
3. Steps shall be enclosed to prevent accumulation of ice and snow.
4. Steps shall not protrude beyond the side bodyline.

STEP TREADS

1. All steps, including floor line platform area, shall be covered with an elastomer floor covering having a minimum overall thickness of 0.187 inch. Any design that provides equal or greater traction is acceptable.
2. The step covering shall be permanently bonded to a durable backing material that is resistant to corrosion.
3. Steps, including the floor line platform area, shall have a 1 ½ inch nosing that contrasts in color by at least 70% measured in accordance with the contrasting color specification in 36 CFR, Part 1192, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Accessibility Guidelines for Transportation Vehicles.
4. Step treads shall have the following characteristics:
 - a. Abrasion resistance: Step tread material weight loss shall not exceed 1.10 percent, as tested under ASTM D-4060, Standard Test Method for Abrasion Resistance of Organic Coatings by the Taber Abraser, (DS-17 Wheel, 1000 gram, 1000 cycle);
 - b. Weathering resistance: Step treads shall not break, crack, or check after ozone exposure (7 days at 50 phm at 40 degrees C); and Weatherometer exposure (ASTMD-750, Standard Test Method for Rubber Deterioration in Carbon-Arc Weathering Apparatus, 7 days); and
 - c. Flame resistance: Step treads shall have a calculated burn rate of .01 mm per minute or less using the test methods, procedures and formulas listed in Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSS) No. 302, Flammability of Interior Materials.
 - d. A spray on application type material that meets the requirements of items a through c above may be used in lieu of Number 1 A. The material shall be applied not only to the interior surfaces of the service door step treads but the exterior as well if not covered by undercoating.

STIRRUP STEPS

Unless the windshield and lamps are not easily accessible from the ground, there may be at least one folding stirrup step or recessed foothold and suitably located handles on each side of the front of the body for easy accessibility for cleaning. Steps are permitted in or on the front bumper, in lieu of the stirrup steps, if the windshield and lamps are easily accessible for cleaning from that position.

STOP ARMS

STOP SIGNAL ARM

1. The stop signal arm(s) shall comply with the requirements of Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSS) No. 131, School Bus Pedestrian Safety Devices. The stop signal arm is a required retrofit of all school buses, effective July 1, 1987. (Reference section on lamps and signals 3.b. (4).) MFSABs are exempt from these requirements.
2. Any newly manufactured bus under 40 feet in length may have an optional stop signal arm mounted to the rear of the bus.
3. Any newly manufactured bus over 40 feet in length shall have an additional stop signal arm mounted to the

rear of the bus.

4. Stop Signal Arms may be equipped with a camera system(s).

~~The following section on extended stop arm becomes effective on July 1, 2022.~~

EXTENDED STOP ARM

5. When a school bus route includes a bus stop that requires a child to cross a roadway, the school bus must be equipped with an extended stop arm that partially obstructs the roadway.
6. ~~SA~~-school child~~ren~~ may not cross a roadway to enter or exit from a school bus unless the roadway has been partially obstructed by the extended stop arm.
7. Extended Stop Arm must:
 - a. Be equipped with additional flashing red lights as specified in 61-9-402, MCA;
 - b. Be capable of extending a distance of at least 54 inches from the school bus; and
 - c. Be at a height of not less than 36 inches.
8. Extended Stop Arm should have an additional illuminated stop sign located at the furthest distance from the school bus.

STORAGE COMPARTMENT

A storage container for tools, tire chains, and/or tow chains may be located either inside or outside the passenger compartment. If inside, it shall have a cover (seat cushion may not serve this purpose) capable of being securely latched and fastened to the floor, convenient to either the service or emergency door. Luggage storage compartments accessible from the outside shall be lockable.

SUN SHIELD

1. Interior adjustable transparent sun shield not less than ~~6~~^{6 1/2} inch x 30 inch for Type B, C, and D vehicles, with a finished edge, shall be installed in a position convenient for use by driver.
2. On all Type A buses, the sun shield shall be installed by the chassis Manufacturer.

SUSPENSION SYSTEM

1. The capacity of springs or suspension assemblies shall be commensurate with the chassis manufacturer's Gross Vehicle Weight Rating (GVWR).
2. Rear leaf springs shall be of a progressive rate or multi-stage design. Front leaf springs shall have a stationary eye at one end and shall be protected by a wrapped leaf, in addition to the main leaf.

THROTTLE

The force required to operate the throttle shall not exceed 16 pounds throughout the full range of accelerator pedal travel.

TIRES AND RIMS

1. Rims of the proper size and tires of the proper size with a load rating commensurate with chassis manufacturer's gross vehicle weight rating shall be provided. The use of multi-piece rims and/or tube- type tires shall not be permitted on any school bus ordered after December 31, 1995.
2. Dual rear tires shall be provided on Type A-2, Type B, Type C, and Type D school buses.
3. All tires on a bus shall be of the same size, and the load range of the tires shall meet or exceed the Gross Vehicle Weight Rating (GVWR) as required by Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSS) No. 120, Tire Selection and Rims for Vehicles other than Passenger Car.
4. If the vehicle is equipped with a spare tire and rim assembly, it shall be the same size as those mounted on the bus.
5. If a tire carrier is required, it shall be suitably mounted in an accessible location outside the passenger compartment.
6. Tread depth 4/32 inches on front and 2/32 inches on rear will be minimum. Retreads are allowed on rear wheels only.

TOWING ATTACHMENT POINTS

Front and/or rear towing devices (i.e. tow hooks, tow eyes, or other designated towing attachment points) shall be furnished to assist in the retrieval of buses that are stuck and/or for towing buses when a wrecker with a “wheel lift” or an “axle lift” is not available or cannot be applied to the towed vehicle. Towing devices shall be attached to the chassis frame by either the chassis or body manufacturer in accordance with the chassis manufacturer’s specifications.

Each towing device shall have a strength rating of ~~13,000~~ 13,500 pounds each, for a combined rating of 27,000 pounds with the force applied in the rearward direction, parallel to the ground, and parallel to the longitudinal axis of the chassis frame rail. For pulling and lifting purposes, tow hooks are meant to be used simultaneously. For pulling, angularity applied to the tow hooks will decrease the capacities of the tow hooks.

The towing devices shall be mounted such that they do not project forward of the front or rearward of the rear bumper.

Note: (Type A buses are exempt from this requirement for front tow hooks or eyes due to built-in crush zones.)

TRACTION ASSISTING DEVICES (OPTIONAL)

1. Where required or used, sanders shall:
 - a. Be of hopper cartridge-valve type;
 - b. Have metal hopper with all interior surfaces treated to prevent condensation of moisture;
 - c. Be of at least 100-pound (grit) capacity;
 - d. Have a cover on filler opening of the hopper, which screws into place, sealing unit airtight;
 - e. Have discharge tubes extending under the fender wheel housing to the front of each rear wheel;
 - f. Have no-clogging discharge tubes with slush-proof, non-freezing rubber nozzles;
 - g. Be operated by an electric switch with pilot light mounted on the instrument panel located to be exclusively controlled by the driver;
 - h. Be equipped with a gauge to indicate that the hopper has reached the one-quarter level (and needs to be refilled); and
 - i. Be designed to prevent freezing of all activation components and moving parts.
2. Automatic traction chains may be installed.

TRANSMISSION (FOR INTERNAL COMBUSTION ENGINES ONLY)

1. Automatic transmissions shall have no fewer than three forward speeds and one reverse speed. The mechanical shift selector shall provide a detent between each gear position when the gear selector quadrant and shift selector are not steering column mounted.
2. Automatic transmissions shall have a transmission shifter interlock controlled by the application of the service brake to prohibit accidental engagement of the transmission.

TRASH CONTAINER AND HOLDING DEVICE

Where requested or used, the trash container shall be secured by a holding device that is designed to prevent movement and to allow easy removal and replacement; and it shall be installed in an accessible location in the driver’s compartment, not obstructing passenger use of the entrance door.

TURNING RADIUS

1. A chassis with a wheelbase of 264 inches or less shall have a right and left turning radius of not more than 42.5 feet, curb-to-curb measurement.
2. A chassis with a wheelbase of 265 inches or more shall have a right and left turning radius of not more than 44.5 feet, curb-to-curb measurement.

UNDERCOATING

1. Entire underside of bus body, including floor sections, cross member and below floor line side panels, shall be coated with rust-proofing compound for which compound manufacturer has issued notarized certification of compliance to the bus body builder that compound meets or exceeds all performance requirements of [Society of Automotive Engineers \(SAE\) J1959](#).
2. Undercoating material shall be applied with suitable airless or conventional spray equipment to the undercoating material manufacturer recommended film thickness and shall show no evidence of voids in cured film.
3. The undercoating material shall not cover any exhaust components of the chassis.

VENTILATION

1. Mandatory auxiliary fans shall meet the following requirements:
 - a. Two auxiliary fans are required and shall be placed in a location where they can be adjusted for maximum effectiveness and do not obstruct the driver's vision or interfere with the safe operation of necessary equipment.
 - b. Fans shall be a nominal six-inch (nominal) diameter; and
 - c. Fan blades shall be enclosed in a protective cage.
 - d. Each fan shall be controlled by a separate switch.
2. The bus body shall be equipped with a suitably controlled ventilating system of sufficient capacity to maintain proper quantity of air under operating conditions, without having to open windows except in extremely warm weather.
3. Static-type non-closeable exhaust ventilation shall be installed in low-pressure area of roof.
4. Roof hatches designed to provide ventilation, regardless of the exterior weather conditions, may be provided.

WARNING STATEMENTS

Buses may have one or both warning statements listed in a & b below to the rear of the bus. These statements shall be located either between the upper and lower glass panes on the rear emergency exit door, or equivalent location if rear door is absent, and /or below the rear tail/stop lights on the right side. These statements apply whether the bus is loaded or unloaded.

1. "This Bus Stops at All R.R. (or Railroad) Crossings." (An equivalent message may be substituted, not to exceed total number of letters and spaces of original.)
2. "STOP-Illegal to Pass When Overhead Red Lights Are Flashing." (An equivalent message may be substituted, not to exceed total number of letters and spaces of original.)
3. The lettering shall conform to "series B" of Standard Alphabets for highway signs, shall be black, and shall be sized so the message will fit the available space, but not to exceed two inches.

WHEEL HOUSING

1. The wheel housing opening shall allow for easy tire removal and service.
2. The wheel housing shall be attached to floor sheets in such a manner as to prevent any dust, water or fumes from entering the body. Wheel housing shall be constructed of at least 16-gauge steel.
3. The inside height of the wheel housing above the floor line shall not exceed 12 inches.
4. The wheel housing shall provide clearance for installation and use of tire chains on single and dual (if so equipped) power-driving wheels.
5. No part of the raised wheel housing shall extend into the emergency door opening.

WINDOWS

1. Each full side window, other than emergency exits designated to comply with [Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards \(FMVSS\) No. 217](#), Bus Emergency Exits and Window Retention and Release, each side window

shall provide an unobstructed emergency opening of at least nine inches (but not more than 13 inches high) and at least 22 inches wide, obtained by lowering the window. One side window on each side of the bus may be less than 22 inches wide.

2. Optional tinted and/or frost-free glazing may be installed in all doors, windows, and windshields consistent with federal, state, and local regulations. For improved visibility, frost-free glazing shall be installed in the driver's window (excluding Type A). Optional frost-free glazing may be installed in the first two windows to the rear of the entry door and/or the first window behind the driver.
3. See door section for entrance door glazing requirements.

WINDSHIELD WASHERS

A windshield washer system shall be provided.

WINDSHIELD WIPERS

1. A windshield wiping system, two-speed or variable speed, with an intermittent feature, shall be provided and shall be operated by a single switch.
2. The wipers shall be operated by one or more air or electric motors of sufficient power to operate wipers. If one motor is used, the wipers shall work in tandem to give full sweep of windshield. The wiper system shall meet the requirements of [Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards \(FMVSS\)](#) No. 104, Windshield Wiping and Washing Systems.

SPECIALLY EQUIPPED SCHOOL BUSES

INTRODUCTION

The specifications in this section are intended to be supplementary to specifications in the Body and Chassis section. In general, specially equipped buses shall meet all the requirements of the preceding sections plus those listed in this section. It is recognized by the entire industry that the field of special transportation is characterized by varied needs for individual cases and by a rapidly emerging technology for meeting those needs.

DEFINITION

A specially equipped school bus is any school bus, which is designed, equipped, and/or modified to accommodate students with special transportation needs.

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

1. School buses designed for transporting students with special transportation needs shall comply with Montana School Bus Standards, National School Transportation Specifications ~~and~~ Procedures, ~~and with the Federal Vehicle Safety Standards~~ and with Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSS) applicable to their Gross Vehicle Weight Rating (GVWR) category.
2. Any school bus to be used for the transportation of children who utilize a wheelchair or other mobile positioning device, or who require life support equipment that prohibits use of the regular service entrance, shall be equipped with a power lift.

AISLES

All school buses equipped with a power lift shall provide a minimum 30-inch pathway leading from any wheelchair/mobility aid position to at least one 30"-inch wide emergency exit door. A wheelchair securement position shall never be located directly in front of (blocking) a power lift door location. ~~It is understood that, when provided, the lift service door is considered an emergency exit.~~

COMMUNICATIONS

~~All school buses which are used to transport individuals with disabilities should be equipped with a two-way electronic voice communication system that can be used at any point in the vehicle's route. Where no such~~

~~service exists, vehicles would be exempt.~~

GLAZING

Tinted glazing may be installed in all doors, windows, and windshields consistent with federal, state, and local regulations.

IDENTIFICATION

Specially equipped school buses shall display below the window line the International Symbol of Accessibility. Such emblems shall be white on blue background, shall not exceed 12 square inches in size, and shall be of a high-intensity, Retro-reflective material meeting Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) FP-85 Standard Specifications for Construction of Roads and Bridges on Federal Highway Projects.

PASSENGER CAPACITY RATING

In determining the passenger capacity of a school bus for purposes other than actual passenger load (e.g., vehicle classification, or various billing/reimbursement models), any location in a school bus intended for securement of an occupied wheelchair/mobility aid during vehicle operations may be regarded as four designated seating positions. Similarly, each lift area may be regarded as four designated seating positions.

POWER LIFTS

1. ~~The P~~power lift shall be located on the right side of the bus body.
2. Exception: The lift may be located on the left side of the bus if, and only if, the bus is only used to deliver students to the left side of one-way streets.
3. Vehicle lift and installation
 - a. General: Vehicle lifts and installations shall comply with the requirements set forth in Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSS) No. 403, Platform Lift Systems for Motor Vehicles, and FMVSS No. 404, Platform Lift Installations in Motor Vehicles.
 - b. Design load: The design load of the lift shall be at least 800 pounds. Working parts, such as cables, pulleys, and shafts, which can be expected to wear, and upon which the lift depends for support of the load, shall have a safety factor of at least six (6), based on the ultimate strength of the material. Non-working parts, such as platform, frame, and attachment hardware that would not be expected to wear, shall have a safety factor of at least three (3), based on the ultimate strength of the material.
 - ~~b-c.~~ Lift capacity: The lifting mechanism and platform shall be capable of operating effectively with a wheelchair and occupant mass of at least 800 pounds.
 - ~~c-d.~~ Controls Requirements: Controls shall enable the operator to activate the lift mechanism from either inside or outside the bus. See 49 CFR 571.403, S6.7, Control systems. ~~The controls should be interlocked with the vehicle brakes, transmission, or door, or shall provide other appropriate mechanisms or systems to ensure the vehicle cannot be moved when the lift is not stowed and so the lift cannot be deployed unless the interlocks or systems are engaged. The lift shall deploy to all levels (i.e., ground, curb, and intermediate positions) normally encountered in the operating environment. Where provided, each control for deploying, lowering, raising, and stowing the lift and lowering the roll-off barrier shall be of a momentary contact type requiring continuous manual pressure by the operator and shall not allow improper lift sequencing when the lift platform is occupied. The controls shall allow reversal of the lift operation sequence, such as raising or lowering a platform that is part way down, without allowing an occupied platform to fold or retract into the stowed position.~~
 - ~~i.~~ Exception—Where the lift is designed to deploy with its long dimension parallel to the vehicle axis and which pivots into or out of the vehicle while occupied (i.e., “rotary lift”), the requirements of this paragraph prohibiting the lift from being stowed while occupied shall not apply if the stowed position is within the passenger compartment and the lift is intended to be stowed while occupied.
 - d-e. Emergency operation:— The lift shall incorporate an emergency method of deploying, lowering to ground level with a lift occupant, and raising and stowing the empty lift if the power to the lift fails. See

~~49 CFR 571.403, S6.9, Backup operation. No emergency method, manual or otherwise, shall be capable of being operated in a manner that could be hazardous to the lift occupant or to the operator when operated per manufacturer's instructions and shall not permit the platform to be stowed or folded when occupied, unless the lift is a rotary lift and is intended to be stowed while occupied. No manual emergency operation shall require more than two (2) minutes to lower an occupied wheelchair to ground level.~~

~~e.f. Power or equipment failure: Platforms stowed in a vertical position, and deployed platforms when occupied, shall have provisions to prevent their deploying, falling, or folding any faster than 12 inches per second or their dropping of an occupant in the event of a single failure of any load carrying component. See 49 CFR 571.403, S6.2.2, Maximum platform velocity. Platform barriers: See 49 CFR 571.403, S6.4.7, Wheelchair retention.~~

~~i. Platform barriers The lift platform shall be equipped with barriers to prevent any of the wheels of a wheelchair or mobility aid from rolling off the platform during its operation. A movable barrier or inherent design feature shall prevent a wheelchair or mobility aid from rolling off the edge closest to the vehicle until the platform is in its fully raised position. Each side of the lift platform that extends beyond the vehicle in its raised position shall have a barrier a minimum 1.5 inches high. Such barriers shall not interfere with maneuvering into or out of the aisle. The loading edge barrier (outer barrier), which functions as a loading ramp when the lift is at ground level, shall be sufficient when raised or closed, or a supplementary system shall be provided, to prevent a power wheelchair or mobility aid from riding over or defeating it. The outer barrier of the lift shall automatically raise or close, or a supplementary system shall automatically engage, and remain raised, closed, or engaged always that the platform is more than 3 inches above the roadway or sidewalk and the platform is occupied. Alternatively, a barrier or system may be raised, lowered, opened, closed, engaged, or disengaged by the lift operator, provided an interlock or inherent design feature prevents the lift from rising unless the barrier is raised or closed or the supplementary system is engaged.~~

~~f.g. Platform surface: See 49 CFR 571.403, S6.4.2, S6.4.3, Platform requirements. See also "Wheelchair or Mobility Aid Envelope" figure at the end of this subsection. The platform surface shall be free of any protrusions over 1/4 inch high and shall be slip resistant. The platform shall have a minimum clear width of 28.5 inches at the platform, a minimum clear width of 30 inches measured from two inches above the platform surface to 30 inches above the surface of the platform, and a minimum clear length of 48 inches measured from two inches above the surface of the platform to 30 inches above the surface of the platform.~~

~~g.h. Platform gaps and entrance ramps: See 49 CFR 571.403, S6.4.4, Gaps, transitions and openings. Any openings between the platform surface and the raised barriers shall not exceed 5/8 inch in width. When the platform is at vehicle floor height with the inner barrier (if applicable) down or retracted, gaps between the forward lift platform edge and the vehicle floor shall not exceed 1/2 inch horizontally and 5/8 inch vertically. Platforms on semi-automatic lifts may have a hand hold not exceeding 1.5 inches by 4.5 inches located between the edge barriers.~~

~~h.i. Platform deflection: See 49 CFR 571.403, S6.4.5, Platform deflection. The lift platform (not including the entrance ramp) shall not deflect more than 3 degrees (exclusive of vehicle roll or pitch) in any direction between its unloaded position and its position when loaded with 600 pounds applied through a 26-inch by 26-inch test pallet at the centroid of the platform.~~

~~i.j. Platform movement: See 49 CFR 571.403, S6.2.3, Maximum platform acceleration. No part of the platform shall move at a rate exceeding 6 inches per second during lowering and lifting an occupant, and shall not exceed 12 inches per second during deploying or stowing. This requirement does not apply to the deployment or stowage cycles of lifts that are manually deployed or stowed. The maximum platform horizontal and vertical acceleration when occupied shall be 0.3 g.~~

~~4.k. Boarding direction: The lift shall permit both inboard and outboard facing of wheelchair and mobility aid users.~~

~~5. Use by standees—Lifts shall accommodate persons using walkers, crutches, canes or braces, or who otherwise have difficulty using steps. The platform may be marked to indicate a preferred standing position.~~

~~6-l. Handrails: See 49 CFR 571.403, S6.4.9, Handrails. Platforms on lifts shall be equipped with handrails on two sides, which move in tandem with the lift, and which shall be graspable and provide support to standees throughout the entire lift operation. Handrails shall have a usable component at least 8 inches long with the lowest portion a minimum 30 inches above the platform and the highest portion a maximum 38 inches above the platform. The handrails shall withstand a force of 100 pounds concentrated at any point on the handrail without permanent deformation of the rail or its supporting structure. The handrail shall have a cross-sectional diameter between 1 1/4 inches and 1 1/2 inches or shall provide an equivalent grasping surface, and have eased edges with corner radii of not less than 1/8 inch.~~

~~a. Handrails shall be placed to provide a minimum 1 1/2 inch knuckle clearance from the nearest adjacent surface. Handrails shall not interfere with wheelchair or mobility aid maneuverability when entering or leaving the vehicle.~~

~~7-m. Circuit breaker: A resettable circuit breaker shall be installed between power source and lift motor if electrical power is used. It shall be located as close to the power source as possible, but not within the passenger/driver compartment.~~

~~8-n. Excessive pressure: See 49 CFR 571.403, S6.8, Jacking prevention. Lift design shall prevent excessive pressure that could damage the lift system when the platform is fully lowered or raised, or that could jack the vehicle.~~

~~9-4. Documentation:—~~ The following information shall be provided with each vehicle equipped with a lift:

- ~~a. A phone number where information can be obtained about installation, repair, and parts. (Detailed written instructions and a parts list shall be available upon request.)~~
- ~~b. Detailed instructions regarding use of the lift and shall be readily visible when the lift door is open, including a diagram showing the proper placement and positioning of wheelchair/mobility aids on lift.~~

~~10-5. Training materials: The lift manufacturer shall make available training materials to ensure the proper use and maintenance of the lift. These may include instructional videos, classroom curriculum, system test results, or other related materials.~~

~~11-6. Identification and certification: Each lift shall be permanently and legibly marked or incorporate a non-removable label or tag which states that it conforms to all applicable requirements of the current National Standards for School Buses. In addition, the lift manufacturer, or an authorized representative, upon request of the original titled purchaser, shall provide a notarized Certificate of Conformance, either original or photocopied, which states that the lift system meets all the applicable requirements of the current National School Transportation Specifications and Procedures.~~

REGULAR SERVICE ENTRANCE

On power-lift equipped vehicles, the step shall be the full width of the step well, excluding the thickness of doors in open position.

~~In addition to the HANDRAIL required in the HANDRAILS section, an additional handrail may be provided on all SPECIALLY EQUIPPED SCHOOL BUSES. This rail shall be located on the opposite side of the entrance door from the rail required in the BUS BODY AND CHASSIS section and shall meet the same requirements for handrails.~~

RESTRAINING DEVICES

~~1. On power lift-equipped vehiclesschool buses with a Gross Vehicle Weight Rating (GVWR) of 10,000 pounds or more, seat frames may be equipped with attachments points to which belt assemblies can be attached for use with Child Safety Restraint Systems (CSRS) that comply with Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSS) No. 213, Child Restraint System. or devices to which belts, restraining harnesses or other devices may be attached. Attachment framework or anchorage devices, if installed, shall conform to Any belt assembly anchorage shall comply with FMVSS No. 210, Seat Belt Assembly Anchorages.~~

~~1.2. Alternatively, a child restraint anchorage system that complies with FMVSS No. 225, Child Restraint Anchorage Systems, may be installed.~~

~~2.3. Seat belt assemblies, if installed, shall conform to FMVSS No. 209, Seat Belt Assemblies.~~

~~3.4. Child restraint systems, which are used to facilitate the transportation of children who, in other modes of transportation would be required to use a child, infant, or booster seat, shall conform to FMVSS No. 213.~~

SEATING ARRANGEMENTS

Flexibility in seat spacing to accommodate special devices shall be permitted to meet passenger requirements. All seating shall be forward-facing.

~~This seating arrangement provision shall apply to all new specially equipped school buses, any older buses modified or retrofitted to carry wheelchairs/mobile seating device(s), and any older specially equipped buses whose wheelchair/mobile seating device positions are retrofitted or modified, after August 15, 1993. This provision shall apply retroactively to all specially equipped school buses after August 15, 1998.~~

SECUREMENT/RESTRAINT SYSTEM FOR WHEELCHAIR/MOBILITY AID AND OCCUPANT

For purposes of understanding the various aspects and components of this section, the term securement and tie down and the phrases securement system or tie down system is used exclusively about the device that anchors the wheelchair to the vehicle. The term Wheelchair ~~t~~Tie-down and Occupant ~~R~~Restraint System (WTORS) is used to refer to the total system used that secures and restrains both the wheelchair and the wheelchair occupant. Add national

~~1. WTORS general requirements:~~

- ~~a. The Wheelchair/Mobility Aid Securement and Occupant Restraint System shall be designed, installed, and operated to accommodate passengers in a forward-facing orientation within the bus and shall comply with all applicable requirements of FMVSS 222, School Bus Passenger Seating and Crash Protection, and SAE J2249, Wheelchair Tie down and Occupant Restraint Systems for use in Motor Vehicles. Gurney type devices shall be secured parallel to the side of each bus.~~
- ~~b. The WTORS, including the anchorage track, floor plates, pockets, or other anchorages shall be provided by the same manufacturer, or be certified to be compatible by manufacturers of all equipment/systems used.~~
- ~~c. When a wheelchair/mobility aid securement device and an occupant restraint share a common anchorage, including occupant restraint designs that attach the occupant restraint to the securement device or the wheelchair/mobility aid, the anchorage shall withstand the loads of both the securement device and occupant restraint applied simultaneously, in accordance with FMVSS 222.~~
- ~~d. When a wheelchair/mobility aid securement device (webbing or strap assembly) is shared with an occupant restraint, the wheelchair/ mobility aid securement device (webbing or strap assembly) shall withstand a force twice the amount as specified in 4.4(a) of FMVSS 209.~~
- ~~e. The bus body floor and sidewall structures where the securement and restraint system anchorages are attached shall have equal or greater strength than the load requirements of the system(s) being installed.~~
- ~~f. The occupant restraint system shall be designed to be attached to the bus body either directly or in combination with the wheelchair/mobility aid securement system, by a method, which prohibits the transfer of weight or force from the wheelchair/mobility aid to the occupant in the event of an impact.~~
- ~~g. When an occupied wheelchair/mobility aid is secured in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions, the securement and restraint system shall limit the movement of the occupied wheelchair/mobility aid to no more than two inches in any direction under normal driving conditions.~~
- ~~h. The securement and restraint system shall incorporate an identification scheme, which will allow for the easy identification of the various components and their functions. It shall consist of one of the following, or combination thereof:~~
 - ~~i. The wheelchair/mobility aid securement (webbing or strap assemblies) and the occupant~~

- ~~restraint belt assemblies shall be of contrasting color or color shade.~~
 - ~~ii.—The wheelchair/mobility aid securement device (webbing or strap assemblies) and occupant restraint belt assemblies shall be clearly marked to indicate the proper wheelchair orientation in the vehicle, and the name and location for each device or belt assembly, i.e., front, rear, lap belt, shoulder belt, etc.~~
- ~~i.—All attachment or coupling devices designed to be connected or disconnected frequently shall be accessible and operable without the use of tools or other mechanical assistance.~~
- ~~j.—All securement and restraint system hardware and components shall be free of sharp or jagged areas and shall be of a non-corrosive material or treated to resist corrosion in accordance with section 4.3(a) of FMVSS 209.~~
- ~~k.—The securement and restraint system shall be located and installed such that when an occupied wheelchair/mobility aid is secured, it does not block access to the lift door.~~
- ~~l.—A device for securement and restraint storage system shall be provided. When the system is not in use, the system shall be kept in a securely contained storage device. The storage container shall allow for clean storage, and shall provide reasonable protection from vandalism, and shall enable the system to be readily accessed for use.~~
- ~~m.—The entire securement and restraint system, including the storage device, shall meet the flammability standards established in FMVSS 302.~~
- ~~n.—Each securement device (webbing or strap assembly) and restraint belt assembly shall be permanently and legibly marked or incorporate a non-removable label or tag which states that it conforms to all applicable FMVSS requirements, as well as, the current National Standards for School Buses. In addition, the system manufacturer, or an authorized representative, upon request by the original titled purchaser, shall provide a notarized Certificate of Conformance, either original or photocopied, which states that the wheelchair/mobility aid securement and occupant restraint system meets all the requirements as specified in FMVSS 222 and the current National School Transportation Specifications and Procedures.~~
- ~~o.—The following information shall be provided with each vehicle equipped with a securement and restraint system:~~
 - ~~i.—A phone number where information can be obtained about installation, repair, and parts. (Detailed written instructions and a parts list shall be available upon request.)~~
 - ~~ii.—Detailed instructions regarding use, including a diagram showing the proper placement of the wheelchair/mobility aids and positioning of securement devices and occupant restraints, including correct belt angles.~~
- ~~p.—The system manufacturer shall make available training materials to ensure the proper use and maintenance of the wheelchair/mobility aid securement and occupant restraint system. These may include instructional videos, classroom curriculum, system test results, or other related materials.~~
- 2.—Wheelchair/mobility Aid Securement System**
 - ~~a.—Each securement system location shall consist of a minimum of four anchorage points. A minimum of two anchorage points shall be in front of the wheelchair/mobility aid and a minimum of two anchorage points shall be in the rear. The securement anchorages shall be attached to the floor of the vehicle and shall not interfere with passenger movement or present any hazardous condition.~~
 - ~~b.—Each securement system location shall have a minimum clear floor area of 30 inches x 48 inches. Additional floor area may be required for some applications. Consultation between the user and the manufacturer is recommended to ensure adequate area is provided.~~
 - ~~c.—The securement system shall secure common wheelchair/mobility aids and shall be able to be attached easily by a person having average dexterity and who is familiar with the system and wheelchair/mobility aid.~~
 - ~~d.—As installed, each securement anchorage shall withstand a minimum force of 3,000 pounds (13,344 Newton's) when applied as specified in FMVSS 222. When more than one securement device share a~~

~~common anchorage, the anchorage shall withstand the force indicated above, multiplied by the number of securement devices sharing that anchorage.~~

- ~~e.—Each securement device, if incorporating webbing or a strap assembly, shall comply with the requirements for Type 1 safety belt systems, in accordance with sections 4.2, 4.3, and 4.4(a) of FMVSS 209.~~
- ~~f.—The securement system shall secure the wheelchair/mobility aid in such a manner that the attachments or coupling hardware will not become detached when any wheelchair/mobility aid component deforms, when one or more tires deflate, and without intentional operation of a release mechanism (e.g., a spring clip on a securement hook).~~
- ~~g.—Each securement device (webbing or strap assembly) shall withstand a minimum force of 2,500 pounds when tested in accordance with FMVSS 209.~~
- ~~h.—Each securement device (webbing or strap assembly) shall provide a means of adjustment, of manufacturer's design, to remove slack from the device or assembly.~~

~~3.—Occupant Restraint System~~

- ~~a.—A Type 2A occupant restraint system, which meets all applicable requirements of FMVSSs 209 and 210, shall provide for restraint of the occupant.~~
- ~~b.—The occupant restraint system shall be made of materials, which do not stain, soil, or tear an occupant's clothing, and which are resistant to water damage and fraying.~~
- ~~c.—Each restraint system location shall have not less than one anchorage, of manufacturer's design, for the upper end of the upper torso restraint.~~
 - ~~i.—The anchorage for each occupant's upper torso restraint shall withstand a minimum force of 1,500 pounds (6,672 Newton's) when applied as specified in FMVSS 222. (See 49 CFR 571.222, S5.4.3, S5.4.4). If the upper torso belt anchorage is higher than 44", measured from the vehicle floor, an adjustment device as part of the occupant restraint system shall be supplied.~~
- ~~d.—Each wheelchair/mobility aid location shall have not less than two floor anchorages for the occupant pelvic and the connected upper torso restraint.~~
 - ~~i.—Each floor anchorage shall withstand a minimum force of 3,000 pounds (13,344 Newton's) when applied as specified in FMVSS 222.~~
 - ~~ii.—When more than one occupant restraint shares a common anchorage, the anchorage shall withstand a minimum force of 3,000 pounds (13,344 Newton's) multiplied by the number of occupant restraints sharing the common anchorage in accordance with FMVSS 222.~~
- ~~e.—Each floor and wall anchorage which secures the occupant restraint to the vehicle and which is not permanently attached, shall be of a "positive latch" design, and shall not allow for any accidental disconnection.~~

~~4.—Dynamic Testing~~

- ~~a.—The wheelchair/mobility aid securement and occupant restraint system shall be subjected to, and successfully pass, a dynamic sled test at a minimum impact speed/deceleration of 30 mph/20g's.~~
- ~~b.—The dynamic test shall be performed by experienced personnel using an impact simulator with proven ability to provide reliable, accurate, test results that can be replicated.~~
- ~~c.—The dynamic test shall be performed in accordance with the procedures set forth in Appendix A of SAE J2249 "Test for Frontal Impact Crash Worthiness."~~
- ~~d.—The wheelchair/mobility aid used for testing purposes shall be a rigid, reusable surrogate wheelchair that complies with the requirements of Appendix D of SAE J2249 "Specification for Surrogate Wheelchair."~~
- ~~e.—The dynamic test shall be performed using system assemblies, components and attaching hardware that are identical to the final installation in type, configuration and positioning. The body structure at the anchorage points may be simulated for the sled test.~~
- ~~f.—When tested, the wheelchair/mobility aid securement and occupant restraint system shall pass the criteria specified in Section 6.2 of SAE J2249 "Performance Requirements of Frontal Sled Impact Test."~~

~~Following is an abridged summary of the criteria:~~

- ~~i. Retain the test dummy in the test wheelchair and on the test sled with the test wheelchair in an upright position;~~
- ~~ii. Does not show any fragmentation or complete separation of any load-carrying part;~~
- ~~iii. Does not allow the horizontal excursions of the test dummy and the test wheelchair to exceed specified limits;~~
- ~~iv. Prevent the test wheelchair from imposing forward loads on the test dummy; and~~
- ~~v. Allow removal of the test dummy and the test wheelchair, after the test, without the use of tools.~~

1. WTORS — general requirements:

- a. A WTORS installed in specially-equipped school buses shall be designed, and operated for use with forward-facing wheelchair-seated passengers and shall comply with all applicable requirements of Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSS) No. 222, School Bus Passenger Seating and Crash Protection, and Society of Automotive Engineers (SAE) J2249, Wheelchair Tiedown and Occupant Restraint Systems for Use in Motor Vehicles. An American National Standards Institute/Rehabilitation Engineering Society of North America WC18-compliant WTORS may be specified when transporting a wheelchair that is fully compliant with WC19 (2012), which includes a crash tested wheelchair anchored pelvic belt;
Note: Floor anchors must provide adjustability when transporting all types and sizes of wheelchairs.
- b. Wheelchair securement positions shall be located such that wheelchairs and their occupants do not block access to the lift door or exits;
- c. A device for storage of the WTORS shall be provided. When the system is not in use, the storage device shall allow for clean storage of the system, shall keep the system securely contained within the passenger compartment, shall provide reasonable protection from vandalism, and shall enable the system to be readily accessed for use;
- d. The WTORS, including the storage device, shall meet the flammability standards established in FMVSS No. 302, Flammability of Interior Materials;
- e. The following information shall be provided with each vehicle equipped with a securement and restraint system:
 - i. A phone number where information can be obtained about installation, repair, and parts. (Detailed written instructions and a parts list shall be available upon request.);
 - ii. Detailed instructions regarding use, including a diagram showing the proper placement of the wheelchair/mobility aids and positioning of securement devices and occupant restraints, including correct belt angles;
- f. The WTORS manufacturer shall make training materials available to ensure the proper use and maintenance of the WTORS. These may include instructional videos, classroom curriculum, system test results, or other related materials;

2. Wheelchair Securement/Tiedown: (See 49 CFR 571.222, S5.4.1, S5.4.2.) Each wheelchair position in a specially equipped school bus shall have a minimum clear floor area of 30 inches laterally by 48 inches longitudinally. Additional floor area may be required for some wheelchairs. Consultation between the user and the manufacturer is recommended to ensure that adequate area is provided;

3. Occupant restraint system: (See 49 CFR 571.222, S5.4.3, S5.4.4.) If the upper torso belt anchorage is higher than 44 inches measured from the vehicle floor, an adjustment device, as part of the occupant restraint system, shall be supplied.

SPECIAL LIGHT

Doorways in which lifts are installed shall ~~have for use during lift operation a special light providing a be~~ equipped with a special interior light that is located above the lift and provides a minimum of two foot-candles of illumination measured on the floor of the bus immediately adjacent to the lift ~~during lift operation and on the lift when deployed at the vehicle floor level.~~

SPECIAL SERVICE ENTRANCE

1. Power lift-equipped bodies shall have a special service entrance to accommodate the power lift.
Exception: If the lift is designed to operate within the regular service entrance, and is capable of stowing such that the regular service entrance is not blocked in any way, and that persons entering or exiting the bus are not impeded in any way, a special service entrance shall not be required.
2. The special service entrance and door shall be located on the right side of the bus and shall be designed so as not to obstruct the regular service entrance.
Exception: A special service entrance and door may be located on the left side of the bus if, and only if, the bus is used primarily to deliver students to the left side of one way streets and its use is limited to that function.
3. The opening may extend below the floor through the bottom of the body skirt. If such an opening is used, reinforcements shall be installed at the front and rear of the floor opening to support the floor and give the same strength as other floor openings.
4. A drip molding shall be installed above the opening to effectively divert water from entrance.
5. Door posts and headers from entrance shall be reinforced sufficiently to provide support and strength equivalent to the area of the side of the bus not used for special service entrance.

SPECIAL SERVICE ENTRY DOORS

1. A single door or double doors may be used for the special service entrance.
2. A single door shall be hinged to the forward side of the entrance unless doing so would obstruct the regular service entrance. If, due to the above condition, the door is hinged to the rearward side of the doorway, the door shall utilize a safety mechanism, which will also prevent the door from swinging open should the primary door latch fail to operate properly. If double doors are used the system shall be designed to prevent the door(s) from being blown open by the wind resistance created by the forward motion of the bus, and/or incorporate a safety mechanism to provide secondary protection should the primary latching mechanism(s) fail.
3. All doors shall have positive fastening devices to hold doors in the open position.
4. All doors shall be weather sealed.
5. When manually-operated dual doors are provided, the rear door shall have at least a one-point fastening device to the header. The forward-mounted door shall have at least three one-point fastening devices. One shall be to the header, one to the floor line of the body, and the other shall be into the rear door. The door and hinge mechanism shall be of a strength that is greater than or equivalent to the emergency exit door.
6. Door materials, panels and structural strength shall be equivalent to the conventional service and emergency doors. Color, rub rail extensions, lettering and other exterior features shall match adjacent sections of the body.
7. Each door shall have windows set in rubber, which are visually similar in size and location to adjacent non-door windows. Glazing shall be of same type and tinting (if applicable) as standard fixed glass in other body locations.
8. Door(s) shall be equipped with a device that will actuate an audible or flashing signal located in the driver's compartment when door(s) is not securely closed and ignition is in "on" position.
9. A switch shall be installed so that the lifting mechanism will not operate when the lift platform door(s) is closed.
10. Special service entrance doors shall be equipped with padding at the top edge of the door opening. Padding shall be at least three inches wide and one inch thick and extend the full width of the door opening.

SUPPORT EQUIPMENT AND ACCESSORIES

1. Each bus which is set up to accommodate wheelchair/mobility aids or other assistive or restraint devices which utilize belts, shall contain at least one belt cutter properly secured in a location within reach of the driver while belted into his/her driver's seat. The belt cutter shall meet the requirements listed in the Bus

Body and Chassis section.

2. Each special equipped school bus that is set up to accommodate wheelchairs or other assistive restraint devices ~~should~~ shall be equipped with an emergency evacuation device that is certified and tested to withstand at least a 300-pound load when used as an emergency stretcher or drag. This evacuation device shall be properly secured to the bus in a location to be determined by the purchaser.
3. Special equipment or supplies that are used on the bus for mobility assistance, health support, or safety purposes shall meet any local, federal, or engineering standards which may apply, including proper identification. Equipment which may be used for these purposes includes, but is not limited to:
 - a. Wheelchairs and other mobile seating devices;
 - b. Crutches, walkers, canes, and other ambulating devices; and
 - c. Medical support equipment. This may include respiratory devices such as oxygen bottles (which should be no larger than 22 cubic feet for liquid oxygen and 38 cubic feet for compressed gas), or ventilators. (If transporting oxygen, refer to Ambulance Manufacturer Design (AMD) Standard 003.) Tanks and valves shall be located and positioned to protect them from direct sunlight, bus heater vents, or other heat sources. Other equipment may include intravenous and fluid drainage apparatus.
4. All portable equipment and special accessory items, including the equipment listed above, shall be secured at the mounting location to withstand a pulling force of five times the weight of the item, or shall be retained in an enclosed, latched compartment. The compartment shall be capable of withstanding forces applied to its interior equal to five times the weight of its contents without failure to the box's integrity and securement to the bus.

Exception: If these standards provide specific requirements for securement of an equipment type, the specific standard shall prevail (i.e., wheelchairs).

TECHNOLOGY AND EQUIPMENT, NEW

It is the intent of these ~~standards~~ School Bus Standards to accommodate new technologies and equipment that will better facilitate the transportation of students with special needs. When a new technology, piece of equipment, or component is desired to be applied for use in specially-equipped vehicles to the school bus, and it meets the following criteria, it may be acceptable if:

1. ~~It (the technology, equipment, or component) shall~~ does not compromise the effectiveness or integrity of any major safety system, unless it completely replaces the system. (Examples of safety systems include, but are not limited to, compartmentalization, the eight light warning lights system, emergency exits, and the uncluttered, approved yellow color scheme.)
2. ~~It shall~~ The technology, equipment, or component does not diminish the safe environment of the interior of the bus.
3. ~~It shall~~ The technology, equipment, or component does not create additional risk to students who are boarding or exiting the bus or are in or near the school bus loading zone.
4. ~~It shall~~ The technology, equipment, or component does not create undue additional activity and/or responsibility for the driver.
5. ~~It shall~~ The technology, equipment, or component generally increases efficiency and/or safety of the bus, or generally provides for a safer or more pleasant experience for the occupants and pedestrians near the bus, or generally assists the driver or makes his/her many tasks easier to perform.

TYPE "E" SCHOOL BUSES

INTRODUCTION

~~As of July 1st, 2017, schools are allowed to purchase a Type E vehicle as defined by 20-10-101, MCA.~~ The following general vehicle requirements, recommended guidelines, and operational guidelines apply only to I~~T~~ype E school buses.

GENERAL VEHICLE REQUIREMENTS

These requirements apply only to school bus I~~T~~ype E.

1. The school bus must be purchased on or after July 1, 2017.
2. Before a ~~T~~ype E school bus is purchased, the school is required to complete a cost analysis of a traditional ~~T~~ype A—D school bus versus the ~~T~~ype E school bus before acquiring this bus type. This cost analysis must be on file for review.
3. The vehicle purchased must meet the Five Star National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) rating, please visit [NHTSA](#).
4. The vehicle does not have to be new assuming all the conditions listed in MCA and the School Bus Standards are met.
5. The manufacturer's rated capacity of this vehicle, which shall be determined only by the ~~O~~original ~~E~~quipment ~~M~~anufacturer (OEM) on the date of manufacture, shall not exceed ~~ten~~ persons including the driver.
6. The vehicle is required to have a backup alarm.
7. The capacity rating may not be changed or modified.
8. Alteration of this vehicle, following manufacture by the OEM, is prohibited, with the exception of a backup alarm. This includes, but is not limited to, the addition or removal of seats, ramps, wheelchair securement devices and power lifts.
9. Wheelchair accessible ~~T~~ype E school buses must be manufactured to transport wheelchairs and have a Five Star NHTSA rating.
10. The only alteration exception allowed is when OEM options or other manufacturer's accessories not in violation of these standards are installed by the original manufacturer.
11. The vehicle shall not carry more passengers than there are seat belts as installed by the manufacturer.
12. The vehicle shall not be painted the color known as ~~N~~ational ~~S~~chool ~~B~~us glossy ~~Y~~ellow (~~NSBY~~).
13. The vehicle shall not be equipped with a stop arm or flashing warning signal lamps.
14. The vehicle must have four doors.
15. The vehicle must meet structural integrity as determined by the school Board of Trustees.
16. Trailer hitches are allowed on Type E vehicles in accordance with the manufacturer's rated towing capacity. When the vehicle is used as a Type E school bus, students are not allowed to be transported in the vehicle when the vehicle is being used to tow.
17. The vehicle is required to have a back-up camera and ~~E~~vent ~~D~~ata ~~R~~ecorder (EDR) device if newly purchased.
18. Any window tinting must comply with state laws.
19. Any storage systems must be properly tied down.

RECOMMENDED GUIDELINES

The following guidelines are recommended procedures for ~~T~~ype E school buses only.

1. Review vehicle before purchase and have proof vehicle is accident free by a vendor who uses National Motor ~~V~~ehicle title information system. This recommendation is in place for school district staff ~~t~~o ensure there is no structural damage to the vehicle due to an accident.
2. It is highly recommended to purchase a vehicle that is white.
3. It is highly recommended to purchase a vehicle with the following features: automatic crash notification system, pedestrian auto braking system, forward collision warning system, lane departure warning system, and blind spot detection.

OPERATIONAL REQUIREMENTS

The following requirements apply to ~~T~~ype E school buses only.

1. This vehicle must load and unload students off the traveled portion of the roadway and students shall not load or unload the vehicle using the door facing traffic. Students shall not walk around the front or rear of the vehicle or open the vehicle's driver side rear passenger door to load or unload.
2. Prohibited bus stops should follow the same restrictions as list in PROHIBITED SCHOOL BUS STOPS.
3. The vehicle, while transporting students to and from school, shall display three signs, one sign visible to the

rear and one sign on each side of the vehicle, with the words "SCHOOL BUS." The sign shall be National School Bus Glossy Yellow (NSBY) with reflective black letters and a minimum of 4 inches high and does not have to be on the same line vertically. The sign shall be a type that can be removed, dismounted, or covered when the vehicle is not transporting pupils to and from school.

4. Compliance with all Montana laws regarding vehicle seatbelt and restraint is required.
5. This vehicle Type E will not stop at railroads as this will create more confusion to the general public.
6. It is highly recommended all Type E school buses have staff trained on how to install child restraint system by a safety seat certified technician. Technicians available across the state can be found at [NHTSA Child Passenger Seat Inspections](#) found at [NHTSA Car Seats](#).
7. All driver requirements apply to school bus drivers of the Type E school bus with the exception of requiring a Commercial Driver's License (CDL) with endorsements. A standard Montana driver's license is acceptable. All other rules, including drug and alcohol testing, apply. See BUS DRIVER QUALIFICATIONS.

ALTERNATIVE FUELS

INTRODUCTION

This standard is designed to be used as an overview of the alternative fuels being utilized for school transportation. The standard is not designed to replace current applicable federal, state, manufacturing or safety standards that may exceed requirements within this standard. There will be advancements in engineering and improvements in equipment fabrication methods and operating practices that differ from those specifically called for in this standard. Such deviations or improvements may provide safety and may meet the intent of and be compatible with this standard. Entities wishing to purchase alternative fuel school buses should use this section only as a starting point. More detailed specifications, including specific design and performance criteria and safety standards, should be researched by prospective purchasers of alternative fuel school buses.

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

Alternative fuel school buses shall meet the following requirements:

1. Chassis shall meet all standards previously mentioned in Bus Chassis Standards;
2. Chassis shall meet all applicable Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSS) standards;
3. Fuel system integrity shall allow zero (0) leakage when impacted by a mobile barrier in accordance with test conditions specified in FMVSS No. 301 or FMVSS No. 303, as applicable;
4. Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs) and conversion systems using Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) shall comply with National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) Standard 52-2013, "Compressed Natural Gas Vehicular Fuel Systems". Fuel systems using Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) shall comply with the NFPA Standard 58-2014 "Liquefied Petroleum Gases Engine Fuel Systems" in effect at the time of installation.
5. Fuel tank(s) for vehicles of less than 54 passenger capacity powered by LPG or CNG shall have a minimum 40-gallon capacity. Fuel tank(s) for vehicles of 54 or more passenger capacity powered by LPG or CNG shall have a minimum 60-gallon capacity.
6. Natural gas-powered buses may be equipped with an interior/exterior gas detection system. All natural gas-powered buses may be equipped with a fire detection and suppression system;
7. All materials and assemblies used to transfer or store alternative fuels shall be installed outside the passenger/driver compartment;
8. All Type C and D buses using alternative fuel shall meet the same base requirements of BUS CHASSIS STANDARDS for power and grad ability, i.e., at least one published net horsepower per each 185 pounds of Gross Vehicle Weight Rating (GVWR);
9. The total weight shall not exceed the GVWR when loaded to the rated capacity;
10. The manufacturer supplying the alternative fuel equipment must provide the owner and operator with adequate training and certification in fueling procedures, scheduled maintenance, troubleshooting, and repair of alternative fuel equipment;
11. All fueling equipment shall be designed specifically for fueling motor vehicles and shall be certified by the

manufacturer as meeting all applicable federal, state and industry standards;

12. All on-board fuel supply containers shall meet all appropriate requirements of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME) code, the United States Department of Transportation (DOT) regulations, or applicable FMVSS and NFPA Standards;
13. All fuel supply containers shall be securely mounted to withstand a static force of eight times their weight in any direction;
14. All safety devices that may discharge to the atmosphere shall be vented to the outside of the vehicle. The discharge line from the safety relief valve on all school buses shall be in a manner appropriate to the characteristics of the alternative fuel. Discharge lines shall not pass through the passenger compartment;
15. CNG buses shall have a positive quick acting (1/4 turn) shut-off control valve shall be installed in the gaseous fuel supply lines as close to the fuel supply containers as possible. The controls for this valve shall be placed in a location easily operable from the exterior of the vehicle. The location of the valve control shall be clearly marked on the exterior surface of the bus; ~~and~~
16. A grounding system shall be required for grounding of the fuel system during maintenance related venting.
- ~~17.~~ Fuel systems identified as compatible with bio-diesel must be provided with components compatible with Bio-Diesel/biodiesel conforming to the specifications of ASTM 6751, Biodiesel Standards;-
- ~~17-18.~~ High-Voltage-Battery-Electric-Powered Vehicles: Buses utilizing a high-voltage propulsion system (more than 48 nominal volts) shall meet FMVSS and all Society of Automotive Engineers (SAE) Standards at the time of manufacture. Additionally:
 - a. The propulsion power source (batteries, fuel cells, etc.) shall be located outside the passenger compartment;
 - b. The propulsion power source enclosure shall be constructed to conform to the power source manufacturer's requirements and recommendations;
 - c. Charging connection point shall be outside the passenger compartment;
 - d. While charging, the transmission/propulsion system shall be rendered inoperable;
 - e. There shall be a disconnect switch to shut off the high-voltage components; and
 - f. Battery packs shall be appropriately heated and cooled.

OPERATIONSSPECIFICATION FOR SCHOOL BUS INSPECTION

INTRODUCTION

~~The success of any school transportation operation depends largely on the performance and degree of dedication displayed by those involved. These recommendations and requirements are designed to assist state agencies, school and Head-start administrators and private operators in understanding their pupil transportation programs and developing applicable policies, including those for transporting students with special needs.~~

~~The school bus is an extension of the classroom and as such, the ride to school should be safe and efficient in an atmosphere conducive to learning readiness. Open and honest communication between all stakeholders is vital for the success of the transportation program. Transportation is critical to the education process, and the school bus is the safest form of transportation. Therefore, transportation to and from school on a school bus shall be offered to all eligible students. In eligible situations, individual transportation contracts for vehicles that are not school buses can be approved.~~

~~Districts or the governing body responsible for pupil transportation shall have an eligibility policy, which takes safety into account, addressing distances from school for different age groups. If transportation eligibility is maximized, the result will be more students on buses, and therefore, safer access to students' educational opportunities. The sole criterion used to establish transportation eligibility should not be only the distance between a student's home address and the student's school of attendance; rather, travel to and from school must consider various criteria. Safety must be the primary concern, and criteria should consider the ages of students and potentially hazardous situations, such as roadway and walk pathway conditions, speed limits, railroad crossings, lighting conditions, etc. The criteria should also consider students' levels of maturity, grade levels, cognitive and physical abilities. Similar criteria should be used in~~

~~establishing maximum distances between a student's home and the assigned bus stop per district guidelines.~~

~~SEMI-ANNUAL BUS INSPECTIONS~~

1. The Montana Highway Patrol shall perform the semiannual inspection of school buses, one of which shall be at least 30 days prior to the beginning of the school term, and re-inspect the buses, if necessary, before the beginning of the school term. The second inspection shall be ~~performed~~ conducted by January 31.
2. The Highway Patrol's inspection shall determine if the school buses meet the minimum standards for school buses as adopted by the Board of Public Education.
3. Only school buses that pass inspection may be used to transport students and only school buses that pass inspection will receive state and county transportation reimbursement. A school bus that fails to pass inspection shall not transport students on routes and will not be eligible for state and county reimbursement until the bus is re-inspected and approved by the inspecting officer.

NOTE: The school district is responsible for contacting the Montana Highway Patrol for bus inspections. Nothing in this rule precludes the Montana Highway Patrol from inspecting school buses at other times as the Highway Patrol sees fit.

4. Buses that are placed in operation after the school semester has begun must be inspected and approved by the Montana Highway Patrol before the vehicle is operated on the established route.

STATE ADMINISTRATION

~~1.—Superintendent of Public Instruction~~

- ~~a.—The Superintendent of Public Instruction shall provide leadership and guidance as defined in MCA-20-10-112.~~

~~2.—State Pupil Transportation Director~~

- ~~a.—The state pupil transportation director's specific duties may include, but are not limited to:~~

- ~~i.—Assisting in the implementation, interpretation and understanding of pupil transportation laws, regulations and policies;~~
- ~~ii.—Supervising the preparation of manuals, handbooks and information for distribution to local transportation personnel and private operators;~~
- ~~iii.—Providing assistance and direction to local school administrators on request;~~
- ~~iv.—Assisting local personnel in planning and conducting pupil safety education programs;~~
- ~~v.—Requiring and maintaining appropriate reports and records;~~
- ~~vi.—Assisting/consulting with groups involved in pupil transportation safety;~~
- ~~vii.—Representing the interests of the pupil transportation industry;~~
- ~~viii.—Working cooperatively with school transportation associations, school districts, parents and private contractors to promote school bus safety and efficiency; and~~
- ~~ix.—Managing the state's Pupil Transportation Program, which includes planning, budgeting and forecasting requirements for the operation.~~

~~The state Director of Pupil Transportation should be an active member of regional and national organizations and should participate in activities that promote student transportation safety.~~

USE OF BUS AUDIO/VIDEO MONITORING SYSTEMS

School systems should promulgate, communicate and enforce policies and procedures to be followed when using on-board audio/video monitoring systems. ~~The Audio/video camera monitoring~~ on a school bus shall be used only as an aid to monitor and record student and driver behavior. It should not replace the discipline policy, the authority of the driver, or the responsibility of the school officials.

The basic safe riding rules must prevail and the consequences of misconduct must be carried out. All students and drivers shall be notified that they are subject to being recorded on the school bus at any time. Notification to parents of all students shall be made by the school district. Prior to actual ~~taping~~ recording, parents and students shall be advised that violation of acceptable student conduct is prohibited by state and school district

student disciplinary code and will result in appropriate consequences as defined in policy. ~~The actual taping shall be audio and video.~~

Ongoing notification regarding ~~videotaping~~ audio/video recording must occur, addressing the continued need for personal awareness of safety issues. This communication is particularly important to warn against a false sense of security, especially when cameras are moved between buses. Newsletters, student handouts, and notices posted in the bus should be considered.

If audio/video ~~cameras monitoring systems~~ are to be used for monitoring drivers, school systems should promulgate, communicate and enforce policies and procedures to be followed when using on-board audio/video monitoring systems. The drivers must be notified as to the extent of their use and for what purpose they will be used. Cameras should be scheduled on a rotation basis so as not to select only certain buses, unless the school is able to monitor all school bus activity without requiring a rotation plan. Based on the number of incidents of misconduct or the seriousness of these reports, recording of a bus route may be done more frequently. The transportation supervisor may decide if more frequent monitoring is needed. Such additional monitoring is meant to supplement the written disciplinary reports by the bus driver, not take the place of reports.

After videotaping has been conducted, the recordings are to be stored at a secure location for a period designated by the local school district, unless a specific recording is being used in an ongoing action. The transportation supervisor or designee shall periodically review the recordings randomly selected to ensure proper pupil conduct. If no incidents are reported within a period defined by local policy, the recording will be recycled. If incidents are reported, or if incidents are viewed during random selection, the recordings are to be kept until final resolution and time for any appeals. Recordings must be dated and have the bus number and driver's name to ensure proper identification. A log shall be maintained on the use of the video camera.

When action is taken because of information obtained from the recording, the driver, supervisor, school administrator, student, and parents or guardians will be contacted. A meeting of the aforementioned parties may be necessary to achieve a resolution of the problem. The recording may be used as evidence in that meeting. All requests for review shall be made in writing. Each district must designate, by policy, persons allowed to review the recording.

SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD AND ADMINISTRATION

The School District's Board and Administrative duties shall include but are not limited to:

1. Understanding and implementing pupil transportation laws, regulations, and policies;
2. Planning and conducting pupil safety education programs as needed;
3. Maintaining adequate records and filing appropriate reports; and,
4. Working to promote school bus safety and efficiencies, including planning and conducting a school bus driver training program.

BUS DRIVER QUALIFICATIONS

A driver of a school bus is qualified to drive a school bus if the driver:

1. ~~I~~is not less than 18 years of age;
2. ~~I~~is of good moral character;
3. ~~I~~is the holder of a ~~C~~eommercial ~~D~~river's ~~L~~icence (CDL);
4. ~~H~~has filed with the district a satisfactory medical examination report, on a form approved by the United States Department of Transportation, signed by any physician licensed in the United States or, if acceptable to an insurance carrier, any licensed physician;
5. ~~H~~has completed a basic first aid and CPR course, and holds a valid basic first aid and CPR certificate from an authorized instructor. The issuance of the certificate is governed by rules established by the

Superintendent of the Office of Public Instruction, if the rules may suspend this requirement for a reasonable period if there has been an inadequate opportunity for securing the basic first aid course and certificate.

5-6. Has completed a fingerprint-based background check, as required in 20-3-323, MCA. This requirement applies to any transportation staff who may be responsible for, or alone with, students during routes or activity trips and is designed to help ensure student safety and reduce liability for school districts.

6-7. Has complied with any other qualifications established by the Board of Public Education; and

7-8. Has filed with the County Superintendent a certificate from the Trustees of the district for which the school bus is to be driven, certifying compliance with the driver qualifications enumerated

Bus Drivers are also required to the following:

1. Have a minimum of five years of licensed driving experience;
2. ~~No~~ record of criminal offenses indicating they may be dangerous to children, as evidenced by a criminal background check provided to and approved by the school district prior to initial employment;
3. ~~A~~ safe driving record, which may not have evidence of any of the following:
 - a. more than one moving traffic violation within any 12-month period of the preceding 36 months;
 - b. any conviction for driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs within the preceding 36 months; or
 - c. a conviction resulting in mandatory revocation or suspension of a driver's license in the previous five years.

BUS DRIVER LICENSING

1. A Commercial Driver's License (CDL) with ~~and~~ School Bus "S" and Passenger "P" endorsement is required when a person who drives a school bus, or who transports ~~pre-primary~~ early childhood education, primary, or secondary school students for school-related activity trips, field trips, and operating on an approved route, in a commercial motor vehicle. The "S" endorsement shall be required for any school bus, including 16 passengers and less, and 16 passengers and more.
2. Drivers of school bus ~~T~~ type E are not required to have a CDL license or endorsement. All other requirements set forth in this section are applicable to all school bus drivers.

LIMITING THE USE OF ELECTRONIC DEVICES

PROHIBITION AGAINST TEXTING

1. No driver shall engage in texting while driving a school bus.
2. ~~Motor carriers. No motor carrier~~ No school district shall allow or require its drivers to engage in texting while driving a school bus.

~~b) Definitions.~~

~~(1) Texting means manually entering into, or reading from, an electronic device.~~

~~(2) Texting includes short message services, e-mailing, instant messaging, a command or request to access a web page, or engaging in any other form of electronic text retrieval or entry, for present or future communication; or~~

~~• Reaching for a hand-held device requiring the bus driver to maneuver so they are no longer in a seated position and restrained by a seat belt~~

~~(2) Driving means operating a commercial motor vehicle, including while temporarily stationary because of traffic, a traffic control device, or other momentary delays. Driving does not include operating a commercial motor vehicle when the driver has moved the vehicle to the side of, or off, a highway and has halted in a location where the vehicle can safely remain stationary.~~

3. Emergency exception. Texting while driving is permissible by drivers of a commercial motor vehicle when necessary to communicate with law enforcement officials or other emergency services.

PROHIBITION AGAINST USING A HAND-HELD DEVICE

1. ~~(a)1.~~ No driver shall use a hand-held device while driving a school bus.

2. ~~2. School Districts.~~ No school district shall allow or require its drivers to use an electronic device while driving a school bus.

~~(b) Definitions.~~

~~(1) The use of a hand-held device means:~~

- ~~• using at least one hand to hold a device to use the device. For example, holding a mobile phone or tablet; or~~
- ~~• Reaching for a hand-held device requiring the bus driver to maneuver so they are no longer in a seated position, restrained by a seat belt~~

~~(2) Driving means operating a commercial motor vehicle, including while temporarily stationary because of traffic, a traffic control device, or other momentary delays. Driving does not include operating a commercial motor vehicle when the driver has moved the vehicle to the side of, or off, a highway and has halted in a location where the vehicle can safely remain stationary.~~

3. Exceptions:

- a. Route Device. It is permissible to use a tablet or other device to provide a route map for the school bus driver. The tablet or other device must be secured and not hand-held. The driver may not enter information or select more than one button while driving a school bus.
- b. Emergency. Using a hand-held mobile device is permissible by a school bus driver when necessary to communicate with law enforcement officials or other emergency services.
- c. Two-way radio. Using a two-way radio device is permissible by a school bus driver when necessary.

PROHIBITION AGAINST USING EARPHONES

1. ~~(a)~~ No driver shall listen to music, podcast, radio, or other recorded or transmitted music or textspeech while driving a school bus using earphones, headphones, ear buds, or other bluetooth devices.

~~(b) Definitions.~~

~~1. Earphones include headphones, ear buds, or other blue tooth device.~~

~~2.1. Driving means operating a commercial motor vehicle, including while temporarily stationary because of traffic, a traffic control device, or other momentary delays. Driving does not include operating a commercial motor vehicle when the driver has moved the vehicle to the side of, or off, a highway and has halted in a location where the vehicle can safely remain stationary.~~

~~3.2. Emergency exception: u~~ Using an earphone is permissible by a school bus driver when necessary to communicate with law enforcement officials or other emergency services.

DRUG AND ALCOHOL TESTING OF BUS DRIVERS

The 1991 Federal Omnibus Transportation Employee Testing Act ~~(FMCSA)~~ imposes several requirements on employers of safety sensitive employees. A variety of drug and alcohol tests are required: —pre-employment, reasonable suspicion, post-accident, random, return to duty, and follow-up.

~~Per FMCSA an employer must do annual random tests of safety sensitive employees—at least 25 percent must be tested for alcohol and 50 percent for drugs.~~

~~Testing must meet the standards set by the Federal Department of Health and Human Services. Employees must be provided information on alcohol and drug misuse and the testing requirements.~~

~~Supervisory employees must receive additional training on recognizing substance abuse. The FMCSA rules define what alcohol related conduct is prohibited while performing safety sensitive functions. Please visit [FMCSA](#).~~

~~Employers are responsible for the testing programs. (If a district contracts for its transportation the contractor, not the district, may be the employer. This possibility should be discussed with the contractor and the district's legal counsel.) Testing responsibilities can be met using district employees, contracting for services, or joining a consortium.~~

~~A school bus driver is defined as any who drives district-owned, contractor-owned, home to school/school to home and all other activity trips. All school bus drivers shall comply with the Federal regulations regarding drug and alcohol testing.~~

RAILROAD PROCEDURES

1. A school bus with or without passengers, before crossing at grade any track or tracks of a railroad, shall stop the vehicle as close as practicable but the door not less than 15 feet and no more than 50 feet from the nearest rail of the railroad.
2. While stopped the driver shall open the front door and driver's side window of a school bus, and shall listen and look in both directions along the track for an approaching train or other on-track equipment and for signals indicating the approach of a train or other on-track equipment and may not proceed until the driver can do so safely.
3. Before proceeding past the grade crossing, the driver shall close the front door.
4. The driver may cross only in a gear of the vehicle that requires no changing gears while traversing the crossing. The driver may not shift gears while crossing the track or tracks.
5. A stop need not be made at:
 - a. A streetcar crossing, or railroad tracks used exclusively for industrial switching purposes, within a business district
 - b. A railroad grade crossing when a police officer or crossing flagman directs traffic to proceed.
 - c. A railroad grade crossing controlled by a functioning highway traffic signal transmitting a green indication which, under local law, permits the commercial motor vehicle to proceed across the railroad tracks without slowing or stopping.
 - d. An abandoned railroad grade crossing which is marked with a sign indicating that the rail line is abandoned.
 - e. An industrial or spur line railroad grade crossing marked with a sign reading "Exempt." Such "Exempt" signs shall be erected only by or with the consent of the appropriate State or local authority.

DRIVER INSERVICE TRAINING PROGRAM

Introduction

1. School bus transportation is an integral part of today's educational system. The school bus driver is expected to present a strong role model for children, as well as represent the school district before the public. If the school bus driver is professional and knowledgeable, he will encourage social responsibility among the students. The driver is also able to promote public confidence in the school transportation program. A quality driver training program is critical to the success of a school transportation program.
2. Training Program
 - a. A School Bus Driver Training Program exists to provide cost-effective, quality training that promotes student safety and reduces school bus accidents. The commitment to provide school bus drivers who are safe, competent and well trained should be the goal of every school district. To achieve that goal, each district shall develop and implement a driver-training program that meets the needs of the school district and provides appropriate training to accomplish the goal. The plan shall, upon request, be available for inspection by the Office of Public Instruction. A district approved training program shall include:
 - i. A continuing education program for school bus drivers shall be provided and include at least 15 hours of in-service training annually, which shall include but is not limited to:
 - Pre- and post-trip inspection training and refresher;
 - Passenger boarding and de-boarding procedures;
 - Driving skills;
 - Defensive driving (Montana DR.I.V.E. is encouraged);
 - Railroad safety;
 - Passenger management;

- Safety and emergency procedures;
 - Special needs sensitivity and awareness;
 - Student safety;
 - Human trafficking awareness training, as required in 20-7-1316, MCA;
 - Rules, policies and procedures affecting student transportation;
 - Mirror usage;
 - Drug and alcohol awareness; and
 - Montana Association for Pupil Transportation (MAPT) Conference or equivalent training is encouraged. (See OPI Pupil Transportation Website for listings at the following site: www.opi.mt.gov/PupilTransportation/Trainings).
- ii. A newly hired driver's training program may include but is not limited to:
- A continuing education program (listed above);
 - The essentials of a crash prevention program, including the uniform school bus crash reporting criteria;
 - A system to communicate procedures between administrators and parents, and between administrators and the school bus company or drivers, including student discipline procedure and compliance;
 - Emergency procedures and/or contingency plans to be followed in the event of a crash, unexpected school closing or unforeseen route change; and
 - The appropriate use of special lighting and signaling equipment. (Refer to Driver In-Service Training.)
- b. The opportunity to participate in workshops, conferences (MAPT is encouraged) and meetings where drivers can work with and learn from a group of their peers;
- c. Prior to transporting students with disabilities, the driver shall receive appropriate training in compliance with Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and proper use of adaptive equipment; and
- d. Drivers shall receive drug and alcohol education as required in the Omnibus Transportation Employee Testing Act of 1991 located online at US DOT.

DISTRICT POLICY GUIDELINES

1. The responsible state agency and the local school district should have clear and concise policies and guidelines for the operation of their pupil transportation programs. These are important for two reasons:
 - a. Policies and guidelines have the effect of law when laws or regulations do not specifically address a situation; and
 - b. Policies and guidelines serve as the rulebook for persons charged with the administration of transportation services within the district.
2. Once established, these policies and guidelines become the basis for development of operating procedures. This allows decisions about operational details to be made at the administrative level rather than by the school board. These policies and guidelines should be precise and in writing and should cover the following topics:
 - a. Procedures for determining eligibility for transportation;
 - b. A description of all types of transportation provided;
 - c. The days on which service will be available;
 - d. Essential routing constraints, such as walking distances and age/grade of pupils for whom the district will provide transportation;
 - e. The extent of special transportation service;
 - f. The essentials of a crash prevention program, including the uniform school bus crash reporting criteria;
 - g. A system to communicate procedures between administrators and parents, and between administrators and the Bus Company or drivers, including student discipline procedures and compliance;

- h. Emergency procedures and/or contingency plans to be followed in the event of a crash, unexpected school closing or unforeseen route change; and
- i. Use of special lighting and signaling equipment as indicated below:
 - i. Use of alternately flashing amber lights to warn motorists that the bus is preparing to stop to take on or discharge students;
 - ii. Use of alternately flashing red lights to inform motorists that the bus is stopped on the roadway to take on or discharge passengers
 - iii. Use of four-way (hazard) flashers when approaching, stopping and crossing at a railway crossing. Do not use the overhead amber lights at a railroad crossing;
 - iv. Operating stop arms in conjunction with the flashing red signal lamps;
 - v. Use of white flashing strobe light to increase the visibility of the school bus on the roadway during adverse visibility conditions; ~~and~~
 - vi. Use of crossing control arms, where directed to encourage children to cross properly in front of school buses; and
 - vii. Driving hours shall be regulated, and documented. All School districts and contractors shall not be exempt from regulations based on the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulation 49 CFR 395.3 (15 hours on duty of which no more than 10 hours are driving time; 8 hours continuous off-duty prior to a long trip; no more than 60 hours driving in a week). (This information will be audited.)

3. School districts are permitted to allow school buses to be parked at the bus driver's residence when the district determines that home parking is operationally appropriate and consistent with applicable safety, transportation, and legal requirements. If a district permits home parking of school buses, the district should establish and maintain a written policy and procedures governing the practice.

ADVERTISING ON A SCHOOL BUS

Potential Safety Concerns

Advertising on the interior or exterior of a school bus to catch the attention of passing motorists (since that is precisely what advertising is designed to do), runs the inherent risk that passing motorist will focus their attention on the advertising and not notice, for example, that the school bus has stopped, or turned on its flashing lamps, or allowed the students to de-board or board the bus. The potential increase to driver distraction, a known cause of motor vehicle accidents, presents a significant safety issue around school buses that cannot be ignored.

Therefore, any type of advertisement on a school bus shall be prohibited.

SCHOOL BUS STOPS

DESIGNATED STOPS

School Bus Route Approval

The board of trustees of a school district and the county transportation committee shall approve all school bus routes.

School Bus Stops Requiring A Child To Cross a Roadway

The board of trustees of a school district shall approve all school bus stops requiring a child to cross a roadway.

Bus Stop Requirements

1. Buses shall stop at designated stops on the approved route only.
2. The school bus driver shall actuate the amber flashing lights approximately 150 feet in cities and approximately 500 feet in other areas before the bus stop to load and unload students on the highway or street. (~~MCA-61-8-351~~, MCA)
3. The school bus driver shall actuate the red flashing light system only when the school bus is stopped on the highway or street.

EXCEPTION:

- a. The board of trustees of a school district may adopt a policy prohibiting the operation of amber or red lights when a school bus is about to stop or stopped to receive or discharge children and the receipt or discharge does not involve street crossing by the children. The lights may not be operated in violation of that policy.
- b. If a school bus is stopped outside of the roadway and the school bus will receive or discharge children in a location outside the roadway, the school bus may not actuate the flashing red lights as long as the school children do not enter the roadway.
~~61-8-102(2)(v) states “‘roadway’ means the portion of a highway that is improved, designed, or ordinarily used for vehicular travel, including the paved shoulder.”~~
4. The school bus driver shall not actuate the red flashing light system until the vehicle has come to a complete stop, the transmission is placed in neutral, and the parking brake set.
5. The school bus driver shall not deactivate the flashing light system until the students are seated appropriately, the school bus driver engages the transmission and releases the emergency brake.

PROHIBITED SCHOOL BUS STOPS

A school bus stop shall not be designated at the following locations:

1. Within 200 ft. of the nearest rail of any railroad crossing or grade, except at railroad stations or on highways that parallel the railroad tracks;
2. The left-hand side of any highway; or
3. On a divided or multiple-lane highway where passengers must cross the highway to board or after exiting the bus, unless traffic is controlled by a traffic officer or official traffic control signal. For the purposes of this subsection, a multiple-lane highway is defined as any highway having two or more lanes of travel in each direction.

SPEED LIMITS

Speed limits are an important tool for promoting safety on streets and highways. Driving over the posted speed limit, driving too fast for conditions, or failing to obey special speed limit zones can result in a Montana speeding ticket, points on the driver's license, and even a license suspension or revocation for repeat offenders. All posted speed limits shall be followed without exception.

It is the responsibility of all employees, drivers, and management to assure that the speed limit is adhered to always.

No driver shall drive a school bus at a speed greater than is reasonable or prudent having due regard for weather, visibility, the traffic on, and surface and width of, the highway. In no event, shall a speed endanger the safety of students or property.

TRANSPORTATION SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

MCKINNEY- VENTO HOMELESS ASSISTANCE ACT OVERVIEW

The following provides information on how the McKinney – Vento Homeless Assistance Act, Title IX, Part A of the Every Student Succeeds Act, relates to pupil transportation and describes transportation choices and requirements.

Requirements of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act

Local Education Agencies (LEAs) are required to provide students experiencing homelessness with transportation to and from their school of origin at a parent or guardian's request. For an unaccompanied youth, the request may come from the LEA's homeless liaison if the youth is not an adult. Homeless students are subject to the same time and distance limitations as their normally housed peers. However, exceptions should be considered for students living closer to the school than those normally offered transportation if

there are safety or health concerns. Exceptions should also be considered for a student outside the distance or time limit dependent on the student's age/grade level and completion of graduation requirements.

Transportation for the Homeless in Relation to Distance

Every LEA has a homeless liaison who should, in coordination with the student's family, make the determination of whether the transportation of the student is in the student's best interest. Cost of transportation cannot be used when determining a student's best interest. In accordance with Montana Code, travel time more than 60 miles or one hour, or other circumstances that result in extremely unusual travel demands, may all result in appropriate denial of transportation to the school of origin. Parents may file a formal dispute with the LEA if they disagree with the transportation services offered or when the time and distance limitation impacts the school placement decision.

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Other Considerations Regarding Homeless Transportation

Providing sensitivity training to bus drivers and arranging bus stops to keep student's living situations confidential is important in being able to assist these students through this difficult time in their lives with as little disruption as possible. Schools should be aware of hotels/motels, churches, shelters, or other locations where homeless families and children tend to find temporary housing. Homeless unaccompanied youths who are relying on multiple families for care may need access to multiple bus routes. Developing close ties between school district homeless liaisons, school staff, and pupil transportation staff will help make this process work smoothly.

A school district may be required to provide transportation if a student moves across state lines to secure housing. In such case, a shared transportation arrangement may be utilized, such as meeting the student at the state line, as requirements and reimbursements are based on in-state transportation.

School District Responsibilities for Transportation Costs When a Homeless Student Requires Transportation Across District Boundaries

When a homeless student requires transportation to the school of origin, and that school is outside the current school district, the two school districts involved should collaborate to determine which district is going to assume responsibility for transportation and for how the cost is to be shared. If there is no agreement between the two school districts, the responsibility and cost for transportation shall be shared equally.

Length of Time Transportation Needs to be Provided After a Homeless Student has Moved Into Permanent Housing

Students can stay in their school of origin the entire time they are homeless, and until the end of any academic year in which they move into permanent housing. It is important to note that an episode of homelessness may span multiple school years. Students who are homeless are eligible to remain in the feeder pattern of their original school for the duration of homelessness. Access to transportation services continues until the end of the school year in which the child was determined to be homeless.

Mode of Transportation

There is no requirement that provided transportation be of any specific mode (school buses are not necessarily required). Transportation must be safe and appropriate for the individual student's situation and age. Modes may include school bus, transit passes, gas vouchers or reimbursement for parents or youths with

cars, contracts with taxi companies (driver background checks are required), and contracts with Medicaid transportation brokers (driver background checks are required). In the case of students living in a shelter, the district may contract with the shelter to provide transportation. If law changes, the standards will follow the new law.

TITLE IA FOSTER CARE

Every Student Succeeds Act Overview

The following provides information on how the Title IA Foster Care provisions of the Every Student Succeeds Act relate to pupil transportation and describes transportation choices and requirements. These requirements apply to students under the care and supervision of state child welfare agencies and tribal child welfare agencies. Local Education Agencies (LEAs) working with tribal child welfare agencies must have meaningful consultation with tribal governments

Requirements for the Title IA Foster Care Provisions

LEAs are required to provide students in foster care placements with transportation to and from their school of origin at the request of the social worker or guardian. Students in foster care are subject to the same time and distance limitations as their peers. However, exceptions should be considered for students living closer to the school than those normally offered transportation if there are safety or health concerns. Exceptions should also be considered for a student outside the distance or time limit dependent on the student's age/grade level and completion of graduation requirements.

Transportation for Students in Foster Care in Relation to Distance

Every LEA should identify a foster care point of contact who will assist with the determination of whether the transportation of the student is in the student's best interest. Cost of transportation cannot be used when determining a student's best interest. In accordance with Montana Code, travel time in excess of 60 miles or one hour, or other circumstances that result in extremely unusual travel demands, may all result in appropriate denial of transportation to the school of origin. The social worker or guardian may file a formal dispute with the LEA in the event of a disagreement with the transportation services offered or when the time and distance limitation impacts the school placement decision.

Other Considerations Regarding Foster Care Transportation

Providing sensitivity training to bus drivers and arranging bus stops to keep student's living situations confidential is important in being able to assist these students through this difficult time in their lives with as little disruption as possible. Schools should be aware of group homes within the community that offer congregate care and position bus stop locations in such a way as to protect student privacy. Close ties and collaboration between the school district foster care point of contact, pupil transportation staff, social workers and guardians are strongly encouraged and will help make this process work smoothly for the student.

School District Responsibilities for Transportation Costs When a Student in Foster Care Requires Transportation Across District Boundaries

When a student in foster care requires transportation to the school of origin, and that school is outside the current school district, the two school districts involved should collaborate with the social worker to determine which district is going to assume responsibility for transportation and for how the cost is to be shared. If the transportation needs meet the reimbursement requirements for state and county reimbursement, the school of origin can bill the state and county for the costs allowed in statute and ARM. LEAs, in collaboration with child welfare agencies, should provide school of origin transportation to students in foster care that is age- and developmentally appropriate. ~~Currently, the US Department of Education has not issued final regulations or guidance related to the responsibility for the cost of transportation.~~

Length of Time Transportation is to be Provided to a Student in Foster Care

Students can stay in their school of origin the entire time they are in any type of foster care placement including group home, foster home, or foster care with a relative. It is important to note that the placement of a student in foster care may span multiple school years. Students who are in foster care are eligible to remain in the feeder pattern of their school of origin for the duration of their foster care placement. Access to transportation services continues as long as the student is in any type of foster care placement.

Mode of Transportation

There is no requirement that provided transportation be of any specific mode (school buses are not necessarily required). Transportation must be safe and appropriate for the individual student's situation and age. Modes may include school bus, transit passes, gas vouchers or reimbursement for guardians, contracts with taxi companies (driver background checks are required), and contracts with Medicaid transportation brokers (driver background checks are required). In the case of students living in a group home, the district may contract with the group home to provide transportation.

If law changes, the standards will follow the new law.

SEATING REQUIREMENTS

1. Montana schools must follow Highway Safety Guideline #17, "Pupil Transportation Safety," as issued by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration ([NHTSA](#)), states:
 - a. Standing while school buses and school-charter buses are in motion should not be permitted. Routing and seating plans should be coordinated to eliminate passengers standing when a school bus or school-charter bus is in motion; and
 - b. Due to variations in sizes of children of different ages, states and school districts should exercise judgment in deciding how many students are actually transported in a school bus or school-charter bus.
2. School buses provide the safest form of pupil transportation. An integral part of providing "safe" transportation in a school bus is that the passengers must be properly seated. From a safety perspective, a person who is either standing or improperly seated in a school bus is not afforded the benefits of the safety protection designed into the vehicle and is in increased jeopardy of injury in the event of a crash or extreme sudden driving maneuver.
 - a. Additionally, there must be sufficient space on the school bus seat for each passenger's body to be completely within the seat compartment. In the event of a crash or sudden driving maneuver, students that are not properly seated within the seat compartment may not benefit from the passenger crash protection systems built into the school bus under federal and state regulations.
 - b. In practice, school buses transport students of various sizes, typically from preschool students to 12th graders. While a 39-inch seat may safely accommodate three primary school-aged children, it may not safely accommodate the same number of older children. Since the size of growing children varies, the number of pupils that can safely occupy a school bus seat also changes. Consequently, the "in-use" capacity of a school bus varies depending on the size of the pupils transported. The use of a child safety seat for an infant or toddler, or of special equipment needed for a child with disabilities may further impact the "in-use" capacity of a school bus.
3. It is important to consider the size of the passengers on each school bus route when determining the "in-use" capacity of a school bus. It is recognized that at certain times, for example, at the beginning of a school year, it may not be possible to know exactly how many students will arrive at school bus stops on a route. For that reason, there may be instances where overcrowding exists temporarily on some school buses. In such situations, efforts should be made to provide safe seating to all school bus passengers in a timely and efficient manner, so that during regular operations all passengers are safely seated.

SCHOOL BUS EVACUATIONS

School bus evacuations must be conducted at least twice per school year and must include all students

whether they ride to and from school or not.

The first evacuation must be held within the first two weeks of school.

The second evacuation must be within the first week of the second semester.

All students must practice the evacuation drills since they may ride an activity bus sometime during the school year.

All evacuation drills should be conducted in the same way each time so the students will know exactly what to expect. Students need to know what it looks like, what it sounds like and what it feels like so there are no surprises during a real emergency.

The driver should always be prepared to help the students.

EVACUATION PROCEEDURES

Be Prepared and Plan Ahead. When possible, assign two responsible, older student assistants to each emergency exit. Teach them how to assist the other students off the bus. Assign another student assistant to lead the students to a "safe place" after evacuation. However, you must recognize that there may not be older, responsible students on the bus at the time of the emergency. Therefore, emergency evacuation procedures must be explained to all students. This includes ensuring that they know the location of and operation of the various emergency exits, and the importance of listening to and following all instructions given by you.

Some tips to determine a safe place:

1. A safe place for the students will be at least 100 feet off the road in the direction of oncoming traffic. This will keep them from being hit by debris if another vehicle collides with the bus.
2. Lead students upwind of the bus if fire is present.
3. Lead students at a 45-degree angle away from the train and in the direction of any oncoming train.
4. Lead students upwind of the bus at least 300 feet if there is a risk from spilled hazardous materials.
5. If the bus is in the direct path of a sighted tornado and evacuation is ordered, escort students to a nearby ditch or culvert if shelter in a building is not readily available, and direct them to lie face down, hands covering their head. They should be far enough away so the bus cannot topple on them.
6. Avoid areas that are subject to flash floods.

General Procedures.

1. Determine if evacuation is in the best interest of safety.
2. Determine the best type of evacuation:
 - a. Front, rear or side door evacuation, or some combination of doors.
 - b. Roof or window evacuation.
3. Secure the bus by:
 - a. Placing transmission in Park, or if there is no shift point, in Neutral.
 - b. Setting parking brakes.
 - c. Shutting off the engine.
 - d. Removing ignition key.
 - e. Activating hazard-warning lamps.
4. If time allows, notify dispatch office of evacuation location, conditions, and type of assistance needed.
5. Dangle radio microphone or telephone out of driver's window for later use, if operable.
6. If no radio, or radio is inoperable, use a cell phone, dispatch a passing motorist or area resident to call for help. As a last resort, dispatch two older, responsible students to go for help.
7. Order the evacuation.
8. Evacuate students from the bus.
9. Do not move a student who may have suffered a neck or spinal injury unless his or her life is in immediate danger.

10. Special procedures must be used to move neck spinal injury victims to prevent further injury.
11. Direct a student assistant to lead students to the nearest safe place.
12. Walk through the bus to ensure no students remain on the bus. Retrieve emergency equipment.
13. Join waiting students. Account for all students and check for their safety.
14. Protect the scene.
15. Set out emergency warning devices as necessary and appropriate.
16. Prepare information for emergency responders.
17. Provide first aid as necessary.

TRANSPORTATION FOR SCHOOL RELATED ACTIVITY FUNCTIONS

Each school system ~~or Head Start agency~~ providing activity bus operations should have comprehensive policies and guidelines which delegate responsibility for this function to the supervisor of student transportation. To provide safe and efficient activity transportation, lines of responsibility and authority need to be defined and personnel involved must understand their respective responsibilities.

In the interest of providing the safest means of transportation available, students should be transported to school ~~or Head Start~~ sponsored activities in school buses or allowable alternate vehicles that meet state and federal standards, unless circumstances require an alternate mode of transportation as defined in regulation.

These school ~~or Head Start~~ related activity trips may include field trips that are extensions of the instructional program, athletic trips, ~~vocational and trade~~ career and technical education training, volunteer activities and recreational outings, such as dances, picnics and overnight camping trips.

BUS USE FOR SCHOOL ACTIVITY TRIPS

School activity trips may involve the use of a school bus or a vehicle that is excluded from the definition of a school bus under Montana law. The requirements applicable to the vehicle and driver are based on the classification of the vehicle being operated.

20-10-101(4), MCA, defines a school bus as a motor vehicle that complies with the school bus standards established by the Board of Public Education and is used for the transportation of pupils to or from school, subject to the exclusions provided in law. 20-10-101(4)(b), MCA, excludes certain vehicles from the definition of a school bus, including a vehicle designed to carry not more than nine passengers and used to transport pupils to or from activity events and an over the road passenger coach used only to transport pupils to activity events.

A vehicle that meets the definition of a school bus remains subject to the applicable school bus requirements when used for an activity trip. A vehicle that does not meet the definition of a school bus is not subject to school bus requirements solely because it is used to transport students for an activity.

TYPE E SCHOOL BUS

A Type E vehicle that meets the definition of a school bus under 20-10-101, MCA, is a school bus and is subject to the applicable Montana School Bus Standards. The requirements applicable to school buses, including requirements for equipment, inspection, maintenance, and operation, continue to apply.

ACTIVITY TRIP VEHICLES

Activity trip vehicles may include vehicles that do not meet the definition of a school bus. These may include over the road passenger coaches and other vehicles identified in 20-10-101, MCA, as excluded from the

definition of a school bus. 20-10-129, MCA, provides for the use of a passenger vehicle for transportation to or from school sponsored functions or activities. A passenger vehicle used under this section may not be used to transport students to or from school on a regular bus route.

A vehicle used for an activity trip that does not meet the definition of a school bus is not considered a school bus solely because students are being transported for an activity. The requirements applicable to the vehicle should be based on its classification and the laws governing that type of vehicle.

The use of an activity trip vehicle that is not a school bus does not establish a regular school bus route or create eligibility for state transportation reimbursement.

PRE SERVICE DRIVER TRAINING

For a Type E school bus, the applicable school bus driver training requirements continue to apply when the vehicle is used for an activity trip.

For an activity trip vehicle that is not a school bus, driver training specific to the vehicle being operated is recommended. Districts are encouraged to consider training related to vehicle operation, passenger safety, emergency procedures, loading and unloading, and other conditions that may be encountered during an activity trip.

IN SERVICE DRIVER TRAINING

For a Type E school bus, the applicable school bus driver in service training requirements continue to apply.

For activity trip vehicles that are not school buses, additional driver training is recommended based on the type of vehicle, the nature of the activity trip, and the responsibilities of the driver.

HOURS OF SERVICE

Drivers should comply with applicable federal and state hours of service requirements based on the classification and operation of the vehicle being driven.

VEHICLE CONDITION

A Type E school bus used for an activity trip shall continue to meet the applicable requirements established for school buses.

For an activity trip vehicle that is not a school bus, maintaining the vehicle in safe operating condition and in accordance with the requirements applicable to the vehicle is recommended.

PRE-TRIP INSPECTION

For a Type E school bus, the applicable school bus pre-trip inspection requirements continue to apply.

For an activity trip vehicle that is not a school bus, a pre-trip inspection appropriate to the vehicle is recommended before transporting students. The inspection may include, as applicable:

1. Tires, wheels, rims, and lug nuts;
2. Braking system;

3. Steering system;
4. Required lighting and warning devices;
5. Mirrors and visibility;
6. Windshield, windows, wipers, and washers;
7. Passenger doors and emergency exits;
8. Passenger seats and occupant restraints, when equipped;
9. Emergency equipment;
10. Wheelchair lifts, ramps, restraints, and other accessibility equipment, when equipped;
11. Fuel, electrical, and other systems necessary for safe operation; and
12. Other equipment or systems required by applicable law or the vehicle manufacturer.

DAILY REPORT

For a Type E school bus, the applicable school bus requirements for documenting vehicle condition continue to apply.

For an activity trip vehicle that is not a school bus, districts are encouraged to establish procedures for reporting vehicle defects or deficiencies identified before, during, or after an activity trip.

REPAIRS

For a Type E school bus, repairs and maintenance should be conducted in accordance with the applicable school bus requirements and manufacturer recommendations.

For an activity trip vehicle that is not a school bus, repairs and maintenance should be conducted in accordance with the requirements applicable to the vehicle, manufacturer recommendations, and district procedures.

Drivers should not perform mechanical repairs to a vehicle except for emergency measures necessary to address an immediate safety concern.

ACTIVITY TRIP VEHICLE DISTINCTION

The distinction between a Type E school bus and an activity trip vehicle is based on the vehicle classification and not solely on the purpose of the trip. A Type E vehicle that meets the definition of a school bus is subject to the applicable school bus requirements when used for an activity trip. An over the road passenger coach or other vehicle excluded from the definition of a school bus under 20-10-101, MCA, is not a school bus solely because it is used to transport students to an activity.

The recommendations in this section for activity trip vehicles that are not school buses are intended to provide guidance for safe transportation practices and are not intended to establish school bus requirements for vehicles that do not meet the definition of a school bus.

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS OF TRANSPORTATION FOR SCHOOL RELATED ACTIVITIES

These trips range from a few miles to those extending over several days and covering large distances. The following items need to be considered when developing criteria for activity trip transportation:

1. Policies and guidelines, including:

- a. Purpose of trip (instructional, athletic, students'/spectators' recreation, etc.);
 - b. Funding source (district or individual school funds, individual charge, parent group, etc.); and
 - c. Administrative approval (the person(s) having authority to approve the trip and commit funds).
2. A priority guideline should be developed for trip scheduling, addressing situations when all requests cannot be accommodated.
 - a. Advance notification should allow adequate time for the approval process and for making driver and vehicle arrangements.
 - b. Methods of travel may include district- or agency-owned or contracted bus, commercial carrier or local transit equipment, air, boat, rail or combination of the above, private or school passenger automobile, when required by special or unique needs.
 - c. A trip request form should include all necessary information for trip arrangements, special equipment, payroll, reimbursement and other local needs.
 - d. Adult chaperones should be required on all activity trips. Responsibilities include passenger control, with the driver having final authority.
 - e. Discipline and emergency medical procedures should require a trip release for each student to be signed by parents and should include procedures concerning difficult or severe behavioral and medical problems and emergency policies and contacts.
 3. Communication is essential. Drivers, students, chaperones and parents should be made aware of applicable rules and regulations. Parents should have destination information, mode of transportation, names of chaperones, meal stop information, expected departure and return times, appropriate dress and what the students should bring with them. A signed authorization for student participation from the parent or guardian is important. A detailed itinerary for all persons involved may be advisable. Identification of proper response to special medical problems in the event of an emergency en-route is necessary.
 4. Luggage accommodations, if applicable, must be included. A procedure for transporting luggage or equipment prohibited in the passenger compartment by state law and/or local regulations is necessary. Loose luggage or equipment which could cause injury or block passageways should never be transported in the passenger compartment. In no event shall emergency exits be blocked by loose luggage, band equipment, backpacks, ski equipment, etc.
 5. Policies should detail whether or not out-of-state trips are permitted and, if so, any applicable restrictions. Regulations for states to be visited should be reviewed prior to the trip.
 6. All school buses shall be inspected by the Montana Highway Patrol semi-annually (TR-13 Form). The first semiannual inspection must be passed no more than 30 days prior to the beginning of the first semester. The second semiannual inspection must be passed no later than January 31. Only school buses that pass inspection may be used to transport students and only school buses that pass inspection will receive state and county transportation reimbursement. A school bus that fails to pass inspection will not be eligible for state and county reimbursement until the bus is re-inspected and approved by the inspecting officer. The school district is responsible for contacting the Montana Highway Patrol for bus inspections. Nothing in this rule precludes the Montana Highway Patrol from inspecting school buses at other times as the highway patrol sees fit. Buses that are placed in operation after the school semester has begun must be inspected and approved by the Montana Highway Patrol before the vehicle is operated on the established route.
NOTE: A completed copy of the Bus Inspections (TR-13 Form) must be kept on the school bus for the current fiscal year, a copy kept with the school district, and a copy will be sent to the Montana Highway Patrol Office.
 7. Road and weather checks should be made by the designated person. School transportation personnel from other school districts, state patrols, highway divisions and auto clubs are generally cooperative in supplying road information. If warranted, the weather bureau should also be contacted. A planned route and any contingent route for trips should be determined prior to initiation of the trip.
 8. Contingency plans require policies and procedures that detail persons who have authority to make decisions if the unexpected happens during a trip. Impassable roads, crashes or mechanical breakdowns

are examples. Drivers and chaperones should have access to that authority's phone number. It is also advisable to obtain phone numbers of transportation personnel in various communities and school districts where activity vehicles regularly travel.

- a. Provisions should include plans for staying overnight if conditions do not permit a safe trip home. It is advisable to develop a mutual aid directory for contact within athletic league boundaries which could aid in the event of mechanical emergencies. Drivers should be trained in procedures and regulations relating to trip crashes.
9. Driving hours shall be regulated, and documented. All ~~S~~school districts agencies shall not be exempt from regulations based on the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulation 49 CFR 395.5 (15 hours on duty of which no more than 10 hours are driving time; 8 hours continuous off-duty prior to a long trip; no more than 60 hours driving in a week).
10. Driver selection and assignment criteria are necessary to avoid conflict and confusion. The criteria should include a driver's knowledge, skill, experience and familiarity with activity trip vehicles. The area to be traveled should also be a consideration. Drivers should be notified at least three days in advance of the trip date. Drivers who drive only activity trips should be tested periodically for driving ability and vehicle familiarity. They should hold the same license and certification as regular school bus drivers.
11. Passenger manifests (a list of all passengers being transported) shall be kept on board the bus with driver access when necessary and left with proper authorities at the school or institution. In the event of an emergency, the passenger manifest and/or seating chart, shall be made available upon request by the investigating officer/emergency personnel.
12. Evacuation instruction, including an emergency evacuation drill, or at least verbal instructions, should be given by the driver before each trip. (See INSTRUCTIONS FOR CONDUCTING EMERGENCY EXIT DRILLS.)
13. Commercial Driver's License (CDL) with an School Bus "S" and Passenger "P" endorsement is required when a person who drives a school bus, or who transports ~~pre-primary~~ early childhood education, primary, or secondary school students for school-related activity trips, field trips, and operating on an approved route, in a commercial motor vehicle. The "S" endorsement shall be required for any school bus, including 16 passengers and less, and 16 passengers and more.
There shall be no exceptions to this rule. **
14. Vehicle and equipment:
 - ~~b-a.~~ A tool kit containing items such as a flashlight, pliers, screwdrivers, de-icer, extra chain tighteners, etc., and additional equipment for an extended trip, as may be recommended by transportation ~~personal~~ personnel at the destination;
 - ~~c-b.~~ Fuel, bridge tolls, parking fees and personal needs;
 - ~~d-c.~~ Emergency telephone numbers and other information; and
 - ~~e-d.~~ Maps or Global Positioning Systems (GPS), as appropriate.
 - ~~f-e.~~ Inspection requirements should be the same as for regular route buses, and a detailed check should be made prior to activity trips. A completed copy of the inspection shall remain on the bus for the current Fiscal Year.
 - ~~g-f.~~ School buses shall be prohibited from towing another bus, trailer or any vehicle when students are on board the bus.

TRAINING

1. Specialized training should be provided for activity trip drivers. Training should include, but not be limited to, the following:
 - a. State laws and applicable policies and rules;
 - b. Familiarity with the activity trip vehicle and its components;
 - c. Drivers are prohibited by law to talk or text on a cellular or o portable device (including hands free Bluetooth devices) while operating a commercial vehicle.
 - d. Familiarity with local and state trip requirements;
 - e. Discipline procedures on trips;

- f. Driving under adverse conditions (night driving, slippery roads or unfamiliar mountainous driving);
 - g. Maps, destination locations and parking areas;
 - h. Parking location, if other than the student destination; and
 - i. Provisions for bus security at the destination.
2. Specialized training should be provided for all trip chaperones and include at least the following:
 - a. all regulation related to student rider behavior;
 - b. the specific roles and responsibilities of a chaperone both on and off the vehicle as defined by applicable regulations and policies;
 - c. the communication expectations between chaperone and driver; and
 - d. emergency procedures, including evacuations.

APPENDIX A - GLOSSARY

INTRODUCTION

This glossary was developed with three purposes in mind:

1. To provide easy access to the definition of terms used or referenced within the document;
2. To consolidate, in one resource, the acronyms, abbreviations and standard terms commonly used in the industry; ~~and~~
3. To promote consistency throughout the industry by providing standard definitions or preferred usages for terms that may be used differently in different parts of the country; ~~and-~~
4. The glossary is not intended to be definitive. There are and will be terms that are excluded and definitions that differ from regional usages. It is an attempt to reflect the language of pupil transportation which, like all language, is ever-changing.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

ARB: The abbreviation for the (California) Air Resources Board, the state agency in California which sets the state's emission standards.
Access panel: A body panel which must be moved or removed to provide access to one or more serviceable components.
Accessibility: Ability of vehicles and facilities to accommodate people with disabilities.
Activity bus: A bus owned, leased, or contracted by a school district and regularly used to transport students on field trips, athletic trips or other curricular or extracurricular activities, but not used for to - and- from school transportation; must meet all <u>Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSS)</u> (Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards) for school buses.
Activity seat: A seat designed for passenger comfort with contoured seats and backs with the result that passengers' positions are distinctly separate; characterized by fixed seat backs; may have arm rests and head rests; can be manufactured to meet FMVSS (Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards) No. 222.
Activity trip: The transportation of students to any event sanctioned for pupil attendance or authorized by an officer, employee or agent of a public or private school, other than to-and-from school transportation. (See also field trip.)
ADA: The Americans with Disabilities Act, PLIOI-336, 42 USC 12101,etseq.
Adaptive device: Any item or piece of equipment used to increase, maintain or improve functional capabilities of children with disabilities. The device is also known as an assistive technology device.
Aide: (See attendant.)
Alcohol: The intoxicating agent in beverage alcohol, ethyl alcohol, or other low molecular weight alcohols including methyl and isopropyl alcohol.

Alternately flashing signal lamps: A system of red or red and amber signal lamps mounted horizontally both front and rear, intended to identify a vehicle as a school bus and to inform other users of the highway that the bus is about to stop or is stopped to load or unload children; also known as stop signal lamps, SOS lights or school bus traffic warning lights.
Alternative-fuel vehicle (AFV): A vehicle designed to operate on an energy source other than <u>petroleum-based</u> gasoline or <u>regular grades of diesel fuel</u> . Such fuels include, but are not limited to, <u>Compressed Natural Gas (CNG)</u> (<u>compressed natural gas</u>), <u>Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG)</u> (<u>liquefied natural gas</u>), <u>Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG)</u> (<u>liquefied petroleum gas</u>), advanced diesel fuel formulations and electricity. <u>Bio-fuel:</u> A vehicle designed to operate on two different fuels, but not simultaneously. <u>Dual fuel:</u> A vehicle designed to operate on a mixture of two different fuels.
AMD: Ambulance Manufacturer Design.
Anchorage point: The point of attachment of a securement system or occupant restraint to the vehicle structure.
ANPR: Advanced Notice of Proposed Rulemaking. Notice published in the Federal Register by a federal agency, such as NHTSA (National Highway Traffic Safety Administration), requesting information and inviting comment on a proposed change of regulation.
ANSI: American National Standards Institute, the organization which administers and coordinates the development of voluntary industry standards.
Antilock brakes: Brake systems with sensors that automatically control the degree of wheel slip during braking and that relieve brake pressure on wheels that are about to lock up.
Aspect ratio: Percentage used to express the ratio of a tire's height to its width; also known as tire profile.
Assessment team: A group of persons, including the parent or guardian of a student with disabilities who develop a profile of the student in terms of his or her mental and physical functioning to determine the student's eligibility for special education. (See also MDC.)
Assistive device: (See adaptive device.)
Attendant: A person assigned to assist one or more individual student(s) with disabilities on a school bus or school vehicle; also known as aide or paraprofessional. (See also monitor.)
BAC: Blood or breath alcohol concentration; the measure used to determine alcohol impairment.
Ball seat nut mounting: A wheel mounting system wherein the wheel centering is provided by the wheel mounting studs and the ball seat nuts which, when properly tightened, assure the centering alignment of the wheel.
BAT: Breath Alcohol Technician, an individual who instructs and assists persons in the alcohol testing process and operates an EBT (evidential breath testing).
Behavior management: Methods of influencing student conduct on the school bus.
Bench seat: A seat designed to accommodate more than one passenger with no apparent partitioning between positions, which is characterized by fixed legs and a fixed back (e.g., the standard school bus seat which meets <u>Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSS) No. 222</u> .)
Bias ply: A pneumatic tire in which the ply cords extending to the beads are laid at alternate angles substantially less than 90 degrees to the centerline of the tire.
Bi-fuel: Used to describe a bus capable of running on either of two fuels, although not simultaneously. Engines which can be switched to run on either CNG (compressed natural gas) or gasoline are examples.
Biodiesel: Vehicle fuel made from plant matter and commonly mixed with diesel fuel in engines.
Bio-fuel: A vehicle designed to operate on two different fuels, but not simultaneously.

Blood Borne Pathogens: Common name for standards adopted by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) in 29 CFR 1910, to protect workers against the health hazards of exposure to blood and other potentially infectious body fluids or materials; also refers to the pathogenic microorganisms present in human blood.
Boarding: The process of loading passengers into a school bus.
Body fluids cleanup kit: Package of materials including, but not limited to, latex gloves, disposal bag and absorbent material, used to clean up spills of potentially infected bodily fluids, under the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's (OSHA)'s Blood borne Pathogens regulations and Universal Precautions practices; also known as hygiene kit.
Brake fade: A condition that occurs as brakes become less effective.
Brake: A device or mechanism used to retard and stop the speed of a moving vehicle or to prevent the movement of a stopped vehicle.
Braking distance: The distance a vehicle travels between the time the brakes are applied and the time forward motion ceases.
BTU: A unit of work or energy known as a British Thermal Unit. One BTU is the energy required to increase the temperature of one pound of water by one degree Fahrenheit.
Bus: A motor vehicle with motive power, except a trailer, designed for carrying more than ten (10) persons.
Business district: The territory contiguous to and including a highway when within any 600 feet along such highway there are buildings in use for business or industrial purposes, including but not limited to hotels, banks, or office buildings which occupy at least 300 feet of frontage on one side or 300 feet collectively on both sides of the highway.
Bus body: The portion of a bus that encloses the occupant space exclusive of the bumpers, the chassis frame, and any structure forward of the forward-most point of the windshield mounting.
Bus pass: Authorization to ride a school bus other than the student's assigned bus; or prepayment for transit bus rides.
Bus yard: An area for storage and maintenance of buses.
CAA: Clean Air Act; also known as CAAA, the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990.
Capacity: (See seating capacity.)
Capital costs: Long-term costs associated with the purchase of vehicles, buildings and property.
Captive: Refers to a non-removable attachment, part or fitting on a securement system.
Carbon monoxide: A product of incomplete combustion; this gas is colorless, odorless and very poisonous. It does not contribute to smog.
Carrier: Any public-school district, any public or private educational institution providing preschool, elementary or secondary education, or any person, firm or corporation under contract to such a district or institution, engaged in transporting students.
Casualty insurance: (See liability insurance.)
Catalytic converter: An exhaust after-treatment device containing a catalytic material that is used to burn off or reduce unburned fuel or gases and thus reduce emissions, particularly oxides of nitrogen (NOx) and hydrocarbons. Diesel converters run at cooler temperatures than do gasoline converters and require different catalysts

CDIP: Commercial Drivers Instructional Permit. The learner's permit that a CDL applicant receives when he/she passes the knowledge tests; it allows the applicant to drive a CMV when accompanied by a driver with a CDL.
CDL: Commercial Driver's License.
Cetane number: A measure of self-ignition properties of a fuel after injection in a diesel engine. It relates to the knock properties of fuel. The higher the number, the more easily the fuel will ignite under compression; therefore, higher cetane fuels are usually preferred in diesel engines.
CFR: Code of Federal Regulations.
Chain of custody: The chronological handling, documentation, or paper trail showing receipt, custody, control, or transfer of students or items (such as medication).
Charter bus: A bus that is operated under a short-term contract with a school district or other sponsor who has acquired the exclusive use of the vehicle at a fixed charge to transport students to a school related event.
Chassis starting interlock circuit: A device which prevents the engine of a bus from starting if any of the emergency exits are locked.
Chassis: Vehicle frame with all operating parts, including engine frame, transmission, wheels and brakes.
CMV: Commerical Commercial M motor V vehicle
CNG: Compressed N natural G gas.
Combustible gas sensor: Detector capable of sensing the presence of natural gas.
Common carrier: A public bus, train or airplane that travels on a prescribed route and schedule, and accepts passengers indiscriminately.
Communicable disease: Any illness that can be transmitted from one person to another, including most common childhood diseases, the common cold and serious illnesses such as hepatitis and AIDS.
Community transportation: Services that address all transit needs of a community, including general and special populations, such as the elderly and disabled.
Completed vehicle: A vehicle that requires no further manufacturing operation to perform its intended function other than the addition of readily attachable components, such as mirrors or tire and rim assemblies, or minor finishing operations such as painting.
Conduct report: A form authorized by school officials for use by drivers to report instances of unacceptable behavior by school bus passengers; also known as discipline report.
Conspicuity: The ability of an object to be noticed and recognized without any confusion or ambiguity (SAE (Society of Automotive Engineers) J-1967).
Continuum of services: The range of possible options, from least restrictive to most restrictive, available to students with disabilities for transportation services.
Crash test: (See impact test.)
Crash: (1) A motor vehicle crash involving a school bus with or without a pupil on board, resulting in any personal injury or death or any disabling damage to one or more motor vehicles requiring the vehicle(s) to be transported away from the scene by a tow truck or other vehicle; or (2) A collision involving any vehicle or any pupil or school bus at any time during the loading or unloading process.
Criminal background check: The investigation of a person's criminal history through submission of fingerprints to state and/or federal authorities; also known as background check.
Crossing arm: A device attached to the front bumper of a school bus, activated during loading and unloading and designed to force the students to walk far enough away from the front of the bus to be

seen by the driver; also known as crossing control arm.
Cross-view: Convex mirrors mounted on the front of the school bus and designed for student detection during loading and unloading, including elliptical, quadri-spherical, banana, or standard convex; also known as System B mirrors.
Cryogenic: Relates to storage and use at very low temperatures. LNG (liquefied natural gas) requires cryogenic systems.
CSRS: Child Safety Restraint System; a device meeting the requirements of Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSS) No. 213, designed for use in a motor vehicle to restrain, seat or position a child who weighs less than 50 pounds; also known as child safety seat and car seat.
Curb cut: Area where the street curb has been cut and sloped to allow the sidewalk to lead smoothly to the roadway.
Curb weight: The weight of a motor vehicle with standard equipment, maximum capacity of engine fuel, oil, and coolant and, if applicable, air conditioning and additional weight of optional engine, but without passengers.
CW: Commercial motor vehicle. A motor vehicle defined in 49 CFR 390.5.
CWSA: Commercial Motor Vehicle Safety Act of 1986; among other things, authorization for CDL.
Danger zone: A ten-foot area immediately surrounding the stopped school bus.
Davenport seat: A bench seat that extends from side wall to side wall at the rearmost seating position in the bus; not permitted in school buses.
Deadhead: Movement of a bus without passengers (e.g., from school to bus yard).
Deadtime: The period between arriving at an activity trip destination and leaving the destination for the trip home; also known as waiting time and stand-by time.
Dealer: Any person who is engaged in the sale and distribution of new motor vehicles or motor vehicle equipment primarily to purchasers who, in good faith, purchase any such vehicle or equipment for purposes other than resale.
Diesel Exhaust Fluid (DEF): Diesel Exhaust Fluid is a non-hazardous solution, which is 32.5% urea and 67.5% de-ionized water. DEF is sprayed into the exhaust stream of diesel vehicles to break down dangerous NOx emissions into harmless nitrogen and water.
Designed seating capacity: The theoretical passenger capacity that a vehicle would have if it were constructed with the maximum number of seating positions according to standard seating plans; also known as manufacturer seating capacity.
Disc wheel: A permanent combination of a rim and wheel disc.
Disc: The part of the wheel which is the supporting member between the hub and the rim.
Discipline: A monitor whose primary responsibility is to control behavior of students on the bus.
Dispatch: To relay service instructions to drivers.
Distributor: Any person primarily engaged in the sale and distribution of motor vehicles or motor vehicle equipment for resale.
DNR: Do Not Resuscitate; an order from a parent, legal guardian or court that prohibits the use of emergency measures to prolong the life of an individual.
DOT bus: A school bus that meets the FMCSR standards for interstate transportation set forth in 49 CFR 390.

DOT driver: A driver who meets the FMCSR standards, set forth in 49 CFR 391.
DOT: United States Department of Transportation.
Double run: One bus making two trips over the same route each morning and afternoon (e.g. first picking up high school students and then returning for elementary students.)
Downtime: The period when a vehicle is inoperative (e.g. due to mechanical failure.)
Driver applicant: A person who applies for a position as a school bus driver.
Driver qualifications: Restrictions of state and federal law which determine a person's eligibility to become a school bus driver (e.g., age limits, physical condition, criminal record, driving history, etc.)
Driver training: Instructional program designed to impart knowledge and improve the skills necessary for school bus drivers, including but not limited to knowledge of the vehicle, safe driving practices, emergency procedures and passenger control.
Driving: Flat and convex mirrors mounted on each side of the bus designed for viewing the road along the sides to the rear while driving; also known as rearview, double nickel, west coast, or Swent A mirrors.
Driving: operating a commercial motor vehicle, including while temporarily stationary because of traffic, a traffic control device, or other momentary delays.
DRL: Daytime running lamps; Head lamps that operate automatically at a reduced voltage during the day to increase the vehicle's visibility; also known as daytime running lamps.
Drug: Any substance other than alcohol considered to be a controlled substance listed on schedules I through V in 21 CFR (Code of Federal Regulations)1308.
Dry run: A trip on a route without student passengers for driver training or familiarization of the route.
Dual brake system: (See split brake system.)
Dual fuel: A vehicle designed to operate on a mixture of two different fuels.
Dual-fuel engine: Also "flex fuel," used to describe a gasoline-methanol dual-fuel engine using mixtures of gasoline and methanol, such as M85, which is 15 percent gasoline and 85 percent methanol. Dual-fuel engine can also refer to engines operating on any other mixture of fuels simultaneously, such as engines which run on a mixture of CNG (compressed natural gas) and diesel.
DVIR: Driver vehicle inspection report. Federal, state or local approved form for reporting results of pre-trip and post-trip inspections; also known as daily vehicle inspection report and pre-trip inspection form.
Dynamic testing: The process of subjecting vehicle, mobility aid, or mobility aid/securement system components to a simulated crash condition.
EAP: Employee Assistance Program; a program of education and counseling required by 49 CFR 391 as part of a carrier's drug and alcohol testing program; may also include optional rehabilitation services.
Early bus: A bus scheduled to run prior to the regular morning run (e.g., to take children to daycare programs located in schools.)
Early intervention service: Education and related services provided to infants and toddlers from birth through two years of age.
Earphones: include headphones, ear buds, or other bluetooth devices.
EBT: Evidential Breath Testing device; a device approved by NHTSA for testing drivers for alcohol use.
EDR: Event Data Recorder; a device which records vehicle functions (e.g., speed change during a crash.)

Effective date: The date at which a regulation or standard takes effect, on or after which compliance is legally required.
EHA: The Education for all Handicapped Children Act, passed in 1975 as P.L.94-142. (See IDEA).
Electronic voice communication system: A means by which the driver of a vehicle can communicate with a dispatcher or other person at a remote location (e.g., two-way radio, cellular phone.)
Emergency brake: A mechanism designed to stop a motor vehicle after a failure of the service brake system.
Emergency response plan: A detailed approach to identifying and responding to potential accidents involving hazardous substances; required for every community by the Emergency Planning and Right to Know Act of 1986.
Emergency roof exit: An opening in the roof of the bus meeting the requirements of <u>Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSS)</u> No. 217 which provides emergency egress and sometimes ventilation; also known as roof hatch.
EPA: The United States Environmental Protection Agency.
Ergonomics: The study of the design of equipment to reduce human fatigue and discomfort.
Ethanol: Grain alcohol, distilled from fermented organic matter and used as a vehicle fuel.
Evacuation drill: Performance of a mock school bus evacuation in order to teach students proper emergency procedures and to provide practice in the use of emergency exits; also known as bus safety drills.
Extended Stop Arm: a device that partially obstructs the roadway is capable of extending a distance of at least 54 inches from the school bus at a height of not less than 36 inches, with an additional illuminated stop sign.
Extended year service: Transportation provided for students after the end of the traditional school year.
Extra board driver: (See substitute driver.)
FAPE: Free Appropriate Public Education; guaranteed by the EHA for all handicapped children; it includes special education and related services, including transportation.
FBI background check: The national criminal record check.
FERPA: The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, 20 USC 1232, which requires confidentiality of student records in public schools, but allows access to necessary information regarding student disabilities and/or health needs to those who have a need to know, including school bus drivers.
FHWA: Federal Highway Administration, an agency of the U.S. Department of Transportation (<u>DOT</u>).
Field trip: The transportation of students to an event or destination which is an extension of classroom activity (i.e., a part of the curriculum). A field trip is one type of activity trip.
Final Rule: Notice published in the Federal Register by a federal agency announcing a new or changed regulation.
Final stage manufacturer: A person who performs such manufacturing operations on an incomplete vehicle that it becomes a completed vehicle.
First aid: Emergency treatment given to an ill or injured person before regular medical help is available.
Fixed route: Transportation service that runs on regular prescheduled routes, usually with bus schedules and designated bus stops.

Flip seat: A school bus bench seat designed so that the cushion flips up when the seat is not occupied, similar to a theater seat; used to provide aisle clearance when a passenger seat is located adjacent to a side emergency door, as required by <u>Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSS) No. 217</u> .
FMCSA: Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration; an agency of the U.S. Department of Transportation; formerly the Office of Motor Carrier Highway Safety within the Federal Highway Administration.
FMCSR: Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations, 49 CFR 383, 390-397, and 399; motor vehicle safety and construction standards under FMCSA that apply to commercial motor vehicles and drivers transporting passengers in interstate commerce.
FMLA: Family and Medical Leave Act; requires employers to grant time off to employees for medical reasons or to care for family members.
FMVSS: Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards, 49 CFR 57 1; construction standards developed and enforced by NHTSA that apply to all new motor vehicles and items of motor vehicle safety equipment.
Formaldehyde: A chemical compound that is a by-product of combustion from engines. Concentrations may be particularly high in emissions from engines fueled by methanol.
Forward control bus: A school bus in which more than half of the engine length is rearward of the foremost point of the windshield base and the steering wheel hub is in the forward quarter of the vehicle length; also known as transit style.
Forward-facing: Installation of the securement system in such a way that the mobile seating device and its occupant face the front of the vehicle when secured.
Four point tie down: A securement system in which four strap assemblies attach to the wheelchair frame at four separate points and anchor to the vehicle floor at four separate points.
FSS: Fire Suppressant System; a fire extinguisher system installed in the engine compartment of a vehicle and activated automatically in response to a fire sensor or manually in response to an alarm.
FTA: Federal Transit Administration, part of U.S. Department of Transportation (<u>DOT</u>); formerly Urban Mass Transit Administration (UMTA).
Fuel injection: System that uses no carburetor but sprays fuel directly into cylinders or into the intake manifold.
Fumigate: Literally means “to form a gas or disperse one gas in another.” The term is used to describe the injecting of gas, usually CNG, into the intake air of the engine.
G/bhp hr: The amount of a pollutant generated in one hour measured in grams per brake horsepower.
GAWR: Gross <u>A</u> xle <u>W</u> eight <u>R</u> ating, the value specified by the manufacturer as the load-carrying capacity of a single axle system, as measured at the tire-ground interfaces.
Glazing: The glass or glass-like portion of a window.
Greenhouse gases: some of these gases are formed by vehicle emissions causing a rise in temperature of the earth’s atmosphere.
Guideline 17: A highway safety program guide for pupil transportation safety issued by NHTSA in 23 CFR-1204.; formerly Standard 17.
GVWR: Gross <u>V</u> ehicle <u>W</u> eight <u>R</u> ating; the value specified by the vehicle manufacturer as the load carrying capacity of a single vehicle as measured at the tire-ground interfaces. For school buses, <u>the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA)</u> has defined in Title 49 CFR, Section 567.4(g)(3), the minimum occupant weight allowance as 120 pounds per passenger times the number of the vehicle’s designated seating positions and 150 pounds for the driver. Gross Vehicle Weight Rating-GVWR shall not be less than the sum of the unloaded vehicle weight, plus the rated cargo load.
Handrail inspection tool: A device formed by tying a half-inch hex nut to a 36" cord, used to inspect school bus handrails and other areas for possible snagging hazards.
Hazard lamps: Lamps that flash simultaneously to the front and rear on the right and left sides of a vehicle, used to indicate caution; also known as four-way flashers.

Head protection zone: The empty space above and in front of each school bus passenger seat which is not occupied by side wall, window or door structure, the dimensions of which are detailed in FMVSS No. 222.
Head Start: A program initiated in 1965 to provide comprehensive child development services to pre-school children of predominantly low income families.
Headsign: A sign above the windshield of the bus which can be changed from School Bus to other wording, such as Charter.
Health care plan: A plan of action used to outline the care for a medically fragile individual.
Highway: Any public highway, road, street, alley, parkway or other place open to public motor vehicle travel.
Horsepower: The measurement of an engine's ability to do work. One horsepower is the ability to lift 33,000 lbs. one foot in one minute.
Hours of service: The consecutive or cumulative period that a commercial driver may be on duty.
HOV: High Occupancy Vehicle, a vehicle that can carry two or more passengers.
Hub: The rotating outer member of the axle's assembly which provides for wheel disc mounting.
Hybrid power: The use of two or more power sources to provide the motive force for the vehicle (e.g. electricity to drive the wheels with internal combustion to supplement the battery).
Hybrid vehicle: Generally refers to a vehicle designed to run on electric power and an internal combustion engine.
Hydrocarbons: A gaseous compound formed by incomplete combustion and comprised of unburned and partially burned fuel. It combines with NOx and sunlight to form ozone and is a major contributor to smog.
Hydrogen fuel cell: A chemical reaction process to develop electrical current from oxygen and hydrogen.
ICC: The former Interstate Commerce Commission, the economic regulation agency within the Department of Transportation. The agency was disbanded in 1997 because of economic deregulation, and most functions were transferred to the Federal Highway Administration.
IDEA: The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, passed in 1990 as P.L. 101-476 (Part 13) as approved in March of 1999, to replace the EHA.
IEP: Individualized Education Program, a plan including information for each child with disabilities required under P. L. 101-476 (Part B).
IFSP: Individualized Family Service Plan; a written plan similar to the IEP for the family of a child receiving early intervention services required under P. L. 102-119.
Impact test: A simulated crash condition which evaluates the ability of a vehicle or any component or device to withstand crash forces; also known as sled test and crash test.
Inclusion: Integration of a student with disabilities into a regular classroom and onto a regular school bus; also known as mainstreaming.
Incomplete vehicle: An assemblage consisting, as a minimum, of frame and chassis structure, power train, steering system, suspension system and braking system (to the extent that those systems are to be part of the completed vehicle) and requiring further manufacturing operations other than the addition of readily attachable components, such as mirrors and tire and rim assemblies, or minor finishing operations such as painting, to become a completed vehicle.
Injury incident, school bus: Any non-crash injury sustained by a person while in the bus, or while boarding/leaving the bus.
In-service: Training provided annually or more often to school bus-certified drivers.

Inspection: A close examination of a motor vehicle performed in accordance with local, state and/or federal requirements by an authorized agent of the local, state or federal government.
Integrated child safety seat: A child safety seat meeting the requirements of FMVSS No. 213 which is built into and thus an integral part of a bench seat.
Integrated restraint system: A system in which the occupant restraint of an individual in a wheelchair/mobility aid connects directly to, and is dependent upon, the mobility aid's securement system's rear strap assemblies.
Intercity bus: A large bus with front doors only, high-back seats and under floor luggage storage for high-speed, long distance trips; also known as motor coach and over the road coach.
Intermediate manufacturer: A person, other than the incomplete vehicle manufacturer or the final-stage manufacturer, who performs manufacturing operations on an incomplete vehicle.
International symbol of accessibility: A white emblem on blue background used to indicate that a vehicle can accommodate individuals with disabilities.
Jump seat: A seat designed to fold down to provide supplemental seating in a bus (e.g. in the aisle, in front of the door or along the side wall); not permitted in school buses.
Kneeling bus: A bus on which the front or rear end is lowered to allow easier access for passengers with disabilities.
Laminated glass: Any glazing material that consists of one or more sheets of glass and an inboard-facing surface sheet of plastic, the components being held together by intervening plies of plastic interlayer or by the self-bonding characteristic of the inboard plastic layer.
Lap belt: A Type I belt assembly meeting the requirements of <u>Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSS) No. 209</u> , intended to limit movement of the pelvis.
Lap tray: An accessory for a wheelchair or other mobile seating device, to offer support and convenience for the occupant.
Lap and /shoulder belt: A Type 2 belt assembly meeting the requirements of FMVSS No. 210, intended to limit the movement of the pelvis and upper torso. A seat belt assembly (sometimes called a three-point belt because it has three points of anchorage, one near each hip and one above the shoulder) that must meet the requirements of Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSS) No. 209 and is intended to limit the movement of an occupant's pelvis and upper torso. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's (NHTSA) terminology is Type 2 Seat Belt.
Late bus: A bus scheduled to leave school at a time after the end of the school day, usually to provide transportation for students involved in after-school activities.
Layover time: Time built into a trip schedule between arrival and departure.
LEA: Local Education Agency.
Lean burn: Uses more air than is needed for theoretical complete combustion. This added air allows combustion to take place at a lower temperature, thus reducing the emission of NOx and CO
Left: Left position is determined from the normal driving position as seated in the driver's seat looking in the direction of forward travel.
Liability insurance: Protection against the claims of others for injury or property damage; also known as casualty insurance.
Life cycle procurement: A procurement contract based on both the initial capital cost and the cost of operation over the life of a vehicle.
Lift: (See power lift.)
Live time: The time when students are on the bus, beginning when the first passenger boards and ending when the last passenger leaves.
LNG: Liquified Natural Gas.

Load factor: The ratio of passengers carried to the vehicle's passenger capacity.
Load: To pick up students at a designated bus stop or at school.
Loading zone: Any area where students are boarding or leaving a school bus.
Locking ring: A removable, split rim ring that holds the rim flange in place on a multi-piece rim.
Longitudinal: Parallel to the longitudinal centerline of the vehicle, front to rear.
Low profile: A tire that has a section height that is less than 85 percent of its nominal section width (e.g., a tire with an aspect ratio of less than 0.85.)
Low bid procurement: Competitive procedure in which the lowest bidder is awarded the contract.
Low floor vehicle: A bus in which the floor and entrance are closer to the ground, for easier access by students with disabilities or preschoolers.
LPG: Liquefied Petroleum Gas; also known as propane.
LRE: Least Restrictive Environment, a concept embodied in IDEA which requires that children with disabilities be integrated as fully as possible into situations and settings with their nondisabled peers.
Mainstreaming: (See inclusion.)
Manufacturer: Any person engaged in the manufacturing or assembling of motor vehicles or item of motor vehicle equipment, including any person importing motor vehicle equipment for resale.
MDC: Multi-Disciplinary Conference, an assessment meeting for a student with disabilities which leads to an IEP. (See also assessment team.)
Mediation: Efforts by a third party to bring about agreement between dissenting parties (e.g., labor and management or parents and school administration); usually less formal than arbitration.
Medical support equipment: Portable equipment used by students to maintain life functions, such as oxygen bottles, intravenous or fluid drainage apparatus.
Medically fragile: Refers to students who require specialized technological health care procedures for life support and/or health support.
Minibus: A small school bus, usually a Type A-1 or A-2 or Type 13-1 or B-2.
Minivan: A multi-purpose vehicle (MPV) designed to carry seven to ten passengers.
Mirrors: The system of mirrors required to be installed on school buses in accordance with <u>Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSS) No. III</u> and applicable state laws.
MIS: Management Information System; a means of data collection for analysis by management.
Mobility aid: A wheelchair or other device, either battery-powered or manual, that is used to support and convey a person with a physical disability; also known as mobile seating device.
Modesty panel: A panel located in front of a seat or row of seats, usually supported by a stanchion and cross bar, which does not meet the performance standards of a barrier as defined in FMVSS No. 222; or a short panel which extends from the bottom of a barrier to or near to the floor for the purpose of reducing the draft from the entrance door; also known as kick panel.
Monitor: A person assigned to assist the driver on a school bus or school vehicle.
MPV: Multipurpose Passenger Vehicle, any vehicle with a seating capacity of ten or fewer, including the driver, which is built on a truck chassis, or with special features for occasional off-road use.

MRO: Medical Review Officer, a licensed physician with knowledge of substance abuse disorders required by 49 CFR 40 to receive and evaluate laboratory results generated by a carrier's drug testing program.
Multi-Function School Activity Bus (MFSAB): A school bus whose purposes do not include transporting students to and from home or school bus stops. This subcategory of school bus meets all Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSS) for school buses and meets all regulations for school buses, except the traffic control devices, color, use of cruise control, and seating requirements.
MVR: Motor Vehicle Record of the driver; also known as driving history.
NAPT: National Association for Pupil Transportation, a membership organization comprised of individuals and organizations representing all facets of school transportation.
NASDPTS: National Association of State Directors of Pupil Transportation Services, a membership organization comprised of primarily state officials responsible for pupil transportation.
National School Bus Yellow: (NSBY) The color defined in the publication "National School Bus Color Standard" SBMTC008.
NDR: National Driver Registry.
Nebula combustion chamber: A unique high-turbulence combustion chamber in the top of a piston, which is particularly effective in efficient burning of lean gas-air mixtures.
Neutral safety switch: A device which prevents the bus from starting unless the transmission is in neutral gear or the clutch is depressed.
NFPA: National Fire Protection Association.
NGV: Natural Gas Vehicle.
NHTSA: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, an agency of the U.S. Department of Transportation (<u>DOT</u>).
NIST: National Institute of Standards and Technology.
Nominal dimension: A dimension which exists in name only (e.g., 5/8" plywood which is actually 19/32" thick, but is 5/8" nominal thickness.) The variation between the actual dimension and the nominal dimension is the result of manufacturing practices and tolerances.
Nonconforming bus: Any vehicle designed to carry more than ten (10) passengers that is used to transport children to or from school or school-related activities which does not meet the federal standards specific to school buses.
Non-conforming van: A vehicle smaller than a bus, designed to carry seven to ten passengers and used to transport students, that does not meet FMVSS for school buses.
NOx: Nitrogen oxides
NPRM: Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, a notice published in the Federal Register by a federal agency of a proposed change in regulation.
NSC: National Safety Council.
NSTA: National School Transportation Association, a membership organization comprised of primarily school transportation contractor companies.
NTSB: National Transportation Safety Board, an independent federal agency authorized by Congress to investigate accidents and to issue safety recommendations.
OCR: Office of Civil Rights, an agency of the U.S. Department of Education.

Octane number: A measure of anti-knock properties of a fuel that relates to spark ignition engines. The higher the number, the more resistant to knocking. Higher output and more efficient engine designs can be used with higher octane fuel.
OEM: Original Equipment Manufacturer.
On-board monitoring system: Computerized tracking of driver and vehicle performance, including speed, fuel consumption, etc.
Operating costs: All costs associated with running the transportation system, which are distinct from capital costs.
Operator: The carrier who is responsible for running the transportation system, regardless of ownership of the vehicle.
OSEP: Office of Special Education Programs, an agency of the U.S. Department of Education.
OSERS: Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, an agency of the U.S. Department of Education.
OSHA: Occupational Safety and Health Administration, an agency of the U.S. Department of Labor.
OTETA: The Omnibus Transportation Employees Testing Act of 1991, requiring drivers holding CDLs to participate in a drug and alcohol testing program.
Out of Service: The removal of a school bus from passenger service due to a defective condition.
Overall vehicle width: The nominal design dimension of the widest part of the vehicle, exclusive of signal lamps, marker lamps, outside rearview mirrors, flexible fender extensions and mud flaps, determined with the doors and windows closed and the wheels in the straight-ahead position.
Overhang: The distance from the center of the rear axle to the rearmost end of the body or from the center of the front axle to the forward edge of the front bumper.
Ozone: A pollutant formed from nitrogen oxides (NOx), hydrocarbons and sunlight. This gas has an irritating odor, is poisonous and is used as an oxidizing agent for bleaching.
P.A. system: A public address system which allows the driver of a bus to communicate with persons inside and/or outside the bus through a speaker installed on the inside and/or outside of the bus, also known as external loudspeaker.
P.L. 94-142: (See EHA.)
Para transit: Public transit service which is more flexible than a fixed-route system, commonly providing special service for elderly and disabled passengers.
Parallel restraint system: A system in which the occupant restraint lap belt anchors directly to the floor-track or plates, and is independent of the wheelchair/mobility aid securement system.
Parking brake: A mechanism designed to prevent the movement of a stationary motor vehicle.
Passenger vehicle: means a motor vehicle that is designed to transport 8 to 15 passengers and is the size and style of vehicle necessary to meet the needs of the school district; and insured in accordance with the minimum coverage requirements established in 20-10-109, MCA. A district may use a passenger vehicle to transport students on an activity trip. A district may not use a passenger vehicle to transport students to or from school on a school bus route. A passenger vehicle does not include Type E school buses.
Part B: Refers to the section of the <u>Education for all Handicapped Children Act (EHA)</u> applicable to special education and related services for children with disabilities and to the implementing regulations at 34 CFR 300.
Part H: Refers to the section of the <u>IDEA</u> related to early intervention services for infants and toddlers and to the implementing regulations at 34 CFR 303.

Passenger miles: The LOW number of miles traveled by the aggregate number of passengers on a vehicle (e.g., ten students traveling ten miles on one bus equals 100 passenger miles.)
Pilot ignition engine: An engine using a small quantity of diesel fuel to provide an ignition source for an alternative fuel that will not ignite on its own in a compression cycle.
Piloted hub mounting: A wheel mounting system wherein the wheel centering is provided by a close fit between the wheel disc and the hub.
Port injection: Similar to the throttle body system except that the fuel is injected near each cylinder intake port. The injectors and their controls can be individually controlled for maximum performance and emissions control.
Positive locking: A design feature of the mobility aid securement and occupant restraint system where the attachment and anchoring hardware cannot be inadvertently released or disengaged once properly installed.
Post trip interior inspection: A check of the interior of the bus by the driver at the end of the run to ensure that no children or student belongings have been left behind.
Postural support: A seat, belt or other component used to support a child with disabilities in a desired position but not designed or intended to provide occupant restraint in a crash; also known as positioning device.
Power base: A powered, wheeled platform used to mount a seating device for carrying an individual with a disability; usually characterized by smaller diameter tires.
Power cut-off switch: A device that cancels all power from the vehicle batteries.
Power lift: A mechanized platform designed to provide access to a vehicle for an occupied mobility aid/wheel chair; also known as a wheelchair lift.
Powertrain: The group of components used to transmit engine power to the wheels; includes transmission, universal joints, driveshaft, drive axles and gears; also known as drive train.
Preschool: Refers to a child between the ages of three and five years who is not yet in kindergarten or to a program serving children in that age range.
Pre-service: Training provided to driver applicants prior to school bus certification and/or transporting students.
Pre-trip inspection: A systematic inspection of the bus by the driver before every trip or shift to ensure that the bus is in safe operating condition. The same procedure performed after the trip/shift is the post-trip inspection.
Preventable: A crash that could have been prevented by reasonable action on the part of the school bus driver.
Privatization: The process of transferring the operation of public services from the public agencies to private companies or nonprofit organizations; also known as contracting or outsourcing.
Pusher: A school bus in which the engine is mounted in the rear of the vehicle; also known as rear-engine bus.
Pushout window: A bus window that is hinged at the top or front to enable the window to be swung upward or outward relative to the side of the bus and to provide a means of emergency egress from the bus; also known as emergency window.
Radial: A pneumatic tire in which the ply cords which extend to the beads are laid substantially at 90 degrees to the centerline of the tread.
Railroad crossing: The intersection of a highway, street or roadway and railroad tracks; also known as grade crossing.
Ramp: An inclined plane for use between the ground and the floor of the vehicle to permit access by persons in wheelchairs/mobility aids.
Reaction distance: Distance a vehicle travels during the time it takes for a driver to recognize the need to stop and to apply the brakes.

Reclining seat: An activity seat with a reclining seat back; not permitted in school buses.
Reduced capacity: The capacity that is achieved when one or more seats are removed from the standard design during or after manufacture of the vehicle.
Reflective: Refers to the property of materials that cause them, when they are illuminated, to reflect the light to some extent.
Reformulated gasoline: Also known as “oxygenated gasoline,” reformulated gasoline has oxygen added to improve combustion and reduce emissions.
Related services: Transportation and other supportive services that are required to assist a child with a disability to benefit from special education.
Remanufactured: Refers to a vehicle component that has been structurally restored.
Reportable: A crash required to be reported under FMCSR (i.e. a crash involving a CMV on a public road in which there is a fatality or an injury treated away from the scene, or that requires a vehicle to be towed from the scene).
Repower installation: A dedicated natural gas or other engine which was not part of the original chassis at the time of manufacturing.
RESNA: Rehabilitation Engineering Society of North America, an organization engaged in research and development of assistive technology for persons with disabilities.
Restraining barrier: An assembly similar to a seat back located immediately in front of a single school bus passenger seat or row of seats to provide crash protection in accordance with Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSS) No. 222; also known as barrier, crash barrier, and seat barrier.
Restraint system: A generic term for one or more devices intended to secure and protect a passenger with or without a mobility aid in a vehicle, including lap belts, lap <u>and</u> /shoulder belts, child safety seats, safety vests, etc.
Restraint/securement system: (See securement and restraint system.)
Retarder: An auxiliary braking device used to reduce brake wear.
Retractor, automatic locking: A retractor incorporating adjustment by means of a positive self-locking mechanism which is capable of withstanding restraint forces.
Retractor, emergency locking: A retractor that incorporates adjustment by means of a locking mechanism that is activated by vehicle acceleration, webbing movement relative to the vehicle, or automatic action during an emergency, and that is capable of withstanding restraint forces.
Retread: A worn tire casing to which tread rubber has been affixed to extend the usable life of the tire; also known as re-capped or retreaded tire.
Retro reflective: Refers to material that is designed to return illumination of the material directly or generally back to the source of illumination.
RFID: Radio Frequency Identification, use of electromagnetic fields to capture and transfer data
RFP: Request For Proposals, an invitation to submit a contract proposal, less restrictive than an invitation to bid on a contract.
Ridership: The number of passengers using a transportation system during a given period.
Right: Right position is determined from the normal driving position as seated in the driver’s seat looking in the forward direction of travel.
Rim: The part of the wheel on which the tire is mounted and supported.
Risk management: Practices and procedures designed to protect against losses from accidents, passenger and worker injuries, vehicle damage and other losses, and to reduce insurance costs.

Roadway: According to 61-8-102(2)(v), MCA, roadway means the portion of a highway that is improved, designed, or ordinarily used for vehicular travel, including the paved shoulder.
Rolling stock: The vehicles in a transportation system.
Roof hatch: (See emergency roof exit.)
Route miles: The total number of miles in one or more routes in the system.
Route sheet: A list of all the designated stops on a route.
Route: means a Board of Trustees of a school district and the County Transportation Committee approved designated course regularly traveled by a school bus to pick up students and take them to school, or to deliver students from school to their homes or designated bus stops.
Run: A complete trip on a route. (To illustrate the difference between a run and a route: it is possible to have six daily runs on the same route, i.e., one high school, one middle school, and one elementary run both morning and afternoon.)
Running gear: The wheels, axles, springs, frames and other carrying parts of the vehicle.
SAE: Society of Automotive Engineers, the leading standards-writing organization for the automotive industry.
Safety glass: Glazing material constructed, treated or combined with other materials so as to reduce, in comparison with ordinary glass, the likelihood of injury to persons as a result of contact with the glass, either broken or unbroken.
Safety patrol: Students whose duties may include acting as crossing guards and safety assistants.
Safety training: Educational programs provided for students to teach proper behavior while waiting for, riding in, boarding or leaving school buses; also known as ridership programs.
Safety vest/harness: An upper torso restraint that supports and secures a child by attachment to the vehicle seat.
Safety: A monitor whose primary responsibility is to ensure the safety of students getting on and off the bus and to check the loading zone before the driver pulls out.
SAP: Substance Abuse Professional, a licensed physician, psychologist, social worker or alcohol and drug counselor who is required to evaluate any employee who violates a carrier's drug and alcohol testing program.
SBMTC: School Bus Manufacturers Technical Council; formerly the School Bus Manufacturers Institute (SBMI), a membership organization within NASDPTS which serves as a technical advisor regarding school buses.
School bus equipment: Equipment designed primarily as a system, part or component of a school bus, or any similar part or component manufactured or sold for replacement or as an accessory or addition to a school bus.
School bus stop: An area on the street or highway designated by school officials for picking up and discharging students.
School bus: A bus owned, leased, contracted to or operated by a school or school district that complies with the Board of Public Education <u>S</u> chool <u>B</u> us <u>S</u> tandards as verified by the Department of Justice's semiannual inspection and regularly used to transport students to and from school or school-related activities, but not including a charter bus or transit bus; must meet all applicable <u>Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards</u> (FMVSS)s, and is readily identified by alternately flashing lights, National School Bus Yellow (<u>NSBY</u>) paint, and the legend "School Bus." A school bus includes Type E School Buses. A school bus does not include (as defined in 20-10-101, MCA):
Privately owned and not operated for compensation vehicles;

- Privately owned and operated for reimbursement under MCA, 20-10-142, <u>MCA</u>; - Either district-owned or privately owned, designed to carry not more than nine passengers, and used to transport pupils to or from activity events or to transport pupils to their homes in case of illness or other emergency situations; or <u>An over-the-road passenger coach or passenger vehicle used only to transport students for activity trips.</u>
School trip: (See activity trip.)
School vehicle: Any vehicle owned, leased, contracted to or operated by a school or school district and regularly used to transport students to and from school or school-related activities. Includes school buses, activity buses, vans and passenger vehicles, but does not include transit or charter buses.
School: An educational institution for children at the pre-primary <u>early childhood education</u> , primary, elementary, or secondary level, including nursery schools and Head Start programs, but not including daycare programs.
Scooter: A motorized mobility aid with three wheels, handlebar or tiller and a swiveling seat.
SEA: State Education Agency
Seat belt: (See seat restraints.)
Seat restraints: A passenger restraint system incorporating lap belts or lap <u>and</u> /shoulder belts and meeting the requirements of <u>Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSS)</u> Nos. 209 and 210.
Seat: A device designed and installed to provide seating accommodations.
Seating capacity: The number of designated seating positions provided in a vehicle, including the driver's position. In determining seating capacity, each wheelchair securement location shall be counted as four (4) designated seating positions.
Seating position: The space on a school bus bench seat designated for one student. The number of such positions per seat is determined by dividing the width of the seat by 15" and rounding to the nearest whole number, as described in <u>Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSS)</u> No. 222.
Seating reference point: The manufacturer's design point, with coordinates relative to the vehicle structure, which establishes the rearmost normal driving or riding position of each designated seating position and simulates the position of the pivot center of the human torso and thigh.
Section 402: Section of 23 CFR that authorizes grant funds for highway safety projects.
Section 504: Section of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, PL 93-112, which prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities by any recipient of federal funding.
Securement and restraint system: The total system which secures and restrains both a wheelchair/mobility aid and its occupant; also known as <u>Wheelchair Tie down and Occupant Restraint System (WTORS)</u> .
Securement points: Locations on the base or seat frame of the wheelchair/mobility aid where the securement system should be attached.
Securement system: The means of securing a mobile seating device to a vehicle in accordance with <u>Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSS)</u> No. 222, including all necessary buckles, anchors, webbing/straps and other fasteners.
Seizure: A reaction to an electrical discharge in the brain, resulting in symptoms which can range from a blank stare of a few seconds to full convulsions.
Self insured: Refers to a company or school district which provides reserved funds against claims or losses.

Sensor: An electronic device installed on a school bus for the purpose of detecting animate objects in the loading zone; also known as object detection system.
Service animal: An animal trained to aid with persons with disabilities; may be a guide animal or, assistive animal.
Service brake: The primary mechanism designed to retard and stop a moving vehicle.
Shuttle: A trip run back and forth over a short route (e.g. between two schools.)
Siped: A tire which has been scored or cut perpendicular to the direction of rotation (across the tread) to improve traction.
Skid plate: Stout metal plate attached to the underside of a vehicle to protect the oil pan, transmission, step well or fuel tank from scraping on rocks, curbs and road surface.
Slack adjuster: Adjustable device connected to the brake chamber pushrod used to make up for brake shoe wear.
Snow: A tire with an obvious aggressive or lug type tread across the entire width which is designed to be self-cleaning.
SOS lights: Stop on Signal lights. (See alternately flashing signal lights.)
SOWAT: The Subcommittee on Wheelchairs and Transportation, a group acting under the auspices of RESNA to develop transportable wheelchair crashworthiness standards.
Special education: Specially designed instruction to meet the unique needs of a child with disabilities.
Specially equipped school bus: Any school bus designed, equipped or modified to accommodate students with special needs.
Specially equipped: A school bus designed, equipped, or modified to accommodate students with special needs.
Split -brake system: A service brake system with two separate hydraulic circuits which, upon failure of either, retains full or partial braking ability.
Spoke wheel: A rotating member which provides for mounting and support of one or two demountable rims; also known as wheel for demountable rim.
Stanchion: An upright post or bar, usually installed from floor to ceiling in a bus, which provides support for other structural members and/or provides a hand-hold for passengers.
State Director: The chief government administrator in charge of a state's pupil transportation program and responsible for oversight of regulatory functions.
State: As used in this document, "state" shall refer to any of the 50 states and commonwealths and any United States territory, possession, or federal agency (e.g., the General Services Administration or the Department of Defense) that may consider, follow or adopt part or all the specifications and procedures contained herein for school buses and operations.
Stoichiometric burn: Use of fuel and air (or oxygen) in the exact ratio needed for complete combustion to generate maximum efficiency and power.
Stop arm: A device in the form of a red octagon extending outward from the side of a school bus to signal that the bus has stopped to load or unload passengers and meeting <u>Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSS) No. 131</u> ; also known as stop semaphore and stop signal arm.
Stopping distance: Braking distance plus reaction distance.
Storm window: Two or more sheets of safety glazing material separated by an airspace to provide insulating properties and fixed in a common frame or mounting.
Strobe light: A bright short duration light that flashes as a result of an electronic discharge of electricity through a gas.

Stroller: A light weight folding mobility aid.
Studded: A tire to which metal protrusions have been added to improve traction.
Student rides: The number of students transported in a given system multiplied by the number of one way trips in a school bus. (For example, a school district that transports 1000 students provides 2000 student rides daily or 360,000 student rides to and from school annually, assuming 180 school days. To determine the total number of student rides annually, the district would add the actual or estimated number of students transported on activity trips [times 2] to the figure above.)
Student: Any child who attends a school, as previously defined.
Substitute driver: A driver who is not assigned to a regular route but is employed to provide immediate coverage when necessary due to driver absences or emergencies; also known as spare driver and extra-board driver.
Surrogate wheelchair: A wheelchair device which is subjected to impact tests to test securement and restraint systems.
Suspension system: The components of the vehicle that transmit the load of the vehicle's weight from the chassis framework to the ground, including the springs, axles, wheels, tires and related connecting components.
TDD: Telecommunication devices for the deaf.
Temperature control system: The means of heating or cooling the interior of the vehicle.
Tempered glass: Glazing which consists of glass that has been tempered to meet the properties of safety glass.
Tether: An upper anchor strap used in addition to a seat belt to hold certain types of restraint devices in place.
Texting: Manually entering, or reading from, an electronic device. Texting includes short message services, emailing, instant messaging, a command or request to access a web page, or engaging in any other form of electronic text retrieval or entry, for present or future communication.
Throttle body injection: A gasoline fuel injection system in which the fuel is injected directly into the air intake pipe or manifold. No carburetor is required; electronics monitor engine variables and control the rate of fuel injected.
Tie-down system: (See securement system.)
Tier: Any level of separate runs and routes designed to allow a single bus to complete multiple routing assignments. Multiple assignments typically require the use of staggered school schedules, permitting multiple levels or "tiers" for the daily assignments.
Tire cords: The strands forming the reinforcement structure in a tire.
Tire: The continuous solid or pneumatic rubber elastomeric cushion encircling a wheel intended for contact with the road.
To-and-from school: Transportation from home to school and from school to home; also transportation from school to school or from school to job training site.
Tour: Transportation of a group on a longer trip, usually by charter bus (e.g., senior class trip to Washington.)
Tow hooks: Attachments on the chassis frame for use in towing the vehicle backwards or forwards; also known as tow eyes.
Track seating: A seating system in which seating units, including mobility aids, are secured to the vehicle structure by attaching them to tracks on the vehicle floor.

Traffic lights: Traffic signals which control the flow of traffic at intersections.
Transit bus: A bus designed for frequent stops, with front and back-center doors and low-back seating, operated on a fixed schedule and route to provide public transportation by indiscriminately taking on passengers at designated bus stops.
Transportation: the conveyance of a pupil by a school bus between the pupil's legal residence or an officially designated bus stop and the school designated by the trustees for the pupil's attendance.
Transverse: Perpendicular to the longitudinal centerline of the vehicle (i.e., from side to side.)
Trip: The transportation of students from school to any destination, followed by a return trip back to school. The two together make a round trip.
Tripper service: Regularly scheduled mass transit service which is open to the public, and which is designed or modified to accommodate the needs of school students and personnel, using various fare collections or subsidy systems. Must be part of the regular route service as indicated in published route schedules.
Turbocharger: A device which uses the pressure of exhaust gases to drive a turbine that, in turn, pressurizes air normally drawn into the engine's chambers.
Turnkey: Partial privatization in which a school district hires a company to supply drivers, maintenance management and/or vehicles; also known as management contract.
Two-way radio: Electronic communication system which uses a designated airway for transmission between a bus and a base station.
Type A: A Type "A" school bus is a conversion or bus constructed utilizing a cutaway front section vehicle with a left side driver's door. This definition includes two classifications: Type A-1, with a Gross Vehicle Weight Rating (GVWR) of 10,000 pounds or less; and Type A-2, with a GVWR greater than 10,000 pounds.
Type B: A Type "B" school bus is constructed utilizing a stripped chassis. The entrance door is behind the front wheels. This definition includes two classifications: Type B-1, with a <u>Gross Vehicle Weight Rating (GVWR)</u> of 10,000 pounds or less; and Type B-2, with a GVWR greater than 10,000 pounds.
Type C: A Type "C" school bus is constructed utilizing a chassis with a hood and front fender assembly. The entrance door is behind the front wheels; also known as a conventional school bus.
Type D: A Type "D" school bus is constructed utilizing a stripped chassis. The entrance door is ahead of the front wheels; also known as transit-style school bus or forward-control vehicle.
Type E: A Type "E" school bus-vehicle is district-owned, is designed to carry 10 or fewer passengers, has an overall safety rating of five stars from the N ational H ighway T raffic S safety A administration (<u>NHTSA</u>) at the time of purchase, is insured in accordance with minimum coverage requirements set forth in 20-10-109, <u>MCA</u> , and is purchased after 7/1/2017.
UCRA: Universal child restraint anchorage, a standardized means of installing child restraint systems in vehicles that is independent of the seat belt system. UCRA's will be required in all new motor vehicles under 10,000 pounds, including school buses, as of September 2002.
UL: Underwriters Laboratory.
UMTA: Urban Mass Transit Administration, predecessor to <u>Federal Transit Administration (FTA)</u> .
Universal precautions: Method of infection control designed to protect the individual from exposure to disease, which requires that all bodily fluids and secretions are treated as though they were infectious.
Unload: To discharge passengers from a school bus.
Unloaded vehicle weight: The weight of vehicle with maximum capacity of all fluids necessary for operation, but without cargo or occupants or accessories that are ordinarily removed from the vehicle when they are not in use.

UST: Underground storage tank.
Vaporlock: Boiling or vaporization of fuel in the lines from excessive heat, which interferes with liquid fuel movement and in some cases, stops the flow.
Vehicle miles: The aggregate number of miles a vehicle travels in a given period.
Video system: A means of monitoring student behavior in a school bus. The system includes one or more video cameras to record activity. Camera housing units mounted in each bus appear to hold a camera, whether or not one is actually in place; also known as surveillance.
VIN: Vehicle Identification Number, a series of Arabic numbers and Roman letters which is assigned to a motor vehicle for identification purposes.
Viscosity: A measure of internal resistance to flow or motion offered by a fluid lubricant.
Walking distance: The maximum distance a student can be required to walk to school before transportation must be provided.
Weather emergencies: Weather conditions that require a deviation from normal transportation procedures (e.g., flooding, snowstorm.)
Weight distribution: The distribution proportion of the vehicle load divided between the front and rear axles.
Wheel: A rotating load-carrying member between the tire and the hub, usually consisting of two major parts, the rim and the wheel disc, which may be integral, permanently attached or detachable.
Wheelbase: The distance between the front and rear axles.
Wheelchair lift: (See power lift.)
Wheelchair: A seating system comprising at least a frame, seat and wheels for the support and mobility of person with physical disabilities; also known as mobile seating device.
WTORS: Wheelchair Tie down and Occupant Restraint System.
ZEB: Zero-emissions bus.
ZEV: Zero-emissions vehicle.

APPENDIX B—NATIONAL SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION SPECIFICATION AND PROCEDURES

SCHOOL BUS CHASSIS AND BODY

NATIONAL SCHOOL BUS YELLOW

The color known as National School Bus Yellow is specified and described in the School Bus Manufacturers Technical Council publication “National School Bus Yellow Color Standard” (SBMTC-008).

BUS BODY HEATING SYSTEM TEST

1.——Scope

This procedure, limited to liquid coolant systems, establishes uniform cold weather bus-vehicle heating system test procedures for all vehicles designed to transport ten (10) or more passengers. Required test equipment, facilities and definitions are included. SAE J381 and SAE J382 establish defrosting and defogging procedures and requirements, which are hereby included by reference.

1.1—Purpose

This procedure is designed to provide bus manufacturers with a cost effective, standardized test method to provide relative approximations of cold weather interior temperatures.

2.——Definitions

2.1——Heat Exchanger System—Means will exist for providing heating and windshield defrosting, and defogging capability in a bus. The system shall consist of an integral assembly, or assemblies, having a core assembly or assemblies, blower(s), fan(s), and necessary duct systems and controls to provide heating, defrosting and defogging functions. If the bus body structure makes up some portion of the duct system this structure or assimilation of this structure must be included as part of the system.

2.2——Heat Exchanger Core Assembly—The core shall consist of a liquid to air heat transfer surface(s), liquid inlet and discharge tubes or pipes.

2.3——Heat Exchanger Defroster Blower—An air moving device(s) compatible with energies available on the bus body.

2.4——Coolant—A 50-50 solution of commercially available glycol antifreeze and commercial purity water. Commercial purity water is defined as that obtained from a municipal water supply system.

2.5——Heat Exchanger Defroster Duct System—Passages that conduct inlet and discharge air throughout the heater system. The discharge outlet louvers shall be included as part of the system.

2.6——Heater Test Vehicle—The completed bus as designed by the manufacturer with, or without, a chassis, engine and driver train, including the defined heat exchanger system. If the vehicle is without a chassis, it shall be placed on the test site in such a way that the finished floor of the body is at a height, from the test site floor, equal to its installed height when on a chassis, and all holes and other openings normally filled when installed on a chassis will be plugged.

2.7——Heat Transfer—The transfer of heat from liquid to air is directly proportional to the difference between the temperatures of the liquid and air entering the transfer system, for a given rate of liquid and air flow measured in pounds per minute, and that heat removed from liquid is equal to heat given to air.

3.——Equipment

3.1——Test Site—A suitable location capable of maintaining an average ambient temperature not to exceed 25 degrees Fahrenheit (-3.9 degrees Celsius for the duration of the test period. The maximum air velocity across the vehicle shall be 5 mph(8kph).

3.2——Coolant Supply—A closed loop system, independent of any engine/drive train system, capable of delivering a 50-50 (by volume) solution of anti-freeze-water, as defined in 2.4, at 150 degrees +1-5 degrees (65.5 degrees +/- 1.70C) above the test site ambient temperature, and 50 lbs. (22.7 kg) per minute flow. The coolant supply device shall be equipped with an outlet diverter valve to circulate coolant within the device during its warm-up period. The valve will then permit switching the coolant supply to the bus heat exchanger system at the start of the test.

3.3——Power Equipment Supply—A source capable of providing the required test voltage and current for the heater system.

3.4——Heat Exchange Units—The heat exchangers used shall be labeled as specified by the School Bus Manufacturer's Technical Council No. 001 (Revised 4/94). The test rating of each unit, and quantity used, shall be recorded.

4.——Instrumentation

4.1——Air Temperature

~~4.1.1 — Interior~~ Recommended air temperature measuring instrumentation are thermocouples or RTD's. Thermometers are not recommended because of their slow response to rapid temperature changes. Measuring instrumentation shall be placed on alternate seat rows beginning 39 inches $\pm$ 5 inches (99 cm $\pm$ 13 cm) from the rear of the body, at 36 inches $\pm$ 2 inches (91 cm $\pm$ 5 cm) from the finished floor of the body, and on the longitudinal centerline of the body.

~~4.1.2 — Ambient~~ A set of four (4) of electrically averaged temperature measuring devices shall be placed 18 inches $\pm$ 5 inches (46 cm $\pm$ 13 cm) from the nearest body surface, 96 $\pm$ 5 in (243 cm $\pm$ 13 cm) above the floor of test site. One measuring device shall be placed at each of the following locations:

- ~~(1) — Midline of body forward of windshield;~~
- ~~(2) — Midline of body aft of the rear surface; and~~
- ~~(3) — Midway between the axles on the right and left sides of the body.~~

~~4.1.3 — Driver~~ Measuring devices shall be placed at appropriate locations to measure ankle, knee, and breath level temperatures with the driver's seat in rear-most, lowest and body-center most position.

~~(1) — Ankle Level~~ Place a minimum of four (4) electrically averaged temperature measuring devices at the corners of a 10 X 10 inch (25 X 25 cm) square area, the rear-most edge of which begins 8 inches (20 cm) forward of the front edge of, and centered on, the seat cushion. The devices shall be located 3 inches $\pm$ 0.5 in (7.5 cm $\pm$ 1.3 cm) above floor surface.

~~(2) — Knee Level~~ Place a minimum of one measuring device at the height of the front top edge of the seat cushion and on the centerline of the seat. This measurement shall be 4 inches $\pm$ 1 inch (10 cm $\pm$ 2.5 cm) forward of the extreme front edge of the seat cushion and parallel to the floor.

~~(3) — Breath Level~~ Place a minimum of one measuring device 42 inches $\pm$ 2 inches (107 cm $\pm$ 5 cm) above the floor and 10 inches $\pm$ 2 inches (25 cm $\pm$ 5 cm) forward of the seat back. The forward dimension shall be measured from the upper edge of the seat back and parallel to the floor.

~~4.1.4 — (Optional) Heat Exchanger Inlet and Outlet Temperature~~ A minimum of four (4) electrically averaged temperature measuring devices shall be used to measure the inlet air temperature of each heat exchange unit. Additionally, a minimum of four (4) electronically averaged temperature measuring devices shall be used to measure the outlet air temperature of each heat exchange unit. These sensors shall be placed no closer than 2.0 inches (5.1 cm) from the face of any heater core, to prevent any incidence of radiant heat transfer. Outlet sensors shall be distributed throughout the outlet airstream(s)

~~1.0 inches $\pm$.25 inches (2.5 cm $\pm$.6 cm) from the outlet aperture(s) of the unit heater.~~

~~4.1.5 — (Optional) Defrost Air Temperature~~ The temperature of the defrost air shall be measured at a point in the defroster outlet(s) that is in the main air flow and which is at least one (1) inch (2.54 cm) below the plane of the defroster outlet opening. At least one temperature measurement shall be made in each outlet unit. The interior surface temperature(s) of the windshield shall be measured at a point located on the vertical and horizontal centerline(s) of the windshield.

~~4.1.6 — (Optional) Entrance Area Temperature~~ The temperature of the vehicle entrance area shall be measured by two (2) sets of three (3) each electrically averaged temperature measuring devices. One set of three (3) devices shall be placed one (1) inch (2.54 cm) above the lowest tread of the entrance step, equally spaced on the longitudinal centerline of the tread. The second set of devices shall be placed on the next horizontal surface above the lowest entrance step, four inches (10.2 cm) from the outboard edge of that surface, spaced

identically to the first set of sensors, and placed parallel with the outboard edge of the surface being measured.

4.2 — Coolant Temperature The temperature entering and leaving the heat-changer/defroster system shall be measured as close to the entrance and exit points of the bus body as possible with an immersion thermocouple or RTD device which can be read within ± 0.5 degrees Fahrenheit (± 0.3 degrees Celsius).

4.3 — Coolant Flow The quantity of coolant flowing shall be measured by means of a calibrated flow meter or weighing tank to an accuracy of at least 2 percent of set point.

4.4 — Coolant Pressure The coolant differential pressure shall be measured by suitable connection as close as possible to the inlet and outlet of the heat exchanger/defrosting system. Pressure may be read as inlet and outlet pressure and the differential calculated, or read directly as PSID. Pressure readings shall be made with the use of gauges, manometers or transducers capable of reading within

$\pm$

0.1 psi (689.5 Pa), accurate to $\pm 0.5\%$ of full scale.

4.5 — Additional Instrumentation Additional instrumentation required for vehicle heat exchanger system testing is a voltmeter and a shunt type ammeter to read the voltage and current of the complete system. The ammeter and voltmeter shall be capable of an accuracy of ± 1 percent of the reading.

5. — Test Procedures

5.1 — Install the heater test vehicle on the test site. Testing shall be conducted in such a way as to prevent the effects of solar heating. At an outdoor test site, testing shall commence and data shall be recorded during the hours following sunset and prior to sunrise, regardless of cloud cover or facility roof.

Instrumentation is required to obtain the following readings:

- (a) — Vehicle interior (4.1.1);
- (b) — Inlet coolant temperature, at entrance to the bus body (4.2);
- (c) — Discharge coolant temperature, at exit from the bus body (4.2);
- (d) — Voltage and current at main bus bar connection of driver's control panel;
- (e) — Ambient temperature (4.1.2);
- (f) — Rate of coolant flow (4.3);
- (g) — Coolant flow pressure (4.4);
- (h) — Elapsed time (stop watch);
- (i) — Driver's station temperatures (4.1.3);
- (j) — (Optional) Heat Exchanger Inlet and Outlet Temperatures (4.1.4);
- (k) — (Optional) Defrost Air Temperature (4.1.5); and
- (l) — (Optional) Entrance Area Temperature (4.1.6).

Soak the test vehicle, with doors open, for the length of time necessary to stabilize the interior temperature for a 30 minute period as recorded by the vehicle interior temperature measuring devices, and the coolant temperature as measured by the inlet and outlet coolant temperature measuring devices, at the test site temperature, ± 5 degrees Fahrenheit (± 2.5 degrees Celsius), not to exceed 25 degrees Fahrenheit (-3.9 degrees Celsius). Warm up the coolant device to the test temperature immediately prior to the start of the test. Use the coolant supply outlet diverter valve to prevent heated coolant from entering the bus heating system prior to the start of the test. At this time, set the heater controls and all fan controls at maximum, close all doors. A maximum of two windows may be left open a total of one (1) inch (2.5 cm) each. A maximum of two occupants may be in the body during the test period. Record all instrumentation readings at five minute intervals for a period of one hour. Recording time shall begin with the initial introduction of heated coolant from the

independent coolant supply. The electrical system shall be operated at a maximum of 115% of nominal system voltage ± 0.2 volts, for example: 13.8 VDC ± 0.2 volts for a 12 VDC system, and the heat exchanger system shall be wired with the normal vehicle wiring.

~~Optional—Additional flow rates and/or coolant temperatures may also be used to generate supplementary data. Test procedure five (5) shall be repeated for each additional flow rate and/or coolant temperature.~~

~~6. Computations~~

~~6.1 Chart and Computations—Customary Units~~—Data shall be recorded on Chart 6.1 or equivalent. Temperature data shall be recorded at the actual temperatures occurring at the time of testing. Air temperature data shall then be adjusted to a 0 degrees Fahrenheit base prior to the construction of graphs. This data reduction shall be directly proportional to the difference between the actual ambient temperature, at the time of test, and 0 degrees Fahrenheit (i.e., actual ambient of 18 degrees Fahrenheit shall result in a reduction of all air temperatures by 18 degrees Fahrenheit, actual ambient temperature of -8 degrees Fahrenheit shall result in an increase of all air temperatures by 8 degrees Fahrenheit). Temperature data shall be presented in graph form as well as tabular form. One graph shall be constructed for the body interior air temperatures (4.1.1) wherein the recording intervals shall be the X-axis and the degrees Fahrenheit shall be the Y-axis. A separate graph shall be constructed for the driver's temperatures (4.1.3) using the same units for the axes. Optional temperature data (4.1.4, 4.1.5, 4.1.6) may be similarly graphed separate from the interior data.

~~6.1.1 Optional Computations BTU/Hr. Coolant~~

- ~~(a) Flow of Coolant (Ww) lb./min measured to ± 2 percent.~~
- ~~(b) Temperature of Coolant into System (T in) degrees Fahrenheit measured.~~
- ~~(c) Temperature of Coolant out of System (T out) Fahrenheit measured.~~
- ~~(d) Heat Removed From Coolant
(Qw) Btu/h calculated: $Qw = CpWw(T in - T out) \times 60$ Cp=
Specific Heat of Coolant—Given
as
 0.85×1.0018
Btu/lb./degree
es Fahrenheit
 $Ww = No. 1 T$
 $in = No. 2$
 $T out = No. 3$~~

~~6.2 Chart and Computations—Metric Units~~—Data shall be recorded on Chart 6.2 or equivalent. Temperature data shall be recorded at the actual temperatures occurring at the time of testing. Air temperature data shall then be adjusted to a -18 degrees Celsius base prior to the construction of graphs. This data reduction shall be directly proportional to the difference between the actual ambient temperature, at the time of test, and -18 degrees Celsius i.e., actual ambient of -7.8 degrees Celsius shall result in a reduction of all air temperatures by 10.2 degrees Celsius, actual ambient temperature of -22.2 degrees Celsius shall result in an increase of all air temperatures by 4.2 degrees Celsius. Temperature data shall be presented in graph form as well as tabular form. One graph shall be constructed for the body interior air temperatures (4.1.1) wherein the recording intervals shall be the X-axis and degrees Celsius shall be the Y-axis. A separate graph shall be constructed for the driver's temperatures (4.1.3) using the same units for the axes. Optional temperature data (4.1.4, 4.1.5, 4.1.6) may be similarly graphed separate from the interior data.

~~6.2.1 Optional Computations BTU/Hr. Coolant~~

- (a) ~~Flow of Coolant (Ww) lb./min measured to +/- 2 percent.~~
- (b) ~~Temperature of Coolant into System (T in) degrees Celsius measured.~~
- (c) ~~Temperature of Coolant out of System (T out) Celsius measured.~~
- (d) ~~Heat Removed From Coolant~~
~~(Qw)-Btu/h-calculated: Qw=~~
~~CpWw(T in-T out) X 60 Cp=~~
~~Specific Heat of Coolant-Given~~
~~as (0.85 x 4187j) (kg/c)~~
~~Ww=No. 1~~
~~T in~~
~~=~~
~~No.~~
~~2 T~~
~~out~~
~~=~~
~~No.~~
~~3~~

RESOURCE BACKGROUND—NASDPTS

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF STATE DIRECTORS OF PUPIL TRANSPORTATION

Background:

An estimated 23 million public school students ride over 400,000 school buses twice daily to go to and from school. Additionally, it has been estimated that another one to two million students ride school buses to and from school-related activities each day. In the course of a school year, school buses transport students over four billion miles. The safety of pupil transportation is of significant concern to Federal, State and local governments, school districts, school administrators, parents, and the general public.

Within the school transportation industry itself, there is a long history of significant efforts to make school transportation safe and efficient. Pupil transportation programs date back to the earliest years of the 20th century. By 1910, thirty states had pupil transportation programs in place. The first “vehicles” used to transport students were nothing more than horse-drawn carts which were borrowed from local farmers. With the development of automobiles and trucks with gasoline-powered engines, the school “wagon” was replaced with the school “truck.” During the 1920’s and 1930’s, the Nation’s roadway system was expanding, especially in rural communities. This led to a greater need for vehicles to transport schoolchildren and the formation of an industry of school bus manufacturers.

As the number of school buses operating on the roadways increased, there came the inevitable problems. Several serious tragedies occurred involving school buses which caused school officials to think seriously about developing safety guidelines for school buses. In 1939, representatives from 48 states gathered to develop recommendations for school buses. Since that time, there have been a total of 12 National Conferences on School Transportation where representatives from each state gather to revise existing and establish new safety guidelines for school buses and operating procedures for the safe transportation of schoolchildren, including those with disabilities. The product of these national conferences are referred to as the National Guidelines for School Transportation. The National Conferences are jointly sponsored by the National Association of State Directors of Pupil Transportation Services (which includes the School Bus Manufacturers Technical Council), the National Association for Pupil Transportation, and the National School Transportation Association, the National Safety Council, and Central Missouri State University.

To help ensure the transportation safety of students on school buses, the National Highway

Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) establishes and enforces a series of Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards governing the safety performance and manufacture of school buses. NHTSA also conducts a safety defects investigation program to identify safety defects in motor vehicles, including school buses, and requires manufacturers to recall and remedy defective vehicles free of charge. In addition, NHTSA's Guideline #17, "Pupil Transportation Safety," establishes minimum recommendations for a pupil transportation safety program, including the identification, operation, and maintenance of buses used for transporting students; training of passengers, pedestrians, and bicycle riders; and administration.

Even with the school bus-specific Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards, NHTSA's safety defect investigation and recall program, NHTSA's Guideline #17, and the school transportation industry's National Guidelines for School Transportation, a few school bus safety problems continue to persist.

One of these problems was identified as a contributing factor in a tragic crash that occurred on October 25, 1995, in Fox River Grove, Illinois. On that day, a commuter train hit a school bus that was stopped at a highway-railway grade crossing. Seven students were killed and the school bus driver and 24 other students were injured. The school bus driver had taken all of the appropriate actions prior to crossing the railroad tracks, but unknowingly failed to completely clear the railway track while the school bus was stopped at a red traffic light. The commuter train struck the rearmost side of the school bus.

At the conclusion of its investigation of the crash, the National Transportation Safety Board identified one of the factors contributing to the crash as an inadequate school district routing and hazard marking system. The Safety

Board noted that the substitute school bus driver operating the bus that day was unaware of the hazard at the highway-railroad crossing because "the methods employed by the school district to identify and evaluate route hazards were ineffective."

In addition to the Safety Board's investigation of the Fox River Grove crash, the U.S. Department of Transportation formed a Grade Crossing Task Force to review the decision-making process for designing, constructing, and operating rail crossings. The Task Force published its findings in a March 1996 report, "Accidents That Shouldn't Happen." One recommendation from that report calls for NHTSA to "work with State directors of pupil transportation, through relevant national organizations, to develop a system to improve school bus routing safety by focusing on highway-railroad grade crossings."

As a result of the recommendations from the Safety Board and the Grade Crossing Task Force, NHTSA provided a grant to the National Association of State Directors of Pupil Transportation to:

1. Research the issue of school bus route hazards and route hazard marking systems;
2. Develop a set of guidelines that school transportation officials could utilize in developing a system for identifying school bus route hazards that meets the needs of their locality;
3. Provide suggestions for reasonable and appropriate means of informing school bus drivers of potential school bus route hazards so as to educate them on how to deal with any route hazards that cannot be avoided; and
4. Suggest methods to disseminate the information developed during this project to the school transportation community.

SCHOOL BUS HANDRAIL HANDBOOK & HANDRAIL INSPECTION TOOL AND PROCEDURE

Across the United States, children are being injured or killed when their clothing or accessories are caught in their school bus's handrail or door as they exit the school bus. As a result, they may fall and be violently dragged by the bus and run over by its rear wheels. The most common piece of clothing that can be snagged on the handrail is a jacket with a drawstring at the waist. These drawstrings commonly have a large bobble or knot at the ends that can become lodged in the handrail. However, other articles such as scarves, long straps on backpacks or dangling key chains can also be snagged on the handrail.

School bus handrails have had the same basic design for more than 30 years. However, with the current change in fashion toward oversized and baggy clothing, handrail designs have contributed to tragic and avoidable injuries and deaths.

School bus manufacturers have taken extraordinary and costly steps to remove snagging hazards from school bus entrances. More than 4000,000 school buses have been recalled and manufacturers have absorbed the cost of the repairs. In most cases, a simple spacer can be added to the existing handrail eliminating the potential for snagging. In other cases, manufacturers have redesigned the handrail.

THE SCHOOL BUS DRIVER'S ROLE

The school bus driver is a trained professional concerned with getting children to school and returning them home safely. Driving a school bus is a demanding task. There is a lot of activity in and around the bus. The bus driver must be aware of ever-changing traffic conditions, the children on the bus, and the children who enter and exit at each school bus stop. Compounding this already complex situation is the need for the driver to maintain the school bus schedule.

The major reason for injury and death due to handrail snagging incidents is the driver's failure to notice that the child's drawstring has become snagged. The driver should observe all children, especially those with long drawstrings, oversized or baggy clothing, or other items that may become snagged in handrails, as they exit. Additionally, to ensure safety at each stop, the driver should be certain that each child has completely exited the bus and cleared the danger zones before closing the door and moving the vehicle. The driver should secure the bus and check around and underneath the bus if there is a question of whether a child has moved safely away from the bus. Finally, the driver must be alert for warnings as the bus pulls away. In many of the snagging incidents that have occurred to date, someone inside or outside the bus attempted to warn the driver that a child was being dragged by the bus.

CHILDREN AND PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Children and parents must also accept some responsibility for ensuring that a snagging incident does not occur. While oversized and baggy clothing may represent the latest fashion trend, try to avoid choosing any article that may become caught in a school bus handrail or door. The consumer Product Safety Commission recommends that drawstrings be no more than three inches in length at the waist. Parents should caution children about attaching key rings and other items to their backpacks, as these too may become caught on the handrail or door.

While not directly related to snagging, children should also be warned to stay out of the school bus danger zones. The danger zones are areas around the bus where it is difficult for the driver to see. Children should be taught not to pick up objects they drop near the bus. The driver may not see the child.

If the child does drop something, the child should inform the bus driver and follow the driver's

instructions. Parents should check with the school principal, or local school bus transportation director to determine if the school bus carrying their children has been recalled for a handrail problem and, if so, whether it has been repaired. Parents are encouraged to check with the school system when their child's safety is in question.

Information compiled from [National Highway Traffic Safety Administration](#).

APPENDIX D • PUPIL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY

National Highway Traffic Safety
Administration Highway Safety
Program Guideline #17

I. Scope. This guideline establishes minimum recommendations for a State Highway Safety Program for pupil transportation safety including the identification, operation and maintenance of buses used for carrying students; training of passengers, pedestrians and bicycle riders; and administration.

II. Purpose. The purpose of this guideline is to minimize, to the greatest extent possible, the danger of death or injury to school children while they are traveling to and from school and school-related events.

III. Definitions. "Bus" is a motor vehicle designed for carrying more than 10 persons (including the driver).

"Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations (FMCSR)" are the regulations of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) for commercial motor vehicles in interstate commerce, including buses with a gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) greater than 10,000 pounds or designed to carry 16 or more persons (including the driver), other than buses used to transport school children from home to school and from school to home. (The FMCSR are set forth in 49 CFR Parts 383-399.)

"School chartered bus" is a "bus" that is operated under a short-term contract with state or school authorities who have acquired the exclusive use of the vehicle at a fixed charge to provide transportation for a group of students to a special school-related event.

"School bus" is a "bus" that is used for purposes that include carrying students to and from school or related events on a regular basis, but does not include a transit bus or a school-chartered bus.

IV. Pupil Transportation Safety Program Administration and Operations.

Recommendation. Each state, in cooperation with its school districts and other political subdivisions, should have a comprehensive pupil transportation safety program to ensure that school buses and school chartered buses are operated and maintained so as to achieve the highest possible level of safety.

A. Administration.

1. There should be a single state agency having primary administrative responsibility for pupil transportation, and employing at least one full-time professional to carry out these responsibilities.
2. The responsible state agency should develop an operating system for collecting and reporting information needed to improve the safety of operating school buses and school-chartered buses. This includes the collection and evaluation of uniform crash data consistent with the criteria set forth in Highway Safety Program Guidelines No. 10, "Traffic Records" and No. 19, "Accident Investigation and Reporting."

B. Identification and Equipment of School Buses.

Each state should establish procedures to meet the following recommendations for identification and equipment of school buses.

1. ~~All school buses should:~~
 - a. ~~Be identified with the words "School Bus" printed in letters not less than eight inches high, located between the warning signal lamps as high as possible without impairing visibility of the lettering from both front and rear, and have no other lettering on the front or rear of the vehicle, except as required by Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSS), 49 CFR Part 571.~~
 - b. ~~Be painted National School Bus Yellow, in accordance with the colorimetric specification of National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) Federal Standard No. 595a, Color 13432, except that the hood should be either that color or lusterless black, matching NIST Federal Standard No. 595a, Color 37038.~~
 - c. ~~Have bumpers of glossy black, matching NIST Federal Standard No. 595a, Color 17038, unless, for increased visibility, they are covered with a reflective material.~~
 - d. ~~Be equipped with safety equipment for use in an emergency, including a charged fire extinguisher that is properly mounted near the driver's seat, with signs indicating the location of such equipment.~~
 - e. ~~Be equipped with device(s) demonstrated to enhance the safe operation of school vehicles, such as a stop signal arm.~~
 - f. ~~Be equipped with a system of signal lamps that conforms to the school bus requirements of FMVSS No. 108, 49 CFR 571.108.~~
 - g. ~~Have a system of mirrors that conforms to the school bus requirements of FMVSS No. 111, 49 CFR 571.111, and provides the seated driver a view to the rear along both sides of the bus and a view of the front bumper and the area in front of the bus. Mirrors should be positioned and adjusted such that when a rod, 30 inches long, is placed upright on the ground at any point along a traverse line one foot forward of the forward most point of a school bus, at least seven 1/2 inches of the length of the rod should be visible to the driver, either by direct view or by the system of mirrors.~~
 - h. ~~Comply with all FMVSS applicable to school buses at the time of their manufacture.~~
2. ~~Any school bus meeting the identification recommendations of sections 1. a. h. above, that is permanently converted for use wholly for purposes other than transporting children to and from school or school-related events, should be painted a color other than National School Bus Yellow, and should have the stop arms and school bus signal lamps described by sections 1. d. & e. removed.~~
3. ~~School buses, while being operated on a public highway and transporting primarily passengers other than school children, should have the words "School Bus" covered, removed, or otherwise concealed, and the stop arm and signal lamps described by sections 1. e & f should not be operated.~~
4. ~~School chartered buses should comply with all applicable FMCSR and FMVSS.~~

~~C. Operations.~~

~~Each state should establish procedures to meet the following recommendations for operating school buses and school-chartered buses:~~

1. ~~Personnel.~~
 - a. ~~Each State should develop a plan for selecting, training, and supervising persons whose primary duties involve transporting school children in order to ensure that such persons will attain a high degree of competence in, and knowledge of, their duties.~~

- b. ~~Every person who drives a school bus or school chartered bus occupied by school children should, as a minimum:~~
 - 1. ~~Have a valid state driver's license to operate such a vehicle. All drivers who operate a vehicle designed to carry 16 or more persons (including the driver) are required by FMCSA's Commercial Driver's License Standards by April 1, 1992 (49 CFR Part 383) to have a valid commercial driver's license.~~
 - 2. ~~Meet all physical, mental, moral and other requirements established by the state agency having primary responsibility for pupil transportation, including requirements for drug and/or alcohol misuse or abuse; and~~
 - 3. ~~Be qualified as a driver under the Federal Motor Carrier Safety regulations of the FMCSA, 49 CFR Part 391, if the driver or the drivers' employer is subject to those regulations.~~

2. ~~Vehicles:~~

- a. ~~Each state should enact legislation that provides for uniform procedures regarding school buses stopping on public highways for loading and discharge of children. Public information campaigns should be conducted on a regular basis to ensure that the driving public fully understands the implications of school bus warning signals and requirements to stop for school buses that are loading or discharging school children.~~
- b. ~~Each state should develop plans for minimizing highway use hazards to school bus and school chartered bus occupants, other highway users, pedestrians, bicycle riders and property. They should include, but not be limited to:~~
 - 1. ~~Careful planning and annual review of routes for safety hazards;~~
 - 2. ~~Planning routes to ensure maximum use of school buses and school chartered buses, and to ensure that passengers are not standing while these vehicles are in operation;~~
 - 3. ~~Providing loading and unloading zones off the main traveled part of highways, when it is practical to do so;~~
 - 4. ~~Establishing restricted loading and unloading areas for school buses and school chartered buses at or near schools;~~
 - 5. ~~Ensuring that school bus operators, when stopping on a highway to take on or discharge children, adhere to state regulations for loading and discharging including the use of signal lamps as specified in section B. 1. f. of this guideline;~~
 - 6. ~~Prohibiting, by legislation or regulation, operation of any school bus unless it meets the equipment and identification recommendations of this guideline;~~
 - 7. ~~Replacing, consistent with the economic realities which typically face school districts, those school buses which are not manufactured to meet the April 1, 1977 FMVSS for school buses, with those manufactured to meet the stricter school bus standards, and not chartering any pre-1977 school buses; and~~
 - 8. ~~Informing potential buyers of pre-1977 school buses that these buses may not meet current standards for newly manufactured buses and of the need for continued maintenance of these buses and adequate safety instruction.~~
- c. ~~Use of amber signal lamps to indicate that a school bus is preparing to stop to load or unload children is at the option of the state. Use of red warning signal lamps as specified in section B 1. of this guideline for any purpose or at any time other than when the school bus is stopped to load or discharge passengers should be prohibited.~~
- d. ~~When school buses are equipped with stop arms, such devices should be~~

~~operated only in conjunction with red warning signal lamps, when vehicles are stopped.~~

~~e.—Seating~~

- ~~1. Standing while school buses and school chartered buses are in motion should not be permitted. Routing and seating plans should be coordinated so as to eliminate passengers standing when a school bus or school chartered bus is in motion.~~
- ~~2. Seating should be provided that will permit each occupant to sit in a seat intended by the vehicles' manufacturer to provide accommodation for a person at least as large as a 5th percentile adult female, as defined in 49 CFR 571.208. Due to the variation in sizes of children of different ages, states and school districts should exercise judgment in deciding how many students are actually transported in a school bus or school chartered bus.~~
- ~~3. There should be no auxiliary seating accommodations such as temporary or folding jump seats in school buses.~~
- ~~4. Drivers of school buses and school chartered buses shall be required to wear occupant restraints when the vehicle is in motion.~~
- ~~5. Passengers in school buses and school chartered buses with a gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) of 10,000 pounds or less should be required to wear occupant restraints (where provided) when the vehicle is in motion. Occupant restraints should comply with the requirement of FMVSS Nos. 208, 209 and 210, as they apply to multipurpose vehicles.~~

~~f.—Emergency exit access. Baggage and other items transported in the passenger compartment should be stored and secured so that the aisles are kept clear and the door(s) and emergency exit(s) remain unobstructed at all times. When school buses are equipped with interior luggage racks, the racks should be capable of retaining their contents in a crash or sudden driving maneuver.~~

D.—Vehicle Maintenance

Each state should establish procedures to meet the following recommendations for maintaining buses used to carry school children

- ~~3.—School buses should be maintained in safe operating condition through a systematic preventive maintenance program.~~
- ~~4.—All school buses should be inspected at least semi-annually. In addition, school buses and school chartered buses subject to the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations of FMCSA should be inspected and maintained in accordance with those regulations (49 CFR Parts 393 and 396).~~
- ~~5.—School bus drivers should be required to perform daily pre-trip inspections of their vehicles, and the safety equipment thereon (especially fire extinguishers), and to report promptly and in writing any problems discovered that may affect the safety of the vehicle's operation or result in its technician breakdown. Pre-trip inspection and condition reports for school buses and school chartered buses subject to the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations of FMCSA should be performed in accordance with those regulations (49 CFR 392.7, 392.8, and 396).~~

E.—Other Aspects of Student Transportation Safety.

- ~~6.—At least once during each school semester, each pupil transported from home to school in a school bus should be instructed in safe riding practices, proper loading and unloading techniques, proper street crossing to and from school bus stops and should participate in supervised emergency evacuation drills, which are timed. Prior to each departure, each pupil transported to an activity or field trip in a school bus or school~~

~~chartered bus should be instructed in safe riding practices and on the location and operation of emergency exits.~~

- ~~7. Parents and school officials should work together to select and designate the safety pedestrian and bicycle routes for the use of school children.~~
- ~~8. All school children should be instructed in safe transportation practices for walking to and from school. For those children who routinely walk to school, training should include preselected routes and the importance of adhering to those routes.~~
- ~~9. Children riding bicycles to and from school should receive bicycle safety education, wear bicycle safety helmets, and not deviate from preselected routes.~~
- ~~10. Local school officials and law enforcement personnel should work together to establish crossing guard programs.~~
- ~~11. Local school officials should investigate programs which incorporate the practice of escorting students across streets and highways when they leave school buses. These programs may include the use of school safety patrols or adult attendants.~~
- ~~12. Local school officials should establish passenger vehicle loading and unloading points at schools that are separate from the school bus loading zones.~~

F. Program evaluation

The pupil transportation safety program should be evaluated at least annually by the state agency having primary administrative responsibility for pupil transportation.

Full document is located at [National Highway Traffic Safety Administration](#)

APPENDIX E • HUMAN RESOURCES REFERENCES

SAMPLE JOB DESCRIPTIONS

Local Student Transportation Director, Manager, Supervisor and Private Operator

A. The local student transportation director's and private operator's specific duties should include, but are not limited to, the following activities:

- ~~1. Providing assistance in planning, budgeting and forecasting for the student transportation system.~~
- ~~2. Assisting in school site selection and facility planning.~~
- ~~3. Providing, when appropriate, chassis, body and related equipment procurement.~~
- ~~4. Developing and implementing a plan for preventive and on-going equipment maintenance.~~
- ~~5. Recruiting, selecting, instructing, evaluating and supervising personnel.~~
- ~~6. Routing and scheduling buses for safe, efficient and economical transportation service.~~
- ~~7. Assisting in the development and implementation of student safety education programs.~~
- ~~8. Working with administrators, teachers, transportation personnel, students, parents and various public and private agencies to improve their knowledge and the quality of the transportation system.~~
- ~~9. Investigating and reporting crashes and safety-related incidents, when applicable, using the uniform school bus crash reporting criteria and standard safety incident investigation process.~~
- ~~10. Investigating reported problems.~~
- ~~11. Maintaining records and preparing reports, as required.~~
- ~~12. Developing and supervising an on-going evaluation plan for the student transportation system.~~
- ~~13. Implementing a drug/alcohol testing program in compliance with federal regulations for persons in safety-sensitive positions and for commercially licensed drivers.~~
- ~~14. Establishing and ensuring appropriate staffing levels.~~
- ~~15. Recommending vehicle and equipment replacement schedules.~~

- ~~16. Exhibiting effective skills in conflict resolution and problem solving.~~
- ~~B. Minimum qualifications for the student transportation director and private operator who supervise transportation should include the following:~~
 - ~~1. An undergraduate degree, equivalent experience or industry certification in one or more of the following fields of study is desirable:~~
 - ~~2. Education;~~
 - ~~3. Business Administration;~~
 - ~~4. Management; and~~
 - ~~5. Transportation or a related field.~~
 - ~~6. Formal instruction in student transportation management, including classroom instruction and field experience or student transportation industry certification.~~
 - ~~7. A basic understanding of the educational process and the corresponding role of transportation.~~
 - ~~8. The ability to manage personnel and resources.~~
 - ~~9. Basic user-level computer competency with accounting and word processing software and knowledge of web-based information systems.~~
 - ~~10. The ability to communicate effectively with school or Head Start Center administrators, teachers, parents, students, bus drivers, law enforcement officials, etc.~~
 - ~~11. Knowledge of state and federal regulations applicable to transportation of students.~~

Transportation Specialist

- ~~A. The specific duties should include, but are not limited to, the following activities:~~
 - ~~1. Design and regularly update all routes and time schedules.~~
 - ~~2. Assign drivers to routes and extracurricular trips.~~
 - ~~3. Prepare routes for bidding (if applicable), including schools served and time expectations.~~
 - ~~4. Assign substitute drivers.~~
 - ~~5. Accept bus trouble calls, coordinate replacement buses and drivers.~~
 - ~~6. Advise building officials and parents of route changes, bus changes, late arrivals and departures.~~
 - ~~7. Prepare annual route schedule for distribution and notification to schools and parents.~~
 - ~~8. Assist in planning and presenting staff development programs and annual in-service for drivers.~~
 - ~~9. Assist district in designing new school service areas and boundaries, when necessary.~~
 - ~~10. Assist with road checking all drivers annually.~~
 - ~~11. Relief drive, when necessary.~~
 - ~~12. Investigate school bus crashes, unsafe practices and safety-related incidents and recommend system and procedural improvements leading to improved safety of operations.~~
- ~~B. Minimum qualifications should include, but are not limited to:~~
 - ~~1. Certified state driver instructor (if applicable).~~
 - ~~2. Two years of college, equivalent experience or industry certification.~~
 - ~~3. Basic computer skills, routing software knowledge preferred.~~
 - ~~4. Minimum of one year of experience in an office setting.~~
 - ~~5. Knowledge of district, state and federal regulations, policies and requirements pertaining to driver training and student safety.~~
 - ~~6. Ability to plan, schedule, evaluate and dispatch buses for all district bus routes and extra-curricular trips.~~

- ~~7. Ability to recommend, train and evaluate drivers, meeting all district, state and federal requirements.~~
- ~~8. Ability to recommend equipment and personnel requirements for transportation.~~
- ~~9. Ability to effectively work with and direct bus drivers.~~
- ~~10. Ability to maintain cooperative and effective communication with administrators, students, parents, public and other department employees.~~
- ~~11. Familiarity with vehicle maintenance concepts.~~
- ~~12. Ability to read and interpret road maps.~~
- ~~13. Ability to communicate on the district's two-way voice communications system.~~

Dispatcher

- ~~A. The specific duties should include, but are not limited to, the following activities:~~
 - ~~1. Schedule and dispatch buses and district vehicles to appropriate routes.~~
 - ~~2. Dispatch and coordinate bus and driver assignments for school-sponsored trips.~~
 - ~~3. Secure substitute drivers due to absences and review routes with substitutes, as necessary.~~
 - ~~4. Communicate with drivers via the transportation communications system regarding routes, emergencies and student problems.~~
 - ~~5. Develop and maintain records for driver assignments and vehicle scheduling and use.~~
 - ~~6. Receive and respond to phone calls from parents or public concerning transportation by providing information or referring call to appropriate staff members.~~
 - ~~7. Assist in development of bus routes, schedules and updating routes and schedules throughout the school year.~~
 - ~~8. Assist staff by checking roads during inclement weather.~~
- ~~B. Minimum qualifications should include, but are not limited to:~~
 - ~~1. High school graduate or equivalent.~~
 - ~~2. Class "B" CDL with P and S endorsements.~~
 - ~~3. Two years of experience in public or student transportation.~~
 - ~~4. Experience as a route planner or dispatcher.~~
 - ~~5. Effective oral and written communications skills.~~
 - ~~6. Ability to work effectively under pressure.~~
 - ~~7. Ability to make independent decisions.~~
 - ~~8. Ability to maintain accurate records.~~
 - ~~9. Ability to maintain confidentiality.~~
 - ~~10. Ability to operate communications system.~~
 - ~~11. Ability to schedule and coordinate activities.~~
 - ~~12. Ability to communicate and work effectively with building and department personnel.~~
 - ~~13. Knowledge of student transportation rules and regulations.~~

Instructor/Trainer

- ~~A. The specific duties should include, but are not limited to, the following activities:~~
 - ~~1. Assist with pre-interview and recommend to train.~~
 - ~~2. Train and retrain, as necessary, all bus drivers and bus attendants.~~
 - ~~3. Organize and present safety messages and programs to students.~~
 - ~~4. Annually evaluate, on the road, all bus drivers.~~
 - ~~5. Maintain all driver records and notify drivers of license or certification expirations.~~
 - ~~6. Recommend hiring, retraining and disciplinary action for bus drivers and bus attendants.~~
 - ~~7. Work with vehicle maintenance personnel on possible driver training to avoid equipment abuse.~~
- ~~B. Minimum qualifications should include, but are not limited to:~~
 - ~~1. High school graduate or~~

equivalent.

2. Class "B" CDL with P and S endorsements.

3. Certified state driver instructor (if applicable).

4. Certified first aid instructor.

5. Knowledge of state and federal laws and regulations related to bus drivers.

6. Skill in operating a bus and troubleshooting minor problems.

7. Ability to teach required subjects to obtain state school bus driver's authorization.

8. Ability to instruct CDL requirements.

9. Ability to provide effective instruction in soft skills categories (i.e., confidentiality and intervention strategies).

10. Ability to effectively communicate with staff, peers and community.

11. Ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships.

12. Evidence of effective oral and written communications.

13. Proficiency in basic computer and presentation skills.

Routing Specialist

A. The specific duties should include, but are not limited to, the following activities:

1. Coordinate the development and maintenance of bus stops, runs, routes and schedules consistent with district policies and state requirements.
2. Gather criteria necessary for the development of the school district's school boundaries, street address ranges, speed limits, one-way streets, traffic hazards and hazardous walkway areas.
3. Review all bus route change requests.
4. Communicate with drivers and dispatchers to resolve problems with routes.
5. Communicate with parents, teachers, principals and others regarding the transportation of students.
6. Generate transportation-related reports, as required by the Transportation Director.
7. Evaluate existing hazardous walkway areas and determine route revisions, making recommendations to appropriate individuals.

B. Minimum qualifications should include, but are not limited to:

1. High school graduate or equivalent.
2. Three years of computer routing experience.
3. Knowledge of operating procedures for student transportation.
4. Knowledge of routing procedures and methods.
5. Ability to analyze and make recommendations regarding bus routing activities.
6. Ability to work under pressure.
7. Ability to organize, set priorities and meet deadlines.
8. Ability to maintain accurate records and generate computerized reports.
9. Ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships with a variety of people.
10. Ability to establish a customer service environment.
11. Working knowledge of computer routing systems and boundary analysis software applications.

Secretary

A. The specific duties should include, but are not limited to, the following activities:

1. Develop and maintain filing and record-keeping systems, both physical and electronic.
2. Finalize correspondence and reports prepared by others. Prepare correspondence, reports and other documents, as directed. Perform data entry of pertinent information.
3. Design, format and prepare forms and other documents.

- 4.—Ensure that documents are free from typographical errors, misspellings, omissions, logical inconsistencies and grammatical errors.
- 5.—Ensure that sufficient levels of office supplies are maintained.
- 6.—Arrange for meeting space, send notices and track responses, ensure appropriate refreshments are available and rooms and equipment are properly set up.
- 7.—Use standard office equipment.
- 8.—Coordinate activities with other clerical staff, departments and outside agencies.
- B.—Report employees' hours of work, sick leave, vacation and other leaves to payroll, per district policy and procedures.
 - 1.—Maintain permanent employee records, including payroll, evaluations and leaves, per district policy and procedures.
 - 2.—Answer phones while maintaining professional demeanor and answering queries or redirecting caller to the appropriate personnel.
 - 3.—Facilitate purchase of equipment by obtaining quotes, and preparing purchase orders. (This often is the duty of the Purchasing Agent.)
 - 4.—Ensure that all financial transactions are properly recorded, totaled, balanced and reconciled with budget. (This often is the duty of the Bookkeeper.)
- C.—Minimum qualifications should include, but are not limited to:
 - 1.—High school graduate or equivalent.
 - 2.—Computer experience in word processing, database, spreadsheet and desktop publishing.
 - 3.—Two years' secretarial experience in an office setting.
 - 4.—Ability to create and maintain a filing system.
 - 5.—Ability to enter data.
 - 6.—Ability to create forms, documents, and pamphlets, using desktop publishing.
 - 7.—Ability to maintain good telephone skills.
 - 8.—Good organizational and time management skills.
 - 9.—Excellent oral and written skills.
 - 10.—Ability to handle changing priorities.
 - 11.—Knowledge of payroll practices and procedures.
 - 12.—Knowledge of general accounting and purchasing procedures.
 - 13.—Ability to work effectively under high stress situations.
 - 14.—Ability to maintain confidentiality.

Bookkeeper

- A.—The specific duties should include, but are not limited to, the following activities:
 - 1.—Develop and maintain records of budget data, both physical and electronic.
 - 2.—Prepare special reports, as required by the Transportation Director.
 - 3.—Prepare purchase orders and maintain records.
 - 4.—Ensure that all financial transactions are properly recorded, totaled, balanced and reconciled with budgeted amounts.
 - 5.—Invoice departments, schools and other agencies for transportation services performed.
 - 6.—Obtain quotes and prepare purchase orders for buses, supplies, office and shop equipment.
 - 7.—Maintain inventory of all buses and district vehicles, including VIN and license numbers, model, chassis, seat and vehicle-rated capacity, wheelchairs and occupant restraint systems.
 - 8.—Remove and add vehicles for insurance purposes.
 - 9.—Assist with insurance claims and warranty work.
 - 10.—Assist with development of annual budget.
 - 11.—Assist with answering phones while maintaining professional demeanor and answering queries or redirecting caller to the

appropriate personnel.

12. Use copiers and other office equipment.

B. Minimum qualifications should include, but are not limited to:

1. High school graduate or equivalent.

2. Experience with word processing, spreadsheets and database.

3. Experience as bookkeeper in an office setting.

4. Ability to organize tasks and documents in a logical manner.

5. Ability to complete basic formulas and operations, such as sorting and extracting.

6. Ability to operate a ten-key calculator.

7. Ability to use various types of office equipment.

8. Ability to reconcile checking accounts or bank statements.

9. Ability to maintain good telephone skills.

10. Ability to enter data.

11. Knowledge of general mathematics applications.

12. Knowledge of general accounting procedures.

13. Knowledge of purchasing regulations.

14. Knowledge of bidding and/or low quote purchase of school buses.

15. Ability to maintain confidentiality.

Bus Driver

A. The specific duties should include, but are not limited to, the following activities:

1. Report defective school bus equipment and accessories, including but not limited to, fire extinguishers, highway warning kits, first aid and body fluid cleanup kits, snow chains, sanders, etc., and when necessary install, service or replace defective equipment.

2. Perform required operational and safety inspections of the school bus and all related equipment.

3. Ability to clean and service the school bus to include interior cleaning and exterior bus washing, installation of fuel, oil and other fluids, as directed.

4. Operate all hand and foot controls installed in a school bus, as required.

5. Perform basic first aid, as appropriate, which may include CPR.

6. Work effectively with a group of students of different grade levels, abilities or program placement.

7. Complete legibly and accurately forms, records, reports and other documentation/data logging activities, as required by state or district policy.

8. Be punctual.

9. Dress appropriately and wear proper foot protection.

10. Manage passengers in the school bus.

11. Report unsafe acts or conditions that require the attention of any person other than the driver.

12. Successfully complete school bus driver training programs and courses established by the state or district.

B. Minimum qualifications should include, but are not limited to:

1. High school graduate or equivalent.

2. Hold and maintain a class license with all applicable endorsement for the type of vehicle being driven.

3. Excellent driving record.

4. Physical ability to drive and perform all duties related to school bus operations.

5. Ability to relate effectively with parents, staff and public in a

multicultural and multiracial community.

6. Sufficient command of local language to communicate with students, parents, district staff members and other concerned individuals regarding all aspects of their job-related activities.
7. Ability to pass a criminal history background check.
8. Ability to pass a state or DOT medical examination.
9. Ability to pass a federally mandated drug/alcohol screen.

Bus Attendant (Monitor or Aide)

A. The specific duties should include, but are not limited to, the following activities:

1. Assist the school bus driver.
2. Assist students to safely embark and disembark from a school bus.
3. Ensure a safe trip for every student.
4. Make sure that students get off at the correct busstop.
5. Help implement safety standards on board the bus.
6. When applicable, assist with loading/unloading and securing of assistive devices and safety restraints.
7. Assist driver with student management.

B. Minimum qualifications should include, but are not limited to:

1. High school graduate or equivalent.
2. Ability to work with all students.
3. Ability to physically move wheelchairs onto wheelchair ramp and into the bus.
4. Ability to physically remove students from a disabled bus.
5. Ability to get along with co-workers, parents, students and other staff.
6. Ability to interact with students.
7. Ability to follow directions.
8. Ability to communicate with staff.

Vehicle Maintenance Supervisor, Foreman and Manager

A. The specific duties should include, but are not limited to, the following activities:

1. Supervise and work with technicians in diagnosing malfunctions on vehicles.
2. Supervise and work with technicians to overhaul and rebuild engines, transmissions and other vehicle components.
3. Purchase parts, materials and supplies required for proper maintenance of district vehicles, related equipment and shop facilities, per district procedures.
4. Coordinate maintenance of buses with dispatchers to ensure the bus fleet is ready to meet operational requirements.
5. Recommend and assist with short and long term bus purchase planning.
6. Oversee record keeping, evaluate reports for work assignments, inspect work, as needed, review time and parts used for repair and maintain inventory at required levels.
7. Evaluate needs and recommend purchase of new or replacement shop equipment, machines, tools and related items.
8. Assist in evaluating bids and recommend awards for jobs performed by outside vendors.
9. Assume responsibility for cleanliness, upkeep and organization of shop building, as well as safety, security, equipment and parts.
10. Assume responsibility for hazardous material disposal, following all governmental regulations and required reporting and record keeping.
11. Assume responsibility for evaluating all shop personnel.

- 12. Prepare and maintain preventive maintenance schedules.
- B. Minimum qualifications should include, but are not limited to:
 - 1. High school graduate or equivalent.
 - 2. Minimum of five years of experience in automotive technician field.
 - 3. One year of full-time experience as a journeyman technician in a truck or bus maintenance facility.
 - 4. One year of full-time experience at the supervisory level in an automotive maintenance facility.
 - 5. Class "B" CDL with P and S endorsements.
 - 6. Knowledgeable user of computer-based business and fleet management software.
 - 7. Ability to direct and coordinate employees.
 - 8. Ability to communicate with staff.
 - 9. Ability to understand job functions in relationship to school district requirements.
 - 10. Ability to work under pressure.
 - 11. Ability to teach/instruct.
 - 12. Ability to maintain and analyze vehicle records.
 - 13. Ability to use and understand diagnostic equipment.

Journeyman Technician

- A. The specific duties should include, but are not limited to, the following activities:
 - 1. Diagnose and repair mechanical, electrical and engine defects in buses and other automotive equipment.
 - 2. Overhaul and rebuild engines, transmissions, differentials, brake systems and other major components by repair and replacement of parts.
 - 3. Repair and rebuild generators, alternators and all other electrical components utilizing testing devices and machine equipment, as required.
 - 4. Perform general tune-ups, utilizing diagnostic equipment.
 - 5. Make roadside repairs, as required.
 - 6. Repair and replace seats, glass, sheet metal, latches and other body components and assemblies.
 - 7. Change oil and filters; install antifreeze and snow chains; repair tires; adjust brakes; lubricate chassis, wheel bearings and other assemblies, as required.
 - 8. Perform all required preventive maintenance and regular bus safety inspections
 - 9. Operate battery chargers, valve re-facing and reseating machines, compression gauges, torque wrenches, welding equipment, grinders, reamers, timing lamps, hoists, jacks, presses, headlight adjustment machines, air wrenches, small lathes, spark plug testers and other equipment for performing repair and maintenance of motor vehicles.
 - 10. Assist in cleaning and organizing the shop, parts room and other maintenance facilities.
 - 11. Complete vehicle maintenance forms and records.
- B. Minimum qualifications should include, but are not limited to:
 - 1. High school graduate or equivalent.
 - 2. Class "B" CDL with P and S endorsements.
 - 3. Completion of a recognized apprenticeship as an automotive technician, full journeyman status as an automotive technician or a minimum of four years' applicable work experience of any equivalent combination of experience and training.
 - 4. Experience in repair and maintenance of heavy duty and diesel vehicles and special vehicular equipment.
 - 5. Ability to identify, diagnose and repair vehicle malfunctions.
 - 6. Ability to communicate with staff, peers and students.
 - 7. Ability to understand job functions in relationship to school district needs.
 - 8. Ability to work under pressure.

9. ~~Ability to maintain accurate bus repair and other records.~~
10. ~~Be in good physical condition.~~

Assistant Technician

- A. ~~The specific duties should include, but are not limited to, the following activities:~~
 1. ~~Assist journeyman technicians in overhaul, rebuilding and replacing major assemblies and components.~~
 2. ~~Lubricate buses and other automotive equipment to include chassis lube, oil and filter changes, gearbox fill or drain and flush, wheel bearing pack and all other lubricating and air cleaner service procedures, as required.~~
 3. ~~Verify operational safety of equipment and devices, such as brakes, clutch, lamps, mirrors, glass, fire extinguishers, first aid kits, highway warning kits, horn, warning lamps and buzzers, emergency exits, wipers, signs, tires, etc.~~
 4. ~~Change and repair tires, perform complete battery service and brake adjustments.~~
 5. ~~Install antifreeze; service cooling systems; inspect and replace hoses, caps valves etc.~~
 6. ~~Make minor repairs by replacing lamps, spark plugs, ignition parts, patches and switches, as required.~~
 7. ~~Operate lubrication equipment, hoist, compressor, battery charger, diagnostic equipment, headlight adjustment machine, alignment board, spark plug tester, drills, presses, air wrenches and other tools and equipment, as required in the performance of assigned duties.~~
 8. ~~Drive service truck for roadside service, as required.~~
 9. ~~Assist in cleaning and organizing the shop, parts room and other maintenance facilities.~~
- B. ~~Minimum qualifications should include, but are not limited to:~~
 1. ~~High school graduate or equivalent.~~
 2. ~~Class "B" CDL with P and S endorsements.~~
 3. ~~Minimum two years of general experience in service station type automotive maintenance, plus one year related experience on buses, trucks or other heavy-duty vehicular equipment.~~
 4. ~~Possess a basic set of auto technician hand tools and storage cabinet, if required.~~
 5. ~~Be in good physical condition.~~
 6. ~~Ability to work under pressure.~~
 7. ~~Able to follow directions.~~
 8. ~~Ability to communicate with staff.~~

HIRING NEW EMPLOYEES

~~Employment procedures should be clearly stated in writing and followed by all parties involved in the procedures. There should be no discrimination in the advertisement of a job opening, in the application review process or in the interview. All applicants must be treated equally and interviewed/not interviewed or hired/not hired based on objective and measurable criteria. It is illegal to make any inquiry or keep any record of race, creed, color, national origin, age, sex, marital status or disability before, during or after employment for the purpose of discriminating on these grounds.~~

~~It is the local school district board of trustees or a school bus contractor's responsibility to employ and dismiss employees, including school district school bus drivers. See 20-3-324(1)-(2), MCA.~~

~~The following are essential steps to be incorporated in screening and hiring procedures:~~

1. ~~Advertising~~
 - a. ~~Contact the Personnel Department/Human Resources Office for possible~~

applications on file. (Some offices have a phone job line available for posting job openings.) Advertising by word of mouth, newspapers, employment office, school lunch menus and notices in retail stores or local fire departments are also good methods to get word out to the community regarding job openings.

- b. Provide written procedures, job requirements and duties to applicants. Pre-employment screening requirements (e.g., criminal background checks, driving record checks, drug screening, etc.) should be listed in each packet of information provided to potential applicants.

2. Applicant screening

- a. Check application forms for completeness. Contact applicants as soon as possible to obtain any information that was omitted from the original application documents. One method is to formulate a check-off list to verify the completeness of the applications and that the applicants meet all requirements for the position. A point system or some other grading criteria should be developed that will result in an objectively obtained score. It is advisable for the Personnel Department/Human Resources Office to keep these screening sheets on file, should the district be challenged by an applicant that feels he/she has been discriminated against. The successful applicants should be scheduled for an interview when screening and background checks are completed. This may be done by phone or letter.
- b. Conduct background checks, as may be required. Advise applicants of procedures for fingerprinting for criminal records checks, authorization for driving records check, drug/alcohol screening and any other background checks that are required. Obtain written authorization for any such checks. If a CDL is required prior to employment, a copy of the applicant's current license and physical examination form may be requested at this stage in the procedure.
- c. Contact personal references and previous employers listed on application forms. It is very important to check references; however, because personnel issues are confidential, it is very important to receive written permission from the applicant to allow the former employer(s) to release all information, including any available drug and alcohol test results. If you do not have this release, the only information you will usually obtain is date(s) of employment and position held. One question they may answer is this: "Would you rehire?" If the answer is "No," you may want to more thoroughly evaluate the applicant.
- d. Determine amount of pre-service training required for applicants to fulfill job requirements.

3. Interview

- a. Planning the interview. Interviews should be held in a pre-determined, pre-appointed setting. The interview team should be selected, seating arrangements determined and questions prepared before the interview begins. Applicants should not have to wait. It is very important to plan the number of questions to be asked and about how long the interview should take. Allow time in the schedule for the interview team to exchange any thoughts or concerns about the applicants while information is fresh.
- b. Interview questions
 - i. Questions should be open-ended. Try to avoid asking questions that can be answered with a "yes" or "no." The number of questions depends on the kind of information the interview team wishes to

gather and evaluate. Always allow the applicant to ask the team any questions he/she may have. "Look for" answers, pre-determined by human resources staff and/or the interview team, must be resolved before the interview. The answer(s) are what the team is "looking for" when the applicant is interviewed. Each member of the team would then grade the answer he/she hears on a pre-designed sliding scale.

ii. Do not ask illegal questions. The perception by the candidate could be that he or she was not picked because of the answer of an illegal/personal question.

c. The interview team should meet in advance to determine assignments and to stress that all candidates for the position must be treated equally and asked the same questions, preferably by the same interview team member.

d. Concluding interview activities. After all interviews are completed, interview team members should grade their interview sheets. (These must be kept in the event the district may be challenged about the decision by an unsuccessful applicant at a later date.) Applicants' composite scores should be tallied and recommendations prepared.

4. Recommend hiring

Applicants for all positions must be screened, and only those applicants that qualify in terms of education, job skills and experience should be recommended for final consideration.

5. Hire

Hiring an employee is a process with many steps that usually begins with the need to fill an open or new position. Hiring, the final step, should follow a clearly established written procedure, which often must be ratified by the governing authority of the agency involved.

APPENDIX F – SUPPLEMENTAL RESOURCE MATERIALS

RESOURCE – BUS ROUTE ACTIONS

ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN DURING AND FOLLOWING THE OBSERVATIONS OF SCHOOL BUS ROUTES

Supervisory actions that should be taken during and after the transportation director completes a review of bus routes are listed below:

1. Check the route and schedule for accuracy.
2. Determine that loading and unloading occurs only at authorized stops.
3. Check for bus stop hazards
4. Check to see that vehicles are operated in compliance with prescribed regulations.
5. Observe the driver-student relationship.
6. Check loading and unloading conditions at school centers.
7. Check for evidence of supervision in loading zones.
8. Note hazardous road conditions.
9. Note the nature, frequency and locations of bus stop law violations.
10. Observe conditions of bus (e.g., cleanliness, tires, windows, emergency exit(s), first aid kits, fire extinguisher, seats, etc.).
11. Observe vehicle inspection guide for evidence of pre-trip inspection.
12. Note driver attitude toward other motorists and pedestrians.
13. Follow the observation with a written report and discussion with the driver (and others, as appropriate). The discussion should be used to encourage the driver to become self-auditing and participate in giving supervisors information that is helpful in improving the overall safety, effectiveness and efficiency of the student transportation system.
14. File the written report in the driver's permanent record.

RESOURCE—NASDPTS GUIDELINES FOR ENROUTE EMERGENCY BUS EVACUATION

The intent of these procedures is to provide guidelines for evacuating a bus only when necessary in an emergency, for the safety of students and staff.

I. ~~Preparing an Emergency Evacuation Plan:~~

~~Each bus should have an emergency evacuation plan, which should be kept in the bus. The plan should allow for individual capabilities and needs of each student, the type of behaviors that might be exhibited during an emergency evacuation and the types of wheelchair or support equipment being used for students. A floor plan with student location and special needs should be in the bus. Issues that should be considered when establishing an evacuation plan are listed below.~~

- ~~a. Whether students can help, and to what extent;~~
- ~~b. How to deal with individual emergencies (e.g., seizures) during the evacuation process;~~
- ~~c. Whether students should be evacuated in their wheelchairs, or removed from their wheelchairs before evacuation;~~
- ~~d. How to disconnect or cut wheelchair securement and occupant protection equipment, including belts, trays and other support equipment;~~
- ~~e. The order or sequence in which students should be evacuated;~~
- ~~f. The length of time a student requiring life support equipment or medical care procedures can survive if such service is interrupted or delayed during the evacuation process;~~
- ~~g. Where to gather once off the bus and how to evaluate different scenarios to make the best decision about where to gather;~~
- ~~h. Training plan and schedules for drivers and students; and~~
- ~~i. Specific emergency equipment needed, training in use and assignment of responsibility to remove from the bus when evacuations occur.~~

II. ~~Assessing the Need to Evacuate:~~

~~Student safety and control are best maintained by keeping students in the bus during an emergency and/or impending crisis if doing so does not expose them to unnecessary risk or injury. A decision to evacuate should include consideration of the following conditions:~~

- ~~a. Is there a fire involved?~~
- ~~b. Is fuel leaking?~~
- ~~c. Might the bus roll or tip, thereby causing further threat to safety?~~
- ~~d. Is the bus likely to be hit by other vehicles?~~
- ~~e. Is the bus in the direct path of a sighted tornado or other natural disaster, such as rising water?~~
- ~~f. Would evacuating students expose them to speeding traffic, severe weather or another dangerous environment?~~
- ~~g. Considering the medical, physical and emotional condition of the students, does staying in the bus or evacuating pose the greater danger to the students' safety?~~

III. ~~General Procedures to Follow for Emergency Evacuation:~~

- ~~a. Keep the situation as orderly and low-key as possible.~~
- ~~b. If time and conditions permit, the bus driver should use the communication system to advise the office of the following information:~~
 - ~~1. The exact location, including nearest intersecting road or familiar landmark;~~
 - ~~2. The condition creating the emergency;~~
 - ~~3. The type of assistance needed (police fire ambulance); and~~
 - ~~4. Notification that the bus is being evacuated.~~
- ~~c. Analyze conditions to determine the safest exit from the bus and safest gathering location;~~
- ~~d. During evacuation, monitor conditions and adjust procedures to meet unexpected circumstances.~~

- e. ~~Move evacuated students to the nearest safe location at least 100 feet from the bus.~~
- f. ~~Be prepared to give information to emergency medical personnel regarding individual students' medical or physical requirements.~~

~~IV. Equipment Considerations:~~

- a. ~~Bus staff should, as part of their pre-trip inspection, familiarize themselves with the location and method of opening all emergency exits.~~
- b. ~~If time permits, a lift platform can be lowered half the distance to the ground, providing a step for evacuating wheelchairs. If there is a smell of spilled fuel, the lift should be operated manually.~~
- c. ~~When re-entry to the bus is not probable, communication equipment and first aid kits can frequently be passed through a window, making them accessible outside the bus. Consideration should also be made for student medication, if carried and needed.~~
- d. ~~If a large bus is being used and evacuation is made through the rear exit door, consideration should be given to the method to be used for re-entry to the bus, if necessary, considering the height of the floor from the ground. Some states allow a stirrup-type step on the rear bumper.~~
- e. ~~If a battering ram is needed, a fire extinguisher can often serve that purpose.~~
- f. ~~A belt cutter shall be stored in the bus in a location readily accessible to the driver when he/she is seated in the normal driving position and location. The cutter should have a protected mouth to restrict the entry of fingers, etc.~~

~~V. Local District Policy:~~

~~Bus staff should be familiar with local district policy regarding the following items:~~

- a. ~~Evacuation procedures to follow when students are en route; or, what to do if a tornado or flash flood, etc. is sighted and no shelter is near.~~
- b. ~~The type of medical information to be available on long distance trips in case of student injury.~~

~~Note: THE SAFETY OF THE BUS AND EQUIPMENT IS SECONDARY TO THE SAFETY OF THE STUDENTS. NO ATTEMPT SHOULD BE MADE TO SAVE EQUIPMENT OR PERSONAL ITEMS UNTIL ALL STUDENTS ARE REMOVED FROM THE BUS SAFELY, ARE OUT OF DANGER AND ARE SUPERVISED.~~

~~The full document is located at [National Association of State Directors of Pupil Transportation Services.](#)~~

~~RESOURCE – PLANNING SCHOOL SITES FOR SCHOOL BUS SAFETY~~

- ~~1. In the selection of school sites, major consideration should be given to the safety of students riding school buses. School buses will be forced to utilize the roads in and around the school site, plus public highways leading into the school area. High density traffic flow near school exits and entrances due to the proximity of freeways, periodic commercial traffic or massive commuter traffic from industrial plants should be avoided. It must be recognized, in many cases, that the area designated for the school site has been selected prior to hiring an architect. It is suggested, therefore, that this information be issued to boards of education and municipal planning authorities alerting them to the dangers inherent in the process of site selection. It is also suggested that boards of education discuss the selection with the superintendent of schools, traffic engineers and the state office of school plant planning and solicit their help in evaluating possible school sites.~~
- ~~2. The location of the school plant on a site should be determined to provide a safe means of entrance and exit for all students. When boards of education are considering school sites, the state, county and local roads servicing the area should have a minimum 30-foot paved width where loading and unloading is contemplated off the main~~

thoroughfare. If it is necessary to load or unload students on the main thoroughfare in front of the school, at least a 40-foot wide paved road should be provided.

3. All school bus traffic should be considered as one-way traffic flow, preferably with the entrance door side of the bus always next to the loading and unloading zone.
4. When separate pick-up and delivery points some distance from the teacher and student parking areas should be designated for parents, delivery, service, teacher and administrative traffic. Accident-inducing conditions are created by haphazard pick-up and delivery of students in the bus loading zones, particularly during inclement weather.
5. When roads that completely encircle a school should not be constructed. Areas that students must cross to engage in outside activities should be free of all vehicular traffic.
6. All school bus roads entering or exiting from main arteries should have a 50- to 100-foot radius turn on the inner edge of pavement. Within the school site, roads should have at least a 60-foot radius on the inner edge of pavement on all curves. At least a 50-foot tangent section should be provided between reverse curves. To minimize driveway entrance and exit widths, island construction may be required. Driveway openings must conform to local requirements and driveways opening onto state highways should be approved by the state highway department.
7. Curbing, with suitable drainage, should be constructed on all roads utilized by school buses within the school site. Consideration should be given to state highway department performance specifications. A minimum of 30 feet should be maintained for one-way traffic and 36 feet for two-way traffic, with roads being wider on all curves.
8. It is desirable to separate all parking areas; however, it might be advantageous if only the visitor parking area were near the school. Care should be exercised in the placement of these areas to preclude the visitor from crossing the school bus traffic pattern.
9. Prior to designing and laying out roads and parking lots, architects should consult with the school administration on the following items:
 - a. Total number of students and school personnel;
 - b. Number of present and projected students to be transported;
 - c. Number of buses;
 - d. Type of schedule; and
 1. Staggered opening and closing times; and
 2. Single opening and closing times.
 - e. Extra-curricular activities that would necessitate use of school buses.
10. It is desirable to locate parked buses on school grounds to prevent glare from reflective surfaces of windows, doors and windshields from being transmitted to the students in the classroom.
11. Attention should be given in planning school bus parking, loading and unloading areas. Parking should exclude the necessity for backing the bus.
12. Sidewalk plans for students walking to school should eliminate crosswalks in front of the buses.
13. Architects' plans for school buildings often include bus canopies. Such units are not considered feasible for schools with large enrollments. Canopies are advantageous in schools attended by students with disabilities. The height of the canopy should accommodate the highest school buses. Each canopy support post adjacent to the driveway curb should have a three-foot minimum setback from the curb to minimize the possibility of crushing a student between the support post and arriving school buses.
14. For areas that will be constantly utilized by heavy school buses, the type of pavement and base should conform to state highway department specifications.
15. All roads within the school site should be graded to avoid configurations that could impair a

- motorist's vision. It is suggested that a maximum 5% grade be allowed on all roads and, at entrance and exit points, a maximum 2% grade be allowed. Blind corners and intersections should be eliminated. Trees and shrubbery planted on the school site should not obstruct a motorist's vision.
16. Plans for the location of access and service roads should exclude conditions that would require school buses to be backed on the school premises.
 17. Safety at all student loading and unloading areas should be considered and provided on the school site.
 18. Plans for loading facilities should include separate areas specially designed for students with disabilities. Attention should be given to entrance ramps and handrails.
 19. Plans for roads and loading areas should accommodate emergency vehicles which must have access to the school always.
 20. Where necessary, traffic control devices should be provided to assist school traffic to enter the regular traffic flow.

SCHOOL BUS DRIVER TRAINING

~~(See DRIVER INSERVICE TRAINING PROGRAM)~~

School bus driver training is one of the most important components of the school bus transportation system. A critical component of school bus driver training is the recognition of potential driving hazards and appropriate adjustment of driving behavior to ensure the safety of the school bus occupants. The goal of this project and report is to provide school bus drivers and substitute drivers with a list of locations/situations that should be recognized as being potentially hazardous. School bus drivers should be properly trained to deal with these potentially hazardous conditions. In addition, school bus drivers should be trained to deal with hazardous conditions that occur suddenly or are of a temporary nature. Constant dialogue between school bus drivers and route planners is critical to ensure the continued safe transportation of students in school buses.

Methodology:

The National Association of State Directors of Pupil Transportation (NASDPTS) undertook the following activities to develop a school bus route hazard identification system and a means of educating school bus drivers about such hazards. Each of the activities included review and comment by the various state directors of pupil transportation. Throughout this report, specific comments from states are included to illustrate the involvement and insight provided by the state directors.

1.—Define School Bus Route Hazard

The first, and most critical, step was to develop an acceptable and reasonable definition of what constitutes a "school bus route hazard." From a practicable perspective, "school bus route hazards" can be grouped into two distinct categories. First, there are "driving hazards" that are encountered while operating a school bus route, such as railroad grade crossings and industrial intersections. Second, there are "school bus loading zone hazards" that are encountered at a school bus stop, such as a narrow, busy street without sidewalks or dangerous curves that do not provide the school bus driver, the students, or other motorists with an adequate view of the school bus loading zone. The scope of work for this project only included the first category of school bus route hazards—driving hazards.

2.—Develop a "Model" School Bus Route Hazard Identification System

Based on the knowledge and expertise of individuals within the school transportation industry, an ideal program that could be used to assist states and local school districts in identifying and evaluating potential school bus route hazards was defined. This ideal program became the "model" against which existing school bus route hazard identification programs were compared.

3.—Review Existing Materials/Information

Examples of existing state or local school district route hazard identification programs were reviewed and compared with the “model” system described above. The existing programs were reviewed in terms of the ability of the program to identify route hazards and communicate that information to the appropriate individuals.

4.—Develop a Recommended System

Based on the review of existing programs, as compared to the “model” system, a recommended school bus driving route hazard identification system was developed that could provide states and local school districts with an efficient method for identifying potential school bus route hazards and a means of communicating information about those hazards to school bus drivers and trainers, route planners, and other appropriate school transportation officials.

5.—Dissemination Approaches

Finally, suggestions were made on how to disseminate the “recommended” system to the school transportation community, and what approaches should be taken to educate state and local school transportation providers on the importance of adopting such a school bus driving route hazard identification system.

RESULTS OF PROGRAM ACTIVITIES:

Result #1 — Definition of a School Bus Route Driving Hazard

While it is possible to develop a list of the potential hazardous locations/situations that a school bus driver could encounter while driving a school bus route, it is not possible to develop a definitive list of every potential driving hazard. As was pointed out by the state of Indiana during discussions of this project, “Regular review of the route hazards list is encouraged. This will keep the document accurate and permit the addition of ‘yet-to-be-discovered’ hazards.”

Some potential school bus route driving hazards can be considered as “fixed,” in that the situation or condition exists (such as a railroad crossing), can be identified, and drivers can be informed and educated about the potential hazard. Other potential driving hazards occur without advanced warning — examples include: (1) inclement weather conditions, such as fog, sand storms, blinding sunlight, snow storms, etc.; (2) conditions that result from weather conditions, such as flooded roadways, fallen trees, downed power lines; and (3) accident locations. This report focuses on potential school bus route driving hazards that are of a “fixed” nature.

Discussion:

Table 1 details many of the potentially hazardous locations/situations that a school bus driver could encounter while driving a school bus route. These potential driving hazards were selected based on the belief that the mere existence of any one of these conditions poses possible serious consequences if the school bus driver is not aware of the existence of the hazard. While a hazard could develop at any time while driving a school bus (for example, a tree could fall across a road during a storm, or a stream could overflow, or a wet road could suddenly ice over), this list defines only fixed conditions that, by their presence, have been deemed a potential driving hazard. Also, this list is limited to the hazardous locations/situations encountered while driving the school bus, not during loading and unloading operations.

For each potential school bus route driving hazard, a list of factors or situations that could contribute to causing the hazard is provided. It is important to remember that this list of potential school bus route driving hazards, and the factors/situations within them, is not “all inclusive.” States and local school districts may encounter factors and situations that are not listed below, but which they deem are potentially hazardous.

List of Potentially Hazardous Locations/Situations on School Bus Routes

Railroad Grade Crossing

- * _____ Number of tracks
- * _____ Visual obstructions to determine type and travel speeds of trains
- * _____ Train schedules (consider unscheduled trains also)
- * _____ Presence or absence of grade crossing controls
- * _____ Unique characteristics or operation of grade crossing controls
- * _____ Presence or absence of traffic control signals, including interaction with grade crossing controls
- * _____ Size of queuing area before and after the tracks
- * _____ Expected traffic conditions at various times during the day
- * _____ Roadway design near the grade crossing

Dangerous Intersections and Roadways

- * _____ High-frequency crash locations as defined by state transportation and/or law enforcement officials
- * _____ Uncontrolled intersections
- * _____ Curves and intersections with limited sight distances
- * _____ Areas with no shoulders or drop-off to shoulder
- * _____ Visibility of traffic control signals
- * _____ Coordination of traffic control signals with others in the immediate area

Bridges, Tunnels/Underpasses and Overpasses

- * _____ Weight capacity
- * _____ Height clearances
- * _____ Lane width

Queuing/Storage Areas

- * _____ Short acceleration/deceleration lanes
- * _____ Limited median areas crossing multi-lane highways
- * _____ Turning lanes
- * _____ Bus turnarounds
- * _____ Areas that require backing of the bus to turnaround or park

Industrial Intersections and Construction Zones

- * _____ Areas where heavy vehicles/equipment operate on a regular basis, and may be entering, exiting, or crossing the roadway
- * _____ Steep Downgrades
- * _____ Mountainous areas where brake condition and braking operations are important
- * _____ Location of out-of-control vehicle run-off areas

Areas of Significant Speed Differential between Vehicles

- * _____ On-off ramps to high-speed roads
- * _____ Farm vehicle areas, including non-motorized vehicles on the road
- * _____ Mountain terrain

Pedestrian Areas

- * _____ School bus loading/unloading zones
- * _____ Narrow streets with parked motor vehicles – children darting between vehicles
- * _____ Congested shopping and business areas
- * _____ Parks or intersections with pedestrian/bicycle paths

Other Conditions Identified in Local Area

1. ~~Unique roadway locations, for example:~~
 - a. ~~Roadways without guardrails that are next to rivers, lakes, etc.~~
 - b. ~~Dirt or gravel roads that could affect braking~~
 - c. ~~Rock quarry or open pits~~
 - d. ~~Areas with problems related to right turn on red laws~~
 - e. ~~Areas with visibility problems due to air quality/industrial smoke/etc.~~
 - f. ~~Areas where emergency equipment operate on a regular basis~~
 - (1) ~~fire stations~~
 - (2) ~~hospitals~~

Result #2—Development of a “Model” School Bus Route Hazard Identification System

During the course of this project, a “model” school route hazard identification system was outlined. It was recognized that such a system would consist of three major components:

1. ~~A list of potential driving hazards;~~
2. ~~A specified procedure/schedule for conducting on-site reviews of school bus routes; and~~
3. ~~An efficient and effective means of informing school bus drivers of the presence of potential driving route hazards.~~

Of the three components, the first was determined to be the most critical, since without a definition of what constitutes a school bus route driving hazard, the other components would have little utility.

Additionally, developing a procedure and schedule for reviewing school bus routes and an information dissemination plan were viewed as administrative policy decisions that were independent of the technical issues related to identifying potential school bus route driving hazards. Accordingly, the focus of the effort was placed on identifying and listing potential school bus route driving hazards.

An initial list of potential hazards was prepared during a Working Session of state directors during the 1997 annual conference of the National Association of State Directors of Pupil Transportation Services. The results of that session were summarized and provided for review to all state directors of pupil transportation. The final results of that effort are discussed in the previous section of this report, “Result

#1—Definition of a School Bus Route Driving Hazard.”

Result #3—Review of Existing Materials/Information

A review of existing school bus route hazard identification systems was made to see if any system assessed all of the potential driving hazards developed during the Working Session at the 1997 annual conference. Not one was found. However, this effort identified additional potential hazards that were not previously considered, but were ultimately included in the final list of school bus route driving hazards as defined in Result #1 above.

Result #4—Defining a Route Hazard Identification System

The major goal of this project was to develop a system that a state or a local school district could use to:

- * ~~Identify any fixed locations/situations that constitute a potential school bus driving hazard; and~~
- * ~~Inform school bus drivers and substitute drivers of each identified potential route hazard on the school bus route(s) they drive.~~

Identification

The first component of such a system would consist of an established, systematic process to evaluate all school bus routes to determine whether any potential fixed driving hazards exist. An annual review of each school bus route by a person trained to identify potential route-driving hazards would provide the basis for identifying any potential hazards. In addition, school bus drivers should be trained in how to recognize a potential school bus route-driving hazard, and to report any new potential hazardous conditions to the appropriate school transportation officials. In effect, this would provide for continual monitoring and review of school bus routes so school bus drivers are aware of all potential fixed driving hazards on their routes. As stated by Connecticut, “constant communication between school bus drivers and route planners is critical to safety.” Hazards can and do change, even on a daily basis. As such, “daily updates of critical route hazards should be foremost in the minds of dispatchers and drivers.” A checklist format based on the above list of potential school bus driving route hazards (Result #1 — Table 1) would provide for a consistent means of ensuring that such items were considered during the review of each school bus route. An example of such a checklist for the items identified in Result #1 appears as Appendix A to this report, * and is based on a format utilized in Oklahoma. It is important to remember that a state or a local school district should ensure that any potential hazards that may be unique to their area, or any potential hazards that they believe were missing, are added to the checklist. In addition to regular school bus routes, there also can be potential driving hazards along routes taken for field trips or extra-curricular activities. In such cases, drivers may be able to identify potential route-driving hazards based on their personal knowledge of the route or on a previous trip to the same location.

(Report being quoted above; checklist found in the appendix following.)

Information

The second component of a school bus route-driving hazard identification system consists of a means of informing all regular and substitute school bus drivers of the potential driving hazards on their school bus route(s). New Jersey stressed the importance of “the need for drivers and driver trainers to make clear notes of these hazards for all substitute drivers.” In addition to the drivers, school bus route planners/schedulers/dispatchers, etc. should be made aware of all information about potential driving hazards on the school bus routes. This information would allow them to make changes or adjustments to the routes, when reasonable and practicable, so as to minimize or eliminate the exposure of school buses to these route-driving hazards. Informing the necessary people about potential school bus route-driving hazards can be accomplished in a number of ways. The most practical, and possibly most easily understandable, appears to be through the use of a map that is visually annotated to identify potential route hazards. The same map could obviously be used for other purposes, including designating the actual school bus route and student pick-up/drop-off locations. Additionally, as the states of Ohio and Virginia noted in their comments to this project, information on the location of police/fire/rescue stations, hospitals, and other emergency care facilities, and “possible ‘safe stops’ where a school bus may pull off the road and await aid in the event of an emergency” could be added to the map. A number of local school districts currently use mapping techniques to document the streets in their district, the location of the students’ homes, the school bus stops, and the routes traveled by school buses. Inexpensive color printers allow school districts to print color maps of their bus routes, and computer software allows route planners to incorporate custom information, such as route hazards, on the map. Whatever means is chosen, it is important that school bus drivers be provided with route hazard information in a standardized, consistent manner. Also, the route hazard information should be available to the school bus driver every day, no matter which school bus is driven on that day.

Training

While not a specific part of this project, the importance of training school transportation providers about school bus route driving hazards cannot be understated. In their comments, Ohio noted that the contents of a route hazard identification system are “only good if utilized.” In other words, if drivers are not made aware of the potential driving hazards and trained on how to deal with such potential hazards, then no benefits will accrue from efforts to identify potential route hazards. Mississippi commented that its training in route hazards constantly works “to instill in each driver the concept of Expect the Unexpected.”

However, training alone does not guarantee success. As Connecticut stated, “Route hazards is an area in which some training can be afforded, but common sense and networking among drivers, local officials, and school district personnel is paramount to a safe and successful route hazard notification program.”

Result #5—Dissemination Approaches

Based on the belief that the ultimate success of a school bus route driving hazard identification system is dependent on the awareness and use of the system by school transportation providers, it is strongly suggested that the results of this project be provided to all state directors of pupil transportation, the appropriate student transportation officials in each school district, and organizations affiliated with private/parochial schools. The dissemination to state directors and public schools districts could be made by use of direct mailings. The dissemination to private/parochial schools could be made through national associations that represent such schools.

As a supplement to direct mailings, the report on this project should be made available on the NHTSA and various school transportation web sites in a form that can be downloaded. In addition, the results of this project should be publicized through the various media that deal with pupil transportation.

Non-Fixed School Bus Route Hazards:

As mentioned earlier, this project only dealt with school bus route driving hazards that are “fixed.” However, it is recognized that other driving hazards can occur without advanced warning. These often result from inclement/adverse weather conditions or poor visibility conditions. It is important for school bus drivers to be aware of such possibilities and be trained on how to deal with such sudden potential hazards. As an example of some non-fixed driving hazards, Iowa includes in its School Bus Driver’s Handbook procedures to follow should a school bus encounter a tornado or Agri-Chemical clouding along school bus routes. Also, Delaware provides drivers with information in its School Bus Driver’s Handbook to prepare them for the following:

Adverse weather conditions

- * _____ Extreme heat
- * _____ Rainstorms
- * _____ Flooding
- * _____ Dust
- * _____ Fog
- * _____ Snow/ice/Blizzard
- * _____ Smoke
- * _____ Wind
- * _____ Freezing rain

Conditions affecting visibility

- * ☐ Sun glare
- * ☐ Darkness
- * ☐ Curves and hills

Wild animals are another example of a non-fixed school bus route driving hazard. In many rural and suburban areas, animals such as deer and livestock can be a danger to motorists. School bus drivers should be made aware of such situations and learn how to deal with them.

Conclusions:

Recognizing the importance of identifying school bus route driving hazards, the National Association of State Directors of Pupil Transportation Services has conducted this study for the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. Verbal and written information from members of the Association was consolidated to focus on the key issues and the best approach for addressing the problem of driving hazards on school bus routes. The following conclusions were reached during the study:

- a. ☐ Driving hazards can and do exist on school bus routes.
- b. ☐ Driving hazards on school bus routes that are of a "fixed" nature can be identified.
- c. ☐ School transportation officials should establish a program to routinely and systematically evaluate all school bus routes for potential driving hazards.
- d. ☐ A list of potential fixed school bus route driving hazards has been developed for use in evaluating school bus routes.
- e. ☐ Information on potential school bus route driving hazards should be provided to all regular and substitute school bus drivers, route planners, dispatchers, and other appropriate personnel.
- f. ☐ School bus drivers should be trained on how to effectively deal with potential school bus route driving hazards, of both a fixed or sudden nature.

The results of this project should receive wide dissemination.

The National Association of State Directors of Pupil Transportation (NASDPTS) encourages states, local school districts, and private/parochial schools to review this report in conjunction with their school transportation operations and take whatever actions are necessary to ensure that school bus route driving hazards are identified and made known to all appropriate school bus drivers and school transportation personnel.

Document is located at [National Association of State Directors of Pupil Transportation Services.](#)

CHECKLIST FOR IDENTIFYING POTENTIAL SCHOOL BUS ROUTE

Fixed Driving Hazards Railroad Grade

Crossings Railroad Grade Crossing

Identification Number: Location:

How many tracks are present?	Passenger	Freight	Commuter
What types of trains use the track?			
What are the times of the scheduled trains?			
What are the travel speeds of the scheduled trains?			

a. Are the regulatory signs (crossbucks) clearly visible? ☐ Yes ☐ No

b. Are there regulatory devices (lights/gates/bells) present? ☐ Yes ☐ No

c. Are there any unique characteristics to the operation of the crossing controls? ☐ Yes ☐ No

What are they? ☐ Yes ☐ No

d. When stopped approximately 15 feet from the nearest railroad track, is there an unobstructed sight distance of approximately 1,000 feet in both directions? ☐ Yes ☐ No

e. Is there at least enough room on the other side of the furthest ☐ Yes ☐ No

f. Are there any roadway design features that could affect the safe operation of a school bus at the railroad crossing?

What are they? Dangerous Intersections and Roadways Location

a. Is this a high frequency crash location?

b. Are traffic control devices present?

c. Are there visibility obstructions?

What are they?

Yes No

d. Are there areas with no shoulders or drop to shoulder?

e. Are there peculiar roadway features?

What are they?

Bridges, Tunnels/Underpasses and Overpasses Location

Yes No

a. Is the weight capacity of the bridge/overpass sufficient

for a fully loaded school bus?

b. Is the height of the tunnel/underpass adequate for the

tallest school bus, including open roof hatches?

c. Is the lane width of the bridge, tunnel/underpass, or overpass

adequate for the widest school bus, including the mirrors?

Queuing /Storage Areas Location

Yes No

a. Is there sufficient area for the largest school bus in the

acceleration/deceleration lane?

b. Is there sufficient area for the largest school bus in the median area between a multi-lane road?

c. Is there sufficient area for the largest school bus in the turning lane?

Industrial Intersections and Construction Zones

Steep

Downgrades**Location**

- | | | | |
|----------|---|-----------|----------|
| a. _____ | Do heavy vehicles enter/exit/cross-
the roadway frequently? _____ | Yes _____ | No _____ |
| b. _____ | Are there highway signs alerting drivers of the
industrial/construction traffic? _____ | _____ | _____ |
| c. _____ | Are there highway signs alerting drivers to the
downgrade? _____ | _____ | _____ |
| d. _____ | Are there signs alerting drivers to "Check Brakes?" _____ | _____ | _____ |
| e. _____ | Are there areas marked and designated for vehicles to
safely leave the road (run-off areas)? _____ | _____ | _____ |

Areas of Significant Speed Differential between Vehicles Location

- | | | | |
|-----------|--|-------|-------|
| Yes _____ | No _____ | | |
| a. _____ | Is there sufficient space to accelerate/decelerate a
school bus when entering/exiting a high-speed road? _____ | _____ | _____ |
| b. _____ | Does slow-moving farm equipment operate on the road? _____ | _____ | _____ |
| c. _____ | Do non-motorized vehicles, e.g., horse-drawn carriages,
operate on the road? _____ | _____ | _____ |
| d. _____ | Are there roadway conditions, e.g., mountainous terrain,
that result in vehicles operating at high speeds and low speeds?
What are they? _____ | _____ | _____ |

Pedestrian Areas Location

- | | | |
|----------|--|-----------|
| | Yes | No |
| a. _____ | Are there difficulties seeing pedestrians at school bus stops? _____ | _____ |
| b. _____ | Are there narrow streets with parked vehicles where children may
run into the street? _____ | _____ |
| c. _____ | Are there areas of heavy pedestrian congestion, e.g., shopping
and business areas? _____ | _____ |
| d. _____ | Are there difficulties seeing pedestrians at school bus stops? _____ | _____ |
| e. _____ | Are there narrow streets with parked vehicles where children may
run into the street? _____ | _____ |
| f. _____ | Are there areas of heavy pedestrian congestion, e.g., shopping
and business areas? _____ | _____ |

Other Conditions Identified in Local Area Location

	Yes	No
a. Are there unique roadway conditions?	_____	_____
b. Roads without guardrails that pose a danger, e.g., next to rivers, lakes, quarries?	_____	_____
c. Dirt or gravel roads that could affect braking?	_____	_____
d. Others?	_____	_____
e. Are there roadway conditions that make it difficult to make a "right turn on red?"	_____	_____
f. Are there areas with visibility problems due to industrial smoke, air quality, etc.?	_____	_____
g. Are there areas where emergency equipment operate on a regular basis, e.g., fire stations or hospitals?	_____	_____

POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND TOPICS FOR STUDENT MANAGEMENT

Policies and procedures which address the following topics should be developed and implemented by school districts:

1. The bus driver's authority over, and responsibility for, students while in transit;
2. The student's right to due process when disciplinary action is taken;
3. A step-by-step procedure for resolving problems when the driver needs assistance;
4. The conditions under which a student might be temporarily or permanently suspended from the bus-riding privilege;
5. Procedures for handling emergencies;
6. Use of bus attendants or monitors;
7. Requirements and responsibility for school bus passenger and pedestrian safety instruction;
8. Parent's or guardian's responsibility for damage caused by their children to the bus or its equipment;
9. Rules and procedures for safe travel;
10. Driver, attendant, student and parent training for student management;
11. Special needs teamwork, collaboration, and communication between transportation staff, special education staff, health services personnel and parents in the development of an Individual Transportation Plan (ITP) for each student with a defined disability;
12. Rules and procedures for safe travel; and
13. Driver, attendant, student and parent training for student management.

EVALUATION CHECKLIST FOR SCHOOL BUS

DRIVEWAYS IN THE VICINITY OF THE SCHOOL

NAME OF THE SCHOOL: _____ DATE: _____

LOCATION OF THE
SCHOOL: _____

	YES	NO	DOES NOT APPLY
1. School bus loading areas are provided on the school site.	_____	_____	_____
2. When loading and unloading of school students take place on a main thoroughfare in front of the school, the roadway has a minimum width of 40 feet of hard surface.	_____	_____	_____
3. The driveway leading to and from the loading and unloading area for school buses has a minimum width of 30 feet of paved surface.	_____	_____	_____

- | | | | |
|---|-------|-------|-------|
| 4. If diagonal parking is provided for buses in the loading and unloading area, a minimum width of 60 feet of paved surface is available. | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 5. Parking for loading and unloading of students at school is bumper to bumper or diagonal; in either case, the necessity for backing does not exist. | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 6. The school bus is not required to back anywhere on school property. | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 7. All school bus movement on the school grounds is one-way in a counter-clockwise direction. | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 8. School bus traffic does not completely encircle the school building. | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 9. The driver has proper sight distance at all points along the driveway. | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 10. Crosswalks for students do not exist at the entrance to the school bus driveway. | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 11. Separation is maintained between school bus traffic and all other traffic. | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 12. Vehicular pick-up points for non-bus students are on a separate driveway from that used by school buses. | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 13. Curbing and suitable drainage are provided along driveways. | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 14. Curbing and driveway construction comply with state highway specifications. | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 15. At ingress and egress areas to and from the school, there is a minimum radius on inner edge of driveway pavement from 50 to 100 feet. | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 16. On the school site, there is a minimum radius of inner edge of driveway pavement of 60 feet. | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 17. Between reverse curves, at least a 50-foot tangent section is provided. | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 18. At ingress and egress points a maximum grade of 2% is adhered to. | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 19. A maximum grade of 5% is adhered to on the school bus driveway within the school site. | _____ | _____ | _____ |

Note: A "yes" answer for each of the items indicates a well-planned traffic pattern for school buses. SIGNATURES:

Person making the report:

Title:

Director of School Transportation:

Note: Most of the items included in this Evaluation Checklist are based on a 1966 Report of the Special Committee on School Plant Evaluation "School Planning: Safe Transporting," Bureau of Pupil Transportation, Department of Education, Trenton, New Jersey 08652.

STUDENT RULES

Supervision and Disciplinary Guidelines

1. Student shall follow directions of the driver the first time given.
2. Student shall arrive at the bus stop before the bus arrives.
3. Student shall wait in a safe place, clear of traffic and away from where the bus stops.
4. Student shall wait in an orderly line and shall avoid horseplay.

5. ~~Student shall cross the road or street in front of the bus only after the bus has come to a complete stop and upon direction of the driver.~~
6. ~~Student shall go directly to an available or assigned seat when entering the bus.~~
7. ~~Student shall remain seated and keep aisles and exits clear.~~
8. ~~Student shall exhibit classroom conduct at all times.~~
9. ~~Student shall refrain from throwing or passing objects in, from or into buses.~~
10. ~~Student is permitted to carry only objects that can be held on his/her lap.~~
11. ~~Student shall not use profane language, obscene gestures, tobacco, alcohol, drugs or any other controlled substance in the bus.~~
12. ~~Student shall refrain from eating and drinking in the bus.~~
13. ~~Student shall not carry hazardous materials or non-service animals into the bus.~~
14. ~~Student shall respect the rights and safety of others.~~
15. ~~Student shall refrain from leaving or boarding the bus at locations other than the assigned stop.~~
16. ~~Student shall refrain from extending head, arms or objects out of the bus windows.~~
17. ~~Student shall refrain from hitching rides via the rear bumper or other parts of the bus.~~

BUS CONDUCT REPORT

BUS NO. _____ SCHOOL: _____ DATE: _____

Students in the School District who ride buses are subject to rules and regulations designed to provide safe transportation to and from school. Any behavior which distracts the driver is a serious hazard to the safe operation of the vehicle, and as such, jeopardizes the safety of all passengers. Consequence of continued inappropriate behavior could result in your child being denied the bus riding privilege. _____ has

been cited for an infraction of the rule(s) checked below: (name)

Failure to remain seated _____	Lighting matches _____
Scuffling or fighting _____	Throwing objects from window _____
Profanity or obscene language _____	Refusing to obey driver _____
Smoking in the bus _____	Bothering _____
others Extending arm or head out window _____	Throwing _____
objects in bus Possession of harmful or illegal items. _____	Other _____
(See Comment)	

COMMENT: _____

_____ DRIVER'S SIGNATURE:

_____ DATE:

_____ PRINT NAME: _____

_____ DATE OF OFFENSE:

_____ FIRST OFFENSE:

_____ SECOND OFFENSE:

_____ THIRD OFFENSE:

_____ SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR'S ACTION:

_____ SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR'S SIGNATURE:

_____ DATE:

_____ PRINT NAME: _____

_____ PARENT/GUARDIAN'S

COMMENT: _____

_____ PLEASE SIGN AND RETURN TO SCHOOL

ADMINISTRATOR

Parent's/Guardian's Signature: _____ Date: _____

~~Administrator~~ ~~Canary Copy:~~ ~~Bus Driver~~ ~~Pink Copy:~~ ~~Parent/Guardian~~ ~~Gold Copy:~~ ~~Student~~

[**Note:** A form, such as the one above, should be used for reporting purposes. First offenses require at least a notification to the student and parent or guardian (either by phone or in person) by appropriate school personnel. Second and subsequent offenses may require a conference with the student, parent or guardian, driver and school administrator(s), which may result in a period of suspension of the student's riding privileges.] FLYERS

WHEN LEAVING YOUR BUS:

Here's How to Cross the Road SAFELY

WALK—along the side of the road until you can see your driver

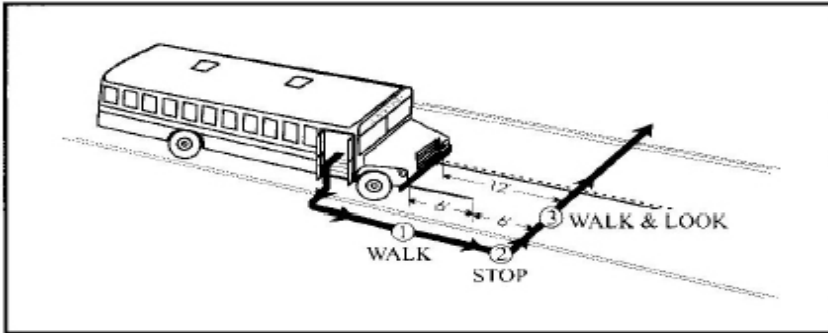
STOP—wait for the signal to cross

WALK & LOOK—for traffic both ways

- if you see a vehicle that has not

stopped, go back to the bus immediately

—if all vehicles have stopped, cross the road quickly.



Crossing the Highway is DANGEROUS

REMEMBER

- WALK
- STOP
- WALK & LOOK

**Drivers SHOULD stop...But
THEY MAY NOT!**

~~*Change word DRIVERS to MOTORISTS in graphic above INSERT AFTER THE STEP STOP ABOVE:~~

~~WALK & STOP—go to the driver-side cross-view mirror and look both ways wait for the signal to continue across the road~~

~~On diagram, change position 3 to: WALK & STOP and Add a position 4 WALK & LOOK~~

~~WHEN BOARDING YOUR BUS:~~

~~Here's How to Cross the Road~~

~~SAFELY~~

~~FOLLOW THE 12 FOOT RULE:~~

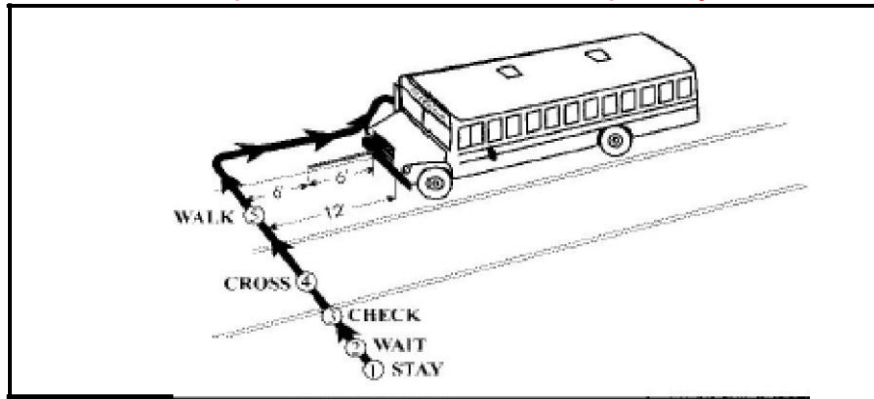
~~STAY 12 feet on your side of the road far away from the traffic~~

~~WAIT for the bus to stop and for your driver's signal to cross~~

~~CHECK traffic both ways then check again~~

~~CROSS walk directly across, checking traffic both ways~~

~~WAIT approximately 12 feet ahead of the bumper and board the bus quickly~~



~~Crossing the Highway is DANGEROUS~~

REMEMBER

~~Drivers should stop, ... But THEY MAY NOT!~~

- ~~Stay 12 feet on your side of the road until your driver signals you to cross~~
- ~~Check and recheck for traffic~~
- ~~Follow the 12-foot rule~~
- ~~Board bus quickly and directly to your seat~~

RECOMMENDED PROCEDURES FOR ESCORTED CROSSING

(Legal references in this procedure can be found within California Code of Regulations (CCR) and CA Education Code (EC) and may be adapted for other states)

1. Begin slowing the bus to get ready for the designated stop.
2. As you approach the stop, turn on the amber warning light, if the bus is so equipped, beginning 200 feet before the bus stop.
3. Apply the brakes with enough pressure to activate the stop lights so that following vehicles will anticipate the bus is preparing to stop.
4. Check all mirrors to ensure that traffic is gone and it is safe to turn to the right and stop.
5. Turn on the right-side turn signal lights during the last 100 feet before turning into the stop.
6. Approach the pupils slowly and with extreme care, considering the roadway surface (wet or slippery, sloped or flat, rough or smooth ground).
7. Do not stop any closer than 12 feet from the waiting pupils. They should be facing the approaching bus. (Refer to Figure SL5-2, "Danger zones.")
8. Once the bus is stopped, cancel the right-side turn signal lights and apply the parking brake.
9. Place a standard transmission in first or reverse gear or, if an automatic transmission, place in the park position. On buses equipped with an automatic transmission that does not have a park position, place the transmission in neutral.
10. Turn off the engine.
11. Remove the ignition key and keep it in your possession.
12. Deactivate the amber warning light.
13. Check all mirrors; activate the flashing red light signal (crossover lights) and stop signal arm, if the bus is so equipped; and wait for traffic to stop.
14. Open the entrance door and look in all directions on the right side of the bus before exiting.
15. Remove the handheld stop sign from the holder.
16. Step off the bus and walk approximately 12 feet in front of the bus before turning to enter the roadway.
17. Turn toward the bus, look up, and verify that the amber warning light is off and the red light signal is flashing.
18. Walk from the right edge of the roadway away from the bus at a 45-degree angle and toward the center of the roadway. Stop before entering the traffic lane and look in all directions for traffic. This position allows the best view of traffic coming from the left and is protected. The handheld stop sign shall be used for all escorted crossings and should be held vertically, above waist level, with the word STOP facing traffic in both directions. This is one of the most dangerous places on earth; a public highway. Do not assume that vehicles will stop or that all pupils will follow procedures. Vehicles may try to pass the bus, and pupils may attempt to run across the roadway before you are ready. Take charge of the situation. Upon reaching the center of the roadway, turn and face the pupils (left side of the roadway). This position enables you to have a clear view of the pupils and traffic in both directions.

Note: Traffic might not be able to stop immediately during adverse weather (e.g., rain, snow, ice).

Note: The signal for pupils to enter the bus will be the flashing of the red light signal, the school bus driver holding a handheld stop sign in the center of the highway or private road on which the school bus is stopped, and verbal direction by the school bus driver to begin crossing the highway to enter the bus, and not simply the bus coming to a stop. Pupils must have received written instruction in school bus emergency procedures and passenger safety before riding a school bus for the first time. Once each year pupils in prekindergarten through grade eight who

receive home-to-school transportation shall receive safety instruction on proper loading and unloading procedures, escorting by the driver, and crossing the street, highway, or private road (EC 39831.5).

Note: If the flashing red light signal (crossover lights) becomes inoperative prior to or during the escorting of pupils, the escort procedures must stop. Pupils may cross the highway only under the protection of a properly functioning flashing red light signal system.

SL5—8

1. When traffic has stopped in both directions, tell the pupils to walk, not run, as they cross the highway or private road. Do not use hand motions or gestures to signal pupils. Some motorists may mistake a hand gesture as a signal for them to proceed. The pupils must cross the roadway between you and the front of the bus, never behind you or to the rear of the bus.
2. When the last pupil has crossed the middle of the roadway, turn and face the bus (right side of the roadway). When the last pupil has reached the right side of the roadway, walk immediately to the right side of the roadway, continuing to hold the stop sign so it is visible to traffic in both directions. Check under and around the exterior of the bus to make sure that no pupil is in the danger zones. Enter the bus.
3. On entering the bus, ensure that all pupils have safely boarded and are seated.
4. Immediately place the handheld stop sign in the holder, close the entrance door, and turn off the flashing red light signal (crossover lights) and the stop signal arm if the bus is so equipped.
5. Sit down in the driver's seat and fasten the driver's seat belt. 24. Check to see that all pupils are accounted for and properly seated. Pupils must be seated before you set the bus in motion.
6. Check all mirrors for pupils, other pedestrians, and traffic. Be sure to check the front cross-view mirror(s) for pupils who may be in front of the bus.
7. Restart the engine. Account for all pupils before moving the bus.
8. Place the transmission in gear and release the parking brake.
9. Check the traffic and the danger zones by using all mirrors before moving the bus; activate the left-side turn signal lights and, when it is safe to do so, pull into the flow of traffic; cancel the left-side turn signal lights; regain road speed; and proceed to the next stop.

Note: School transportation administrators and other transportation officials should adopt policies that standardize signs or signals used by school bus drivers to inform hearing-impaired pupils of when it is safe to cross the highway.

Note: Emphasize the proper use of mirrors, the danger zones, and communication between the driver, pupils, and the public.

RECOMMENDED PROCEDURES FOR RAILROAD-GRADE CROSSINGS

Each year, approximately 4,000 train/vehicle collisions occur at railroad crossings. These 4,000 collisions result in about 500 fatalities and 1,500 injuries. Unfortunately, some of the crashes involve school buses that result in injuries and fatalities to students. To avert these crashes, the following procedures are recommended to school bus drivers. It is important to note that these recommendations must be considered within the context of individual state laws and regulations.

Additional information and training materials on railroad crossing safety are available from: Operation Lifesaver, Inc.
1420 King Street Alexandria, VA 22314

1-800-537-6224

Although the information and recommendations contained in this publication have been compiled from sources believed to be reliable, other or additional safety measures may be required under particular circumstances.

(Adapted from Fact Sheet, "Recommended Procedures for School Bus Drivers at Railroad Crossings," revised, School Transportation Section, 1998, National Safety Council, 1121 Spring Lake Drive, Itasca, IL 60143-3201, (630) 285-1121.)

FORMS

TRIP REQUEST FORM

Trip date:	School:
	Trip destination:
	Depart from:
	No. passengers:
	Departure time:
	Arrival time:
	Extra equipment:
	Meal stop required? yes — no If yes,
where?	
	Equipment that will need to be
transported:	
	Special needs equipment requirements:
	Overnight travel requirement:
	Number of adults accompanying the
students:	
Transportation requested by:	Date:
	Approved by:
	Date:
	Reimbursement category:

TRANSPORTATION USE FORM

Vehicle assigned:	Driver:	
Spot time:	Spot location:	
	Routing information:	
Dispatcher's signature:	Date:	
Time out:	Time in:	Total
time:	Mileage out:	Mileage in:
	Total miles:	Actual
no. passengers:		
	Remarks:	

_____, Driver's signature:

_____, Date: _____ Pre-trip
mechanical check completed (for overnight trips or trips exceeding _____ miles):
_____, Technician's signature: _____ Date: _____

~~INSTRUCTIONS FOR CONDUCTING EMERGENCY EXIT DRILLS~~

Due to the increased number of students being transported and the increased number of accidents on the highways, there is an urgent need to instruct students on how to properly vacate a school bus in case of an emergency. It is possible for students to block the emergency door if all are trying to get out at the same time. Also, there is a possibility of danger when students jump from the rear emergency door exit.

To avoid these situations, schools should organize and conduct emergency exit drills for all students who ride the school bus, even occasionally.

~~A. Reasons for actual emergency evacuations:~~

- 1.— Fire or danger of fire. Being near an existing fire and unable to move the bus, or being near the presence of gasoline or other combustible material is considered dangerous, and students should be evacuated. The bus should be stopped and evacuated immediately if the engine or any portion of the bus is on fire. Students should be moved to a safe place 100 feet or more from the bus and instructed to remain there until the driver has determined that the danger has passed.
- 2.— Unsafe position. When the bus is stopped because of an accident, mechanical failure, road conditions or human failure, the driver must determine immediately whether it is safer for students to remain in or to evacuate the bus.
- 3.— Mandatory evacuations. The driver must evacuate the bus when the following situations arise:
 - a.— Fire or threat of fire is apparent.
 - b.— The final stopping point is in the path of a train or is adjacent to railroad tracks.
 - c.— The stopped position of the bus may change and increase the danger (e.g., a bus comes to rest near a body of water or at a precipice where it could still move and go into the water or over a cliff). The driver should be certain that the evacuation is carried out in a manner which affords maximum safety for the students.
 - d.— The stopped position of the bus is such that there is danger of collision.
- 4.— Sight distance. In normal traffic conditions, the bus should be visible for a distance of 300 feet or more. A position over a hill or around a curve, where such visibility does not exist, should be considered reason for evacuation.

B. Important factors pertaining to school bus evacuation drills:

5. Safety of students is of the utmost importance and must first be considered.
6. All drills should be supervised by the principal or by persons assigned to act in a supervisory capacity.
7. The bus driver is responsible for the safety of the students. When the driver is incapacitated and unable to direct the evacuation, school patrol members, appointed students or adult attendants should be authorized to direct these drills. It is important to have **REGULAR SUBSTITUTES AVAILABLE.**
8. IF OPERABLE, THE SCHOOL BUS ALTERNATELY FLASHING SIGNAL LAMPS (RED TRAFFIC CONTROL LAMPS) MUST BE ACTIVATED AND SIDE STOP ARM EXTENDED TO ALERT ONCOMING TRAFFIC.
9. Students appointed to direct evacuation drills should possess the following qualifications: Maturity and live near the end of the bus

- route.
5. Passengers should receive instruction on how to:
 - a. Turn off ignition switch/shut down engine;
 - b. Set emergency brake;
 - c. Summon help when and where needed;
 - d. Use kick-out windows or emergency escape exits;
 - e. Set warning devices;
 - f. Open and close doors and account for all students passing the station;
 - g. Help small students off the bus;
 - h. Perform other assignments; and
 - i. Use of electronic voice equipment to summon help.
 6. School bus driver and attendant should be active participants.
 7. Drills should be scheduled in a manner similar to fire drills held regularly in schools. They should be held more often during fall and spring months and conducted when the bus arrives at the school building with the students.
 8. Drills should be restricted to school property and conducted under the supervision of school officials.
 9. Types of drills should be varied.
 10. Driver should stay in bus during evacuation drill. He/she must set the parking brake, turn the engine off and place the manual transmission in gear.
 11. Students should not be permitted to take lunch boxes, books, etc., with them when they leave the bus. (The objectives are to get students off safely in the shortest time possible and in an orderly fashion.)
 12. Students should travel a distance of at least 100 feet from the bus in an emergency drill and remain there until given further directions.
 13. All students should participate in the drill, including those who ride only on special trips.
 14. Each student should be instructed in proper safety precautions.
 15. Students should be instructed in how and where to obtain assistance in emergencies. Written instructions and telephone numbers should be posted in the bus.
 16. Sample drill formats:
 - a. Everyone exits through the front entrance doors and emergency door configurations.
 - b. Everyone exits through the rear most emergency door(s).
 - c. Front half exits through the front door and rear half exits through the rear most door.
 - d. Other emergency exits (e.g., windows, hatches) are included in drills.
 17. All rear-engine buses are equipped with a left side emergency exit door in lieu of a rear emergency door. This exit should also be utilized for evacuation drills.
 18. Some states also require side emergency exits in addition to rear emergency doors.
 19. Students should be familiar with the operation of emergency windows (both side and rear) and roof hatches. All exits should be opened by students during evacuation drills to ensure the students' ability to operate such devices.
 20. All school bus drivers shall ensure the students assigned to their buses are familiar with the emergency exit configuration of their assigned bus.
 21. Identification of seat rows and positions similar to airline seating is recommended (i.e., left front seat 1, a, b, c, right front seat 1, d, e, f, etc.)
 22. Education staff and coaches should be trained regarding safe travel practices and procedures and should be required to participate in school bus evacuation drills.

~~SUGGESTED EVACUATION PROCEDURES FOR ACTIVITY TRIPS AND FIELD TRIPS~~

~~In order to ensure the safety of school bus passengers in an actual emergency, every school bus driver assigned to transport students on activity trips or field trips may assign an evacuation team prior to each trip. The team may consist of teachers, coaches, students or any other passenger. A roster should be provided to the driver, accounting for all passengers.~~

~~Passengers assigned to evacuation teams must be seated where they can effectively carry out their responsibilities in an emergency.~~

~~Each evacuation team will consist of at least the following:~~

- ~~1. A passenger assigned to set the parking brake, turn off the engine, turn on warning flashers and to call on the radio or other means and report the incident to the Transportation Department, in case the driver is unable to do so.~~
- ~~2. A passenger assigned to lead passengers to a safe location at least 100 feet from the bus and to take the first aid kit off the bus.~~
- ~~3. Two passengers assigned to stand outside the bus, next to the entrance door, to help students exit the bus and to take the fire extinguisher.~~
- ~~4. Two passengers assigned to stand outside the bus, next to the emergency exit door, to help students exit the bus.~~

~~In addition to assigning an evacuation team, the following information shall be discussed and/or demonstrated prior to each activity trip or field trip:~~

- ~~1. Location and use of the fire extinguisher;~~
- ~~2. Location of the first aid kit;~~
- ~~3. Location of the warning reflectors;~~
- ~~4. Location and use of all emergency exits;~~
- ~~5. How to shut off the engine and set the parking brake;~~
- ~~6. How to open the entrance door, to include, safety releases on manual, air or vacuum doors, if so equipped; and~~
- ~~7. Importance of passengers keeping aisles clear always and not blocking emergency exits.~~

~~THE DRIVER OF THIS TRIP DID ASSIGN AN EVACUATION TEAM AND EXPLAINED THE EMERGENCY PROCEDURES AND SAFE TRAVEL RULES TO OUR GROUP.~~

~~Sponsor's/trip leader's signature: _____ Date: _____~~

~~BUS USE FOR SCHOOL ACTIVITY TRIPS~~

~~General Provisions~~

~~Pre-service driver training~~

~~In addition to successfully completing all pre-service training provided by their employer, school activity bus drivers shall complete at least a state-required course of instruction.~~

~~In-service driver training~~

~~All school activity bus drivers shall receive the state-required amount of in-service training annually and shall be required to maintain a current first aid certificate with instruction in universal precautions.~~

~~Hours of service~~

~~Driver shall comply with the provisions of CFR 49, Part 395.5.~~

Specially equipped bus

School activity buses may be designed or modified in accordance with Federal Standards or the Americans with Disabilities Act requirements to transport passengers seated in wheelchairs.

Vehicle condition

It shall be unlawful for the driver to drive a school activity bus that is not in safe operating condition or is not equipped, as required by all provisions of law. The driver is solely responsible for the vehicle condition.

Pre-trip inspection

Prior to operation, the driver shall inspect each school activity bus to ascertain that it is in safe condition, it is equipped, as required by all provisions of law, and all equipment is in good working order. The inspection shall include, but is not limited to, the following items:

All required emergency equipment, as well as, first aid and body fluid cleanup kit(s), fire extinguisher(s), reflectors;

- a. All gauges, indicators and warning devices;
- b. Horn(s);
- c. Driver's seat and seat belts;
- d. All doors, door emergency releases, overhead hatches and windows;
- e. All seats, handrails and modesty panels;
- f. Interior and exterior lighting systems;
- g. All heating, cooling and ventilating systems;
- h. All glass and mirrors, including adjustment of mirrors;
- i. Windshield wipers and washers;
- j. All tires, wheels, rims and lug nuts;
- k. Wheelchair restraints, tie downs and loading devices (such as ramps and lifts);

Brake system

- a. Air compressor governor cut-in and cut-out pressures;
- b. Static pressure for air loss;
- c. Applied brake pressure loss;
- d. Low air pressure warning devices;

Emergency stopping systems

- a. Parking brake;
- b. Antiskid device (if equipped);
- c. Vacuum gauge (if equipped), ensuring it reads not less than 15 inches of mercury;
- d. Low vacuum warning device(s); and
- e. Brake pedal for brake adjustment.

*(Note: Draining reservoirs in dual air systems is not required.)

Daily report

At the completion of the driver's work or tour of duty, each driver shall submit a daily documented report to the employer indicating the condition of the vehicle and noting any defects found. Whether discovered by or reported to the driver, all vehicle defects and deficiencies likely to affect safe operation or cause mechanical breakdown of the school activity bus shall be listed, and a negative report shall indicate that no such conditions are present.

Repairs

The driver shall not make any repairs of the bus or its equipment except necessary emergency

~~repairs on the road.~~

EVACUATION PROCEDURES for ACTIVITY TRIPS AND FIELD TRIPS

~~In order to ensure the safety of school bus passengers in an actual emergency, every school bus driver assigned to transport students on activity trips or field trips may assign an evacuation team prior to each trip. The team may consist of teachers, coaches, students or any other passenger. A roster should be provided to the driver, accounting for all passengers. Passengers assigned to evacuation teams must be seated where they can effectively carry out their responsibilities in an emergency. Each evacuation team will consist of at least the following:~~

- ~~1.— A passenger assigned to set the parking brake, turn off the engine, turn on warning flashers and to call on the radio or other means and report the incident to the Transportation Department, in case the driver is unable to do so.~~
- ~~2.— A passenger assigned to lead passengers to a safe location at least 100 feet from the bus and to take the first aid kit off the bus.~~
- ~~3.— Two passengers assigned to stand outside the bus, next to the entrance door, to help students exit the bus and to take the fire extinguisher.~~
- ~~4.— Two passengers assigned to stand outside the bus, next to each emergency exit door, to help students exit the bus.~~

~~In addition to assigning an evacuation team, the following information shall be discussed and/or demonstrated prior to each activity trip or field trip:~~

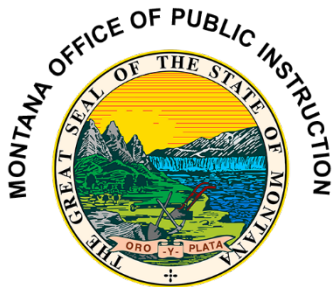
- ~~a.— Location and use of the fire extinguisher;~~
- ~~b.— Location of the first aid kit and body fluid kit;~~
- ~~c.— Location of the warning reflectors~~
- ~~d.— Location and use of all emergency exits;~~
- ~~e.— How to shut off the engine and set the parking brake~~
- ~~f.— How to open the entrance door, to include, safety releases on manual, air or vacuum doors, if so equipped; an~~
- ~~g.— Importance of passengers keeping aisles clear always and not blocking emergency exits.~~

~~THE DRIVER OF THIS TRIP DID ASSIGN AN EVACUATION TEAM AND EXPLAINED THE EMERGENCY PROCEDURES AND SAFE TRAVEL RULES TO OUR GROUP.~~

Sponsor's/trip leader's signature: _____ Date: _____

REFERENCE LOCATIONS

~~The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration [NHTSA](#)
National Association of State Directors of Pupil Transportation Services)-
[NASDPTS](#) National Association of Pupil Transportation [NAPT](#)
Montana Association of Pupil Transportation [MAPT](#)
California Code of Regulations [CCR CA](#)
Operation Lifesaver [OL](#)
Federal Motor Carrier Services Administration [FMCSA](#) [This](#)~~



Human Resources References

SAMPLE JOB DESCRIPTIONS

Local Student Transportation Director, Manager, Supervisor and Private Operator

- A. The local student transportation director's and private operator's specific duties should include, but are not limited to, the following activities:
1. Providing assistance in planning, budgeting and forecasting for the student transportation system.
 2. Assisting in school site selection and facility planning.
 3. Providing, when appropriate, chassis, body and related equipment procurement.
 4. Developing and implementing a plan for preventive and on-going equipment maintenance.
 5. Recruiting, selecting, instructing, evaluating and supervising personnel.
 6. Routing and scheduling buses for safe, efficient and economical transportation service.
 7. Assisting in the development and implementation of student safety education programs.
 8. Working with administrators, teachers, transportation personnel, students, parents and various public and private agencies to improve their knowledge and the quality of the transportation system.
 9. Investigating and reporting crashes and safety-related incidents, when applicable, using the uniform school bus crash reporting criteria and standard safety incident investigation process.
 10. Investigating reported problems.
 11. Maintaining records and preparing reports, as required.
 12. Developing and supervising an on-going evaluation plan for the student transportation system.
 13. Implementing a drug/alcohol testing program in compliance with federal regulations for persons in safety-sensitive positions and for commercially licensed drivers.
 14. Establishing and ensuring appropriate staffing levels.
 15. Recommending vehicle and equipment replacement schedules.
 16. Exhibiting effective skills in conflict-resolution and problem-solving.
- B. Minimum qualifications for the student transportation director and private operator who supervises transportation should include the following:
1. An undergraduate degree, equivalent experience or industry certification in one or more of the following fields of study is desirable:
 - i. Education;
 - ii. Business Administration;
 - iii. Management; or
 - iv. Transportation or a related field.
 2. Formal instruction in student transportation management, including classroom instruction and field experience or student transportation industry certification.
 3. A basic understanding of the educational process and the corresponding role of transportation.
 4. The ability to manage personnel and resources.

5. Basic user-level computer competency with accounting and word processing software and knowledge of web-based information systems.
6. The ability to communicate effectively with school or Head Start Center administrators, teachers, parents, students, bus drivers, law enforcement officials, etc.
7. Knowledge of state and federal regulations applicable to transportation of students.

Transportation Specialist

- A. The specific duties should include, but are not limited to, the following activities:
 1. Design and regularly update all routes and time schedules.
 2. Assign drivers to routes and extracurricular trips.
 3. Prepare routes for bidding (if applicable), including schools served and time expectations.
 4. Assign substitute drivers.
 5. Accept bus trouble calls, coordinate replacement buses and drivers.
 6. Advise building officials and parents of route changes, bus changes, late arrivals and departures.
 7. Prepare annual route schedule for distribution and notification to schools and parents.
 8. Assist in planning and presenting staff development programs and annual in-service for drivers.
 9. Assist district in designing new school service areas and boundaries, when necessary.
 10. Assist with road checking all drivers annually.
 11. Relief-drive, when necessary.
 12. Investigate school bus crashes, unsafe practices and safety-related incidents and recommend system and procedural improvements leading to improved safety of operations.
- B. Minimum qualifications should include, but are not limited to:
 1. Certified state driver instructor (if applicable).
 2. Two years of college, equivalent experience or industry certification.
 3. Basic computer skills, routing software knowledge preferred.
 4. Minimum of one-year of experience in an office setting.
 5. Knowledge of district, state and federal regulations, policies and requirements pertaining to driver training and student safety.
 6. Ability to plan, schedule, evaluate and dispatch buses for all district bus routes and extra-curricular trips.
 7. Ability to recommend, train and evaluate drivers, meeting all district, state and federal requirements.
 8. Ability to recommend equipment and personnel requirements for transportation.
 9. Ability to effectively work with direct bus drivers.
 10. Ability to maintain cooperative and effective communication with administrators, students, parents, public and other department employees.
 11. Familiarity with vehicle maintenance concepts.
 12. Ability to read and interpret road maps.
 13. Ability to communicate on the district's two-way voice communications system.

Dispatcher

- A. The specific duties should include, but are not limited to, the following activities:
 1. Schedule and dispatch buses and district vehicles to appropriate routes.

2. Dispatch and coordinate bus and driver assignments for school-sponsored trips.
 3. Secure substitute drivers due to absences and review routes with substitutes, as necessary.
 4. Communicate with drivers via the transportation communications system regarding routes, emergencies and student problems.
 5. Develop and maintain records for driver assignments and vehicle scheduling and use.
 6. Receive and respond to phone calls from parents or public concerning transportation by providing information or referring call to appropriate staff members.
 7. Assist in development of bus routes, schedules and updating routes and schedules throughout the school year.
 8. Assist staff by checking roads during inclement weather.
- B. Minimum qualifications should include, but are not limited to:
1. High school graduate or equivalent.
 2. Class "B" CDL with P and S endorsements.
 3. Two years of experience in public or student transportation.
 4. Experience as a route planner or dispatcher.
 5. Effective oral and written communication skills.
 6. Ability to work effectively under pressure.
 7. Ability to make independent decisions.
 8. Ability to maintain accurate records.
 9. Ability to maintain confidentiality.
 10. Ability to operate communications system.
 11. Ability to schedule and coordinate activities.
 12. Ability to communicate and work effectively with building and department personnel.
 13. Knowledge of student transportation rules and regulations.

Instructor/Trainer

- A. The specific duties should include, but are not limited to, the following activities:
1. Assist with pre-interview and recommend training.
 2. Train and retrain, as necessary, all bus drivers and bus attendants.
 3. Organize and present safety messages and programs to students.
 4. Annually evaluate, on the road, all bus drivers.
 5. Maintain all driver records and notify drivers of license or certification expirations.
 6. Recommend hiring, retraining and disciplinary action for bus drivers and bus attendants.
 7. Work with vehicle maintenance personnel on possible driver training to avoid equipment abuse.
- B. Minimum qualifications should include but are not limited to:
1. High school graduate or equivalent.
 2. Class "B" CDL with P and S endorsements.
 3. Certified state driver instructor (if applicable).
 4. Certified first aid instructor.
 5. Knowledge of state and federal laws and regulations related to bus drivers.
 6. Skill in operating a bus and troubleshooting minor problems.
 7. Ability to teach required subjects to obtain state school bus driver's authorization.

8. Ability to instruct CDL requirements.
9. Ability to provide effective instruction in soft skills categories (i.e. confidentiality and intervention strategies).
10. Ability to effectively communicate with staff, peers and community.
11. Ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships.
12. Evidence of effective oral and written communications.
13. Proficiency in basic computer and presentation skills.

Routing Specialist

- A. The specific duties should include, but are not limited to, the following activities:
 1. Coordinate the development and maintenance of bus stops, runs, routes and schedules consistent with district policies and state requirements.
 2. Gather criteria necessary for the development of the school district's school boundaries, street address ranges, speed limits, one-way streets, traffic hazards and hazardous walkway areas.
 3. Review all bus route change requests.
 4. Communicate with drivers and dispatchers to resolve problems with routes.
 5. Communicate with parents, teachers, principals and others regarding the transportation of students.
 6. Generate transportation-related reports, as required by the Transportation Director.
 7. Evaluate existing hazardous walkway areas and determine route revisions, making recommendations to appropriate individuals.
- B. Minimum qualifications should include, but are not limited to:
 1. High school graduate or equivalent.
 2. Three years of computer routing experience.
 3. Knowledge of operating procedures for student transportation.
 4. Knowledge of routing procedures and methods.
 5. Ability to analyze and make recommendations regarding bus route activities.
 6. Ability to work under pressure.
 7. Ability to organize, set priorities and meet deadlines.
 8. Ability to maintain accurate records and generate computerized reports.
 9. Ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships with a variety of people.
 10. Ability to establish a customer service environment.
 11. Working knowledge of computer routing systems and boundary analysis software applications.

Secretary

- A. The specific duties should include, but are not limited to, the following activities:
 1. Develop and maintain filing and record-keeping systems, both physical and electronic.
 2. Finalize correspondence and reports prepared by others. Prepare correspondence, reports and other documents, as directed. Perform data entry of pertinent information.
 3. Design, format and prepare forms and other documents.
 4. Ensure that documents are free from typographical errors, misspellings, omissions, logical inconsistencies and grammatical errors.
 5. Ensure that sufficient levels of office supplies are maintained.

6. Arrange for meeting space, send notices and track responses, ensure appropriate refreshments are available and rooms and equipment are properly set up.
 7. Use standard office equipment.
 8. Coordinate activities with other clerical staff, departments and outside agencies.
- B. Report on employees' hours of work, sick leave, vacation and other leaves to payroll, per district policy and procedures.
1. Maintain permanent employee records, including payroll, evaluations and leaves, per district policy and procedures.
 2. Answer phones while maintaining professional demeanor and answering queries or redirecting caller to the appropriate personnel.
 3. Facilitate purchase of equipment by obtaining quotes and preparing purchase orders. (This often is the duty of the Purchasing Agent.)
 4. Ensure that all financial transactions are properly recorded, totaled, balanced and reconciled with budget. (This often is the duty of the Bookkeeper.)
- C. Minimum qualifications should include, but are not limited to:
1. High school graduate or equivalent.
 2. Computer experience in word processing, database, spreadsheet and desktop publishing.
 3. Two years of secretarial experience in an office setting.
 4. Ability to create and maintain a filing system.
 5. Ability to enter data.
 6. Ability to create forms, documents, and pamphlets, using desktop publishing.
 7. Ability to maintain good telephone skills.
 8. Good organizational and time management skills.
 9. Excellent oral and written skills.
 10. Ability to handle changing priorities.
 11. Knowledge of payroll practices and procedures.
 12. Knowledge of general accounting and purchasing procedures.
 13. Ability to work effectively under high stress situations.
 14. Ability to maintain confidentiality,

Bookkeeper

- A. The specific duties should include, but are not limited to, the following activities:
1. Develop and maintain records of budget data, both physical and electronic.
 2. Prepare special reports, as required by the Transportation Director.
 3. Prepare purchase orders and maintain records.
 4. Ensure that all financial transactions are properly recorded, totaled, balanced and reconciled with budgeted amounts.
 5. Invoice departments, schools and other agencies for transportation services performed.
 6. Obtain quotes and prepare purchase orders for buses, supplies, office and shop equipment.
 7. Maintain inventory of all buses and district vehicles, including VIN and license numbers, model, chassis, seat and vehicle-rated capacity, wheelchairs and occupant restraint systems.
 8. Remove and add vehicles for insurance purposes.

9. Assist with insurance claims and warranty work.
10. Assist with development of annual budget.
11. Assist with answering phones while maintaining professional demeanor and answering queries or redirecting caller to the appropriate personnel.
12. Use copiers and other office equipment.

B. Minimum qualifications should include, but are not limited to:

1. High school graduate or equivalent.
2. Experience with word processing, spreadsheets and database.
3. Experience as bookkeeper in an office setting.
4. Ability to organize tasks and documents in a logical manner.
5. Ability to complete basic formulas and operations, such as sorting and extracting.
6. Ability to operate a ten-key calculator.
7. Ability to use various types of office equipment.
8. Ability to reconcile checking accounts or bank statements.
9. Ability to maintain good telephone skills.
10. Ability to enter data.
11. Knowledge of general mathematics applications.
12. Knowledge of general accounting procedures.
13. Knowledge of purchasing regulations.
14. Knowledge of bidding and/or low-quote purchase of school buses.
15. Ability to maintain confidentiality.

Bus Driver

A. The specific duties should include, but are not limited to, the following activities:

1. Report defective school bus equipment and accessories, including but not limited to, fire extinguishers, highway warning kits, first aid and body fluid cleanup kits, snow chains, sanders, etc., and when necessary install, service or replace defective equipment.
2. Perform required operational and safety inspections of the school bus and all related equipment.
3. Ability to clean and service the school bus to include interior cleaning and exterior bus washing, installation of fuel, oil and other fluids, as directed.
4. Operate all hand and foot controls installed in a school bus, as required.
5. Perform basic first aid, as appropriate, which may include CPR.
6. Work effectively with a group of students of different grade levels, abilities or program placement.
7. Complete legibly and accurate forms, records, reports and other documentation/data-logging activities, as required by state or district policy.
8. Be punctual.
9. Dress appropriately and wear proper foot protection.
10. Manage passengers in the school bus.
11. Report unsafe acts or conditions that require the attention of any person other than the driver.
12. Successfully complete school bus driver training programs and courses established by the state or district.

- B. Minimum qualifications should include, but are not limited to:
1. High school graduate or equivalent.
 2. Hold and maintain a class license with all applicable endorsement for the type of vehicle being driven.
 3. Excellent driving record.
 4. Physical ability to drive and perform all duties related to school bus operations.
 5. Ability to relate effectively with parents, staff and public in a multicultural and multiracial community.
 6. Sufficient command of local language to communicate with students, parents, district staff members and other concerned individuals regarding all aspects of their job-related activities.
 7. Ability to pass a criminal history background check.
 8. Ability to pass a state or DOT medical examination.
 9. Ability to pass a federally mandated drug/alcohol screen.

Bus Attendant (Monitor or Aide)

- A. The specific duties should include, but are not limited to, the following activities:
1. Assist the school bus driver.
 2. Assist students to safely embark and disembark from a school bus.
 3. Ensure a safe trip for every student.
 4. Make sure that students get off at the correct bus stop.
 5. Help implement safety standards on board the bus.
 6. When applicable, assist with loading/unloading and securing of assistive devices and safety restraints.
 7. Assist driver with student management.
- B. Minimum qualifications should include, but are not limited to:
1. High school graduate or equivalent.
 2. Ability to work with all students.
 3. Ability to physically move wheelchairs onto wheelchair ramp and into the bus.
 4. Ability to physically remove students from a disabled bus.
 5. Ability to get along with co-workers, parents, students and other staff.
 6. Ability to interact with students.
 7. Ability to follow directions.
 8. Ability to communicate with staff.

Vehicle Maintenance Supervisor, Foreman and Manager

- A. The specific duties should include, but are not limited to, the following activities:
1. Supervise and work with technicians in diagnosing malfunctions on vehicles.
 2. Supervise and work with technicians to overhaul and rebuild engines, transmissions and other vehicle components.
 3. Purchase parts, materials and supplies required for proper maintenance of district vehicles, related equipment and shop facilities, per district procedures.
 4. Coordinate maintenance of buses with dispatchers to ensure the bus fleet is ready to meet operational requirements.

5. Recommend and assist with short- and long-term bus purchase planning.
 6. Oversee record-keeping, evaluate reports for work assignments, inspect work, as needed, review time and parts used for repair and maintain inventory at required levels.
 7. Evaluate needs and recommend purchase of new or replacement shop equipment, machines, tools and related items.
 8. Assist in evaluating bids and recommend awards for jobs performed by outside vendors.
 9. Assume responsibility for cleanliness, upkeep and organization of shop building, as well as safety, security, equipment and parts.
 10. Assume responsibility for hazardous material disposal, following all governmental regulations and required reporting and record-keeping
 11. Assume responsibility for evaluating all shop personnel.
 12. Prepare and maintain preventive maintenance schedules.
- B. Minimum qualifications should include, but are not limited to:
1. High school graduate or equivalent.
 2. Minimum of five years of experience in the field of automotive technician.
 3. One year of full-time experience as a journeyman technician in a truck or bus maintenance facility.
 4. One year of full-time experience at the supervisory level in an automotive maintenance facility.
 5. Class "B" CDL with P and S endorsements.
 6. Knowledgeable user of computer-based business and fleet management software.
 7. Ability to direct and coordinate employees.
 8. Ability to communicate with staff.
 9. Ability to understand job functions in relationship to school district requirements.
 10. Ability to work under pressure.
 11. Ability to teach/instruct.
 12. Ability to maintain and analyze vehicle records.
 13. Ability to use and understand diagnostic equipment.

Journeyman Technician

- A. The specific duties should include, but are not limited to, the following activities:
1. Diagnose and repair mechanical, electrical and engine defects in buses and other automotive equipment.
 2. Overhaul and rebuild engines, transmissions, differentials, brake systems and other major components by repair and replacement of parts.
 3. Repair and rebuild generators, alternators and all other electrical components utilizing testing devices and machine equipment, as required.
 4. Perform general tune-ups, utilizing diagnostic equipment.
 5. Make roadside repairs, as required.
 6. Repair and replace seats, glass, sheet metal, latches and other body components and assemblies.
 7. Change oil and filters; install antifreeze and snow chains; repair tires; adjust brakes; lubricate chassis, wheel bearings and other assemblies, as required.
 8. Perform all required preventive maintenance and regular bus safety inspections.

9. Operate battery chargers, valve re-facing and reseating machines, compression gauges, torque wrenches, welding equipment, grinders, reamers, timing lamps, hoists, jacks, presses, headlight adjustment machines, air wrenches, small lathes, spark plug testers and other equipment for performing repair and maintenance of motor vehicles.
10. Assist in cleaning and organizing the shop, parts room and other maintenance facilities.
11. Complete vehicle maintenance forms and records.

B. Minimum qualifications should include, but are not limited to:

1. High school graduate or equivalent.
2. Class "B" CDL with P and S endorsements.
3. Completion of a recognized apprenticeship as an automotive technician, full journeyman status as an automotive technician or a minimum of four years' applicable work experience of any equivalent combination of experience and training.
4. Experience in repair and maintenance of heavy duty and diesel vehicles and special vehicular equipment.
5. Ability to identify, diagnose and repair vehicle malfunctions.
6. Ability to communicate with staff, peers and students.
7. Ability to understand job functions in relationship to school district needs.
8. Ability to work under pressure.
9. Ability to maintain accurate bus repair and other records.
10. Be in good physical condition.

Assistant Technician

A. The specific duties should include, but are not limited to, the following activities:

1. Assist journeyman technicians in overhaul, rebuilding and replacing major assemblies and components.
2. Lubricate buses and other automotive equipment to include chassis lube, oil and filter changes, gearbox fill or drain and flush, wheel bearing pack and all other lubricating and air cleaner service procedures, as required.
3. Verify operational safety of equipment and devices, such as brakes, clutch, lamps, mirrors, glass, fire extinguishers, first aid kits, highway warning kits, horn, warning lamps and buzzers, emergency exits, wipers, signs, tires, etc.
4. Change and repair tires, perform complete battery service and brake adjustments.
5. Install antifreeze; service cooling systems; inspect and replace hoses, caps valves, etc.
6. Make minor repairs by replacing lamps, spark plugs, ignition parts, patches and switches, as required.
7. Operate lubrication equipment, hoist, compressor, battery charger, diagnostic equipment, headlight adjustment machine, alignment board, spark plug tester, drills, presses, air wrenches and other tools and equipment, as required in the performance of assigned duties.
8. Drive service truck for roadside service, as required.
9. Assist in cleaning and organizing the shop, parts room and other maintenance facilities.

B. Minimum qualifications should include, but are not limited to:

1. High school graduate or equivalent.

2. Class "B" CDL with P and S endorsements.
3. Minimum two years of general experience in service station-type automotive maintenance, plus one-year related experience on buses, trucks or other heavy duty vehicular equipment.
4. Possess a basic set of auto technician hand tools and storage cabinet, if required.
5. Be in good physical condition.
6. Ability to work under pressure.
7. Able to follow directions.
8. Ability to communicate with staff.

SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD AND ADMINISTRATION

The School District's Board and Administrative duties shall include but are not limited to:

- A. Understanding and implementing pupil transportation laws, regulations, and policies.
- B. Planning and conducting pupil safety education programs as needed.
- C. Maintaining adequate records and filing appropriate reports.
- D. Working to promote school bus safety and efficiencies, including planning and conducting a school bus driver training program.

HIRING NEW EMPLOYEES

Employment procedures should be clearly stated in writing and followed by all parties involved in the procedures. There should be no discrimination in the advertisement of a job opening, in the application review process or in the interview. All applicants must be treated equally and interviewed/not interviewed or hired/not hired based on objective and measurable criteria. It is illegal to make any inquiry or keep any record of race, creed, color, national origin, age, sex, marital status or disability before, during or after employment for the purpose of discriminating on these grounds.

It is the local school district board of trustees or a school bus contractor's responsibility to employ and dismiss employees, including school district school bus drivers. See 20-3-324(1)-(2), MCA.

The following are essential steps to be incorporated in screening and hiring procedures:

A. Advertising

1. Contact the Personnel Department/Human Resources Office for possible applications on file. (Some offices have a phone job line available for posting job openings.) Advertising by word of mouth, newspapers, employment office, school lunch menus and notices in retail stores or local fire departments are also good methods to get word out to the community regarding job openings.
2. Provide written procedures, job requirements and duties to applicants. Pre-employment screening requirements (e.g., criminal background checks, driving record checks, drug screening, etc.) should be listed in each packet of information provided to potential applicants.

B. Applicant screening

1. Check application forms for completeness. Contact applicants as soon as possible to obtain any information that was omitted from the original application documents. One method is to formulate a check-off list to verify the completeness of the applications and that the applicants meet all requirements for the position. A point system or some other grading criteria should be

developed that will result in an objectively obtained score. It is advisable for the Personnel Department/Human Resources Office to keep these screening sheets on file, should the district be challenged by an applicant that feels he/she has been discriminated against. The successful applicants should be scheduled for an interview when screening and background checks are completed. This may be done by phone or letter.

2. Conduct background checks, as may be required. Advise applicants of procedures for fingerprinting for criminal records checks, authorization for driving records check, drug/alcohol screening and any other background checks that are required. Obtain written authorization for any such checks. If a CDL is required prior to employment, a copy of the applicant's current license and physical examination form may be requested at this stage in the procedure.
3. Contact personal references and previous employers listed on application forms. It is very important to check references; however, because personnel issues are confidential, it is very important to receive written permission from the applicant to allow the former employer(s) to release all information, including any available drug and alcohol test results. If you do not have this release, the only information you will usually obtain is date(s) of employment and position held. One question they may answer is this: "Would you rehire?" If the answer is "No," you may want to more thoroughly evaluate the applicant.
4. Determine amount of pre-service training required for applicants to fulfill job requirements.

C. Interview

1. Planning the interview. Interviews should be held in a pre-determined, pre-appointed setting. The interview team should be selected, seating arrangements determined and questions prepared before the interview begins. Applicants should not have to wait. It is very important to plan the number of questions to be asked and about how long the interview should take. Allow time in the schedule for the interview team to exchange any thoughts or concerns about the applicants while information is fresh.
2. Interview questions
 - i. Questions should be open-ended. Try to avoid asking questions that can be answered with a "yes" or "no." The number of questions depends on the kind of information the interview team wishes to gather and evaluate. Always allow the applicant to ask the team any questions he/she may have. "Look for" answers, pre-determined by human resources staff and/or the interview team, must be resolved before the interview. The answer(s) are what the
 - ii. team is "looking for" when the applicant is interviewed. Each member of the team would then grade the answer he/she hears on a pre-designed sliding scale.
 - iii. Do not ask illegal questions. The perception by the candidate could be that he or she was not picked because of the answer of an illegal/personal question.
3. The interview team should meet in advance to determine assignments and to stress that all candidates for the position must be treated equally and asked the same questions, preferably by the same interview team member.
4. Concluding interview activities. After all interviews are completed, interview team members should grade their interview sheets. (These must be kept in the event the district may be

challenged about the decision by an unsuccessful applicant at a later date.) Applicants' composite scores should be tallied and recommendations prepared.

D. Recommend hiring

1. Applicants for all positions must be screened, and only those applicants that qualify in terms of education, job skills and experience should be recommended for final consideration.

E. Hire

2. Hiring an employee is a process with many steps that usually begins with the need to fill an open or new position. Hiring, the final step, should follow a clearly established written procedure, which often must be ratified by the governing authority of the agency involved.



First Aid Kit Inspection Form

The Montana School Bus Standards require each school bus to have a removable moisture-proof and dust-proof first-aid kit in an accessible place in the driver's compartment. It shall be properly mounted and secured and identified as a first-aid kit.

The contents of first-aid kit shall follow state standards and shall include but is not limited to:

- 2 - 1" x 2.5 yards adhesive tape rolls
- 24 - sterile gauze pads 3" x 3"
- **100 - 3/4" x 3" adhesive bandages
- 8 - 2" bandage compress
- 10 - 3" bandage compress
- 2 - 2" x 6' sterile gauze roller bandages
- 2 - non-sterile triangular bandages approximately 40" x 36" x 54" with 2 safety pins
- 3 - sterile gauze pads 36" x 36"
- 2 - sterile eye pads
- 1 - rounded-end scissors
- pair medical examination gloves
- 1 - mouth-to-mouth airway

A First-Aid Kit Inspection Form and Body Fluid Clean-up Kit Inspection Form must be completed and stored with the TR-13 form on the school bus.

***School buses purchased on or before January 2027 shall only be required to include 20 - 3/4" x 3" adhesive bandages in the First-Aid Kit.*

FIRST AID KIT INSPECTION FORM						
First Aid Kit	Year:		Year:		Year:	
	Good	Replaced	Good	Replaced	Good	Replaced
2 - 1"x 2.5 yards adhesive tape rolls						
24 - sterile gauze pads 3" x 3"						
**100 - 3/4" x 3" adhesive bandages						
8 - 2" bandage compress						
10 - 3" bandage compress						
2 - 2" x 6' gauze roller bandages						
2 – non-sterile triangular bandages with 2 safety pins						
3 - sterile gauze pads 36" x 36"						
3 - sterile eye pads						
1 - rounded-end scissors						
1 - pair medical examination gloves						
1 – mouth to mouth airway						
Inspected by:						
School Transportation Supervisor:						
Sign:						
Date:						



Body Fluid Clean Up Inspection Form

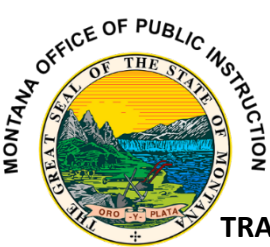
The Montana School Bus Standards requires each school bus to have a removable and moisture-proof body fluid clean-up kit accessible to the driver. It shall be properly mounted and identified as a body fluid clean-up kit.

The contents of body fluid clean-up kit shall follow state standards and shall include but is not limited to:

- 2 - Sterile non-latex Gloves - 1 pr
- 1 - Red Bio-hazard Waste Bag w/tie
- 1 - Black/brown Plastic Bag w/tie
- 1 - Liquid Treatment System – ¾ oz
- 2 - Disposable Microbial Towels
- 2 - Antiseptic Microbial Wipe
- 1 - Face Mask with Eye Shield
- 1 - Pick up Scoop with Scraper
- 1 - Surface Cleaning Wipe
- #10 Unit Poly White Storage Box

A Body Fluid Clean-up Kit Inspection Form must be completed and stored with the TR-13 form on the school bus.

BODY FLUIDS CLEAN-UP INSPECTION FORM						
Body Fluid Clean-Up Kit	Year:		Year:		Year:	
	Good	Replaced	Good	Replaced	Good	Replaced
2 - sterile non-latex gloves - 1 pair						
1 - red bio-hazard waste bag w/tie						
1 - black/brown plastic bag w/tie						
1 - liquid treatment system - 3/4 oz.						
2 - disposable microbial wipe						
1 - face mask with eye shield						
1 - pick up scoop with scraper						
1 - surface cleaning wipe						
Inspected by:						
School Transportation Supervisor:						
Sign:						
Date:						



Medical Forms

TRANSPORTATION FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES AND SPECIAL HEALTH CARE NEEDS

SPECIAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT FORMS

Sample Form 1

CONSENT FOR DISCLOSURE OF MEDICAL INFORMATION AND RECORDS

(NOTE: Most medical professionals will now require a HIPAA form)

TO: _____

(Physician's Name and Address)

I, _____, the (parent/guardian) of _____ (Student) consent and authorize you to disclose and provide to the (School District), its nursing and other necessary service providers, upon the school district's request, any information or records which you have concerning the diagnosis, evaluations, tests, medical problems or conditions, medications, or treatments of my child or ward named above. I hereby waive any and all privileges which I or my child or ward might have with respect to disclosure of the above information and records to the school district, including the doctor-patient privilege, psychologist-client privilege, and social worker-client privilege.

Signature of Parent or Guardian: _____

Print Name: _____ Dated: _____

PLEASE RETURN TO: _____

REQUEST FOR MEDICAL VERIFICATION OF HEALTH STATUS AND NEEDS

Sample Form 2

SCHOOL DISTRICT: _____

NAME: _____ BIRTH DATE: _____

ADDRESS: _____ PHONE: _____

PARENT/GUARDIAN NAME: _____ PHONE: _____

ADDRESS (IF DIFFERENT): _____

PHYSICIAN: _____

NOTE TO PHYSICIAN:

Should you have any questions regarding this request, please contact:

_____ PHONE: _____

A. VERIFICATION OF MEDICAL, HEALTH AND BEHAVIOR STATUS. 1. Briefly describe the current medical, health, and behavioral status. 2. Identify any medical conditions not addressed above which could impact the student's participation in the school day including transportation. 3. Identify any health concerns that are not addressed above which could impact the student's participation in the school day, including transportation. 4. Identify any behavioral concerns that are not addressed above which could impact the student's participation in the school day including transportation. Give specific consideration to the potential space limitations of a school bus.

B. PARTICIPATION IN THE SCHOOL DAY PROGRAM 1. Briefly describe the staff supervision and interventions necessary for the student to safely participate in the normal school day program, given the student's health and medical status. 2. Identify the training required for all staff, including bus attendants and drivers, to provide the supervision and interventions addressed above. 3. Identify any additional restrictions or modifications in school activities or medical care that would be necessary for the student to safely participate in the school day program. 4. Identify any additional special equipment, aids, restraints, or mobility assistance needed for the student to safely participate in the school day program.

MEDICAL PROCEDURE AUTHORIZATION

Sample Form 3

I delegate and authorize the staff of the _____ School District to perform for _____ (student) the acts, tasks, and functions indicated on the Request for Medical Verification of Health Status and Needs, dated _____, which I previously provided to the district. This authorization is subject to the condition that district staff assigned to perform these activities has been provided the required training, as specified in the above request.

I have reviewed the attached procedures for _____ (procedure) that will be utilized, and I approve them, subject to any specific modifications necessary for this student, which I have noted on the procedures.

I agree to supervise the performance of these activities and procedures by being continuously available through direct communications with district staff performing them and by regularly reviewing the student's health/medical status and needs, as well as the procedures being utilized by the staff.

Signature of Physician

Date

**TRANSPORTATION SERVICE REQUIREMENTS FOR
PASSENGERS WITH DISABILITIES AND HEALTH CONCERNS**

Sample Form 4

SCHOOL DISTRICT: _____

ADDRESS: _____

DATE: _____ ASSIGNED SCHOOL: _____

GRADE LEVEL: _____ SPECIFIC PROGRAM: _____

HOME SCHOOL: _____ NAME OF STUDENT: _____

BIRTH DATE: _____ STUDENT I.D. #: _____

HOME ADDRESS: _____ APT. NO.: _____ ZIP: _____

HOME PHONE: _____

A.M. PICK-UP LOCATION: _____ PHONE: _____

P.M. DROP-OFF LOCATION: _____ PHONE: _____

PARENT/GUARDIAN(S) NAME: _____

1st EMERGENCY / ALTERNATE CONTACT:

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

2nd EMERGENCY/ALTERNATE CONTACT:

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

EMERGENCY MEDICAL INFORMATION

Student's Doctor: _____ Phone: _____

Hospital Preference: _____ Address: _____

Allergy: _____ Reaction? _____

Allergy: _____ Reaction? _____

Allergy: _____ Reaction? _____

MEDICATION(S) STUDENT IS TAKING: _____

DOSAGE: _____

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR ATTENDING

PHYSICIAN(S): _____

SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS IF PARENT(S) ARE NOT AT HOME: _____

LEVEL OF SUPERVISION REQUIRED (Attach Medical Procedure Authorization and Procedures):

REQUIRED TRAINING FOR SUPERVISION: _____

INTERVENTIONS REQUIRED (Attach Medical Procedure Authorization and Procedures):

REQUIRED TRAINING FOR INTERVENTIONS: _____

OTHER ADDITIONAL RESTRICTIONS OR MODIFICATIONS NECESSARY TO TRANSPORT STUDENT:

DISABILITY CONDITIONS AFFECTING TRANSPORTATION:

IN WHAT WAYS DO THESE CONDITIONS AFFECT
TRANSPORTATION? _____

SPECIAL EQUIPMENT, AIDS OR MOBILITY REQUIRED:

SPECIAL TRAINING
NEEDED? _____

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS/INSTRUCTIONS:

PROCEDURE IF CHANGE IN SERVICE IS NECESSARY

If there are any changes in the student's health, medical, or behavior status which the parent(s), physician, transportation, or other school staff believe may merit changes in staffing, precautions to be taken, interventions, restraints, or any other procedure noted above, the concerned party shall immediately contact: _____ phone: _____ who will, in turn, initiate the process to evaluate and recommend necessary changes with the involvement of parents/guardian(s), physician, school and transportation staff.

APPROVAL OF TRANSPORTATION SERVICE REQUIREMENTS

Each of the following persons has participated in the development of these transportation service requirements and by signing below approves them for implementation.

Dated: _____ Signature of Parent / Guardian: _____

Print Name: _____

Dated: _____ Signature of School District Representative: _____

Title: _____

Dated: _____ Signature of Transportation Staff Representative: _____

Title: _____

Dated: _____ *Signature of Private Contracted Transporter: _____

Title: _____

Dated: _____ *Signature of School Nurse: _____

Dated: _____ *Signature of Physician: _____

Dated: _____ Signature of 1st Emergency Contact: _____

Dated: _____ Signature of 2nd Emergency Contact: _____

*If an appropriate signature under the circumstances. cc: All transportation service providers.

cc: All transportation service providers.

ITEM 7

**ANNUAL MONTANA DIGITAL ACADEMY
REPORT**

Dr. Jason Neiffer

Documents and Reporting

Board of Public Education Meeting | September 2026

Dr. Jason Neiffer | Executive Director | jason.neiffer@montanadigitalacademy.org

2026 MTDA Yearbook (our annual report with statistics, stories, and organizational updates)  https://mtda.link/2026yearbook	2026 20-7-1202 Reporting (our mandated state report with program and enrollment information)  https://mtda.link/26biannualreport
Current Frontier Learning Lab AI Briefing (regularly updated AI briefing)  https://mtda.link/aibriefing	Current Frontier Learning Lab VR/AR Briefing (regularly updated AR/VR briefing)  https://mtda.link/vrbriefing
MTDA's "Screen V.A.L.U.E." Framework (in development)  http://mtda.link/screenvalue	Today's Slides (from our presentation)  https://mtda.link/bope202609

BOARD OF PUBLIC EDUCATION TOURS & ACTIVITIES

12:00 PM	LUNCH WITH DAWSON COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS Dawson County High School
12:45 PM	VISIT ART CLASS Dawson County High School
1:45 PM	COMMUNITY MURAL TOUR Glendive Community

*******RECONVENE AT 2:30PM*******

❖ **ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE – (Items 8-9)**

Dr. Hannah Neiskens

ITEM 8

**ACTION ON THE CORRECTIVE PLANS FOR
SCHOOLS IN DEFICIENT STATUS FOR
ACCREDITATION**

- **Lame Deer High School**
- **Stanford K-12 Schools**

Crystal Andrews

Montana Board of Public Education

Executive Summary

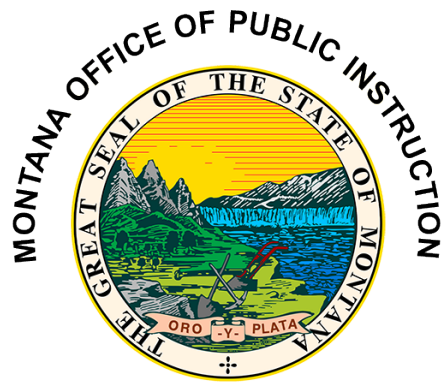
Date: September 24-25, 2026

Presentation	Recommend Approval of the Corrective Plans for SY 2025-26
Presenter	Crystal Andrews
Position Title	School and Educator Effectiveness Senior Manager Office of Public Instruction
Overview	This presentation provides information to the Board of Public Education (BPE) for consideration of the corrective plans for the 2025-2026 Accreditation Report. The state superintendent recommends approval of the corrective plans as presented. The report is attached and Superintendents from Lame Deer and Stanford will be available online.
Requested Decision(s)	Action Item
Related Issue(s)	
Recommendation(s)	Approval of the corrective plans for the 2025-2026 school year as recommended by the State Superintendent.



Montana
Office Of Public Instruction
Susie Hedalen, State Superintendent
opi.mt.gov

Montana Office of Public Instruction



2025-2026 Accreditation Corrective Plans

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Lame Deer Public Schools – Lame Deer High School: Corrective Plan

Lame Deer Public School #6 Corrective Action Plan K-12 Intensive Assistance Improvement Plan SY 2026-27

Current Reality

The Lame Deer School District #6 has consistently failed to meet accreditation standards for a number of years: Academics, Attendance, graduation rate.

Lame Deer Public Schools K-12 school performance data in the areas the District needs to address to retain accreditation with the state of Montana.

- **Lame Deer Schools k-12 identified in Intensive Assistance Status.**

The team will prepare a first-year binder of all the baseline data and accreditation scores for SY 2024-25. Review and analyze data to set district goals for each of the four area:

- Math k-12
- ELA: K-12
- Attendance: K12
- Graduation Rate

The District will Establish pathway to advise 1-4 on student learning outcomes.

The Team has already been selected and the initial meeting has been scheduled for September 17, 2026 @ 5:30pm at the ARG.

I. Problem of Practice

The consistent decline in academic proficiency and deficiency status has prompted OPI/BPE to place Lame Deer Schools on Intensive Assistance status. These are the root causes that the district will address for a sustainable school improvement.

- Misalignment between assessment and proficiency targets.
- Mastery of key curriculum concepts.
- Failing to properly implement and sustain previous action plans.
- Lack of professional development in effective instructional pedagogic practices.
- Consistently failed to meet accreditation standards.
- Lack of consistency in staffing

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/Effectively implement weekly PLC's**, use progress monitoring to strengthen data-driven instruction.

5. **Attendance:** Chronic Absenteeism will be addressed in collaboration with Tribal Truancy.

Schedule:

Reading Goal: Baseline data, Sy 2024-2025. SY 2026-2027 increase novice to proficient by 3% proficiency. Decrease intensive by 5%

Math Goal: Baseline data, Sy 2024-2025. SY 2026-2027 Increase novice to Proficient by 3% proficiency. Decrease intensive by 5%

Attendance: Elementary is at 85.6% Baseline data (current). Goal for SY 2026-27 increase by 5%. Junior High: 77.80% increase by 5%, High School: 77.80% increase by 5%.

Early Literacy: Baseline data, Sy 2024-2025. SY 2026-2027 3% increase in proficiency. Decrease intensive by 5%

Graduation Rate: Increase the graduate rate to 5% toward preceding pathways to advice from 74.55%. Create opportunities to participate in post-secondary learning.

III. Actionable Step and Focus Area

1. Data-Driven Instruction

Action Step	Responsible	Timeline	Expected Outcome
Conduct regular item analysis on formative and summative assessments.	Classroom teacher with the data coach/Administrator	Weekly PLC's	Identify area of concern and improve instructional quality.
Use item analysis results to revise or remove low Quality test items.	All Teachers	On-going	Improve validity & reliability of assessment -Share data.

2. Proficiency-Based Education (BPE)

Action Step	Responsible	Timeline	Expected Outcome
Align learning targets and success criteria with Montana Content Standards.	Classroom Teachers Monitored by building Principals	August 2026	Clear pathway for Student mastery of new concepts.
Re-teach using flexible pacing for students who do not meet proficiency. Pacing for student who do not meet proficiency.	Classroom Teachers	Bi-weekly	First year goal 3% of students reach mastery with ea. Preceding year.

3. Tiered Support and Intervention

Action Step	Responsible	Timeline	Expected Outcome
Intervention Multi-Tiered System of support for non-proficient students based on assessment data. Measurable and attainable goals for student success.	Classroom teachers, Title I resource, Para-Professionals.	At the completion of collection of baseline data. September 2026. January 2027 May 2027	5% of Lowest performing students in each category will increase ELA/Math mastery by 3% with ea. Preceding year.

4. Professional Learning Communities (PLC)

Action Step	Responsible	Timeline	Expected Outcome
Grade-level PLCs analyze student work and share best PBE practices. PD: IXL, PBE, Math & ELA Training.	Principal and leadership team in collaboration with District Coach.	Bi-weekly	Build comradery and collective teacher efficacy to reach common goal.

5. Family Engagement

Action Step	Responsible	Timeline	Expected Outcome
Communicate academic progress to families through progress report updates and student portfolios, Provide evidence of academic progress Family Night, School sponsored community meetings, and at the request of Parent/Caregiver.	District Leadership Team, Counselor, Teacher	Quarterly and as scheduled in the school calendar.	Families are informed and partnership developed to expand learning opportunities.

6. Attendance

Action Step	Responsible	Timeline	Expected Outcome
Making phone calls Schedule meetings with parent/caregiver and face to face interventions if needed.	Teachers, Attendance clerk, Counselor, Principals, Multi- disciplinary team (MDT), and Tribal Truancy Officer	Monitor daily and report to truancy officer weekly	Increase communication, establish partnership with parents to address chronic absenteeism in culturally responsive way.

- **Data-Driven Instruction.** Every three weeks, each teacher will administer a brief common formative assessment (or use items from recent classroom/unit tests) and run an item analysis to identify misconceptions, language/reading barriers, and skill gaps at the standard and success-criteria level. During a same-week data huddle (30–45 minutes), teachers—supported by the data coach and an administrator—will sort items into “keep, revise, retire,” tag the underlying standards, and decide on precise reteach moves (mini-lessons, worked examples, error analysis, small-group instruction). Teachers will then revise low-performing items for validity and reliability (clarity, alignment, cognitive demand) and log the changes in a shared assessment tracker. The next cycle will re-check the revised items and compare cohorts/class periods to verify impact, with administrators conducting short walkthroughs focused on evidence of reteaching aligned to the data (e.g., success criteria posted, exemplars, practice sets matched to the error patterns). Expected outcome: continuously improving assessments, targeted reteaching, and steady growth in classroom-level proficiency.
- **Proficiency-Based Education (PBE).** By August, teachers will unpack the Montana Content Standards into clear learning targets (“I can...” statements) and observable success criteria, then attach them to each lesson, task, and assessment item. In bi-weekly cycles, students not yet proficient receive flexible pacing opportunities: targeted small-group lessons, alternative practice pathways, and additional attempts on priority standards, while proficient students engage in extension tasks. Each unit will include a proficiency scale (e.g., Emerging → Proficient → Advanced) and a folder of calibrated exemplars. Teachers will document reteach plans, reassessment windows, and the specific evidence a student must show to be marked proficient, ensuring grading communicates mastery rather than seat time. Administrators will monitor for consistent use of targets/criteria, equitable access to reassessment, and the presence of aligned tasks at the right depth of knowledge. Expected outcome: a transparent path to mastery where every student knows what proficiency looks like and how to reach it.

- **Tiered Support & Interventions.** Beginning September 2026, Title I and resource staff—coordinating with classroom teachers—will use the assessment dashboard to flag students below proficiency on priority standards and schedule Tier 2 sessions (3–5 times per week, 20–30 minutes) with explicit, high-leverage routines (model → guided practice → independent practice with immediate feedback). Students with persistent non-response will receive Tier 3 intensification (smaller groups, increased dosage, or specialized programs), and all intervention plans will include a progress-monitoring probe at least bi-weekly. Teachers will align core-class assignments so intervention time reinforces the same success criteria, and counselors will help with attendance/family coordination to protect intervention minutes. Each month, teams will exit or adjust students based on progress graphs and return them to core supports once proficiency is demonstrated. Expected outcome: acceleration for non-proficient students through timely, data-tied supports that prevent skill slippage. An integrated MTSS model provides all students with the best opportunities to succeed both academically and behaviorally in the school setting. MTSS focuses on providing high-quality instruction and interventions matched to student need across domains and monitoring progress frequently to make changes in instructional goals.

Attendance. Prompt and regular attendance is ***a habit that must be learned***. Being in school is essential for your child’s success. Good habits that are taught at an early age will carry through life. Being in school is essential for your child’s success. Good habits that are taught at an early age will carry through life. Most of the curriculum is taught in sequence and requires an understanding of each concept in order of its presentation. Excessive absenteeism creates a genuine hardship for students and is regarded and treated as a serious problem. Ten or more absences in a semester is considered Chronic absenteeism. To decrease chronic absenteeism rates Lane Deer Schools has partnered up with Tribal Courts Truancy Division. The District will enforce the Tribal Truancy Juvenile Code for SY 2026-2027. Tribal Truancy Officer will attend the Open House this fall to ensure parents understand truancy is an unexcused Absence, which is by choice or neglect punishable by law. The district At-Risk Team/Attendance Team consist of building principal, Attendance Clerk, Counselor, Home/School Coordinator, lead teacher and parent if necessary will address the attendance matter according to individual need and situation. The goal is to Strengthen Family Partnerships and decrease chronic absenteeism rates. The following steps will be followed increase attendance.

- Automated same day Text Messaging with Families to Support Student Attendance and phone call from Attendance Clerk.
- Using Data and Early Warning Systems to Improve Student Attendance and Engagement
- Partnering with Families to Support Student Attendance and Learning
- Promoting a Positive School Climate and Safe Learning Conditions
- Home Visits to build trust and strengthen school and home partnership.

At-Risk Team and Homeless Coordinator will coordinate to **Provide Wraparound Supports** **Basic needs** like school-provided clothes, hygiene products, school-based laundry facilities, and proper health care remove practical barriers to attendance.

- **Professional Learning Communities (PLCs).** Grade-level/content PLCs will meet monthly to study student work, moderate scoring against success criteria, and share PBE-aligned practices that moved the needle (e.g., feedback protocols, scaffolded tasks, reassessment structures). Each PLC will maintain a living agenda and evidence folder: recent item analyses, reteach plans, revised items, student-work samples with annotations, and brief reflection notes on what to scale or abandon. Instructional leaders will facilitate a common “Plan → Do → Study → Act” cycle and ensure each meeting ends with a clear deliverable (e.g., two revised items, one calibrated exemplar, a mini-lesson plan). Administrators will conduct short, supportive learning walks tied to PLC goals and report trend data (what’s being implemented consistently, what needs coaching). Expected outcome: stronger collective efficacy and a consistent instructional core across classrooms and grades. On-going Professional Development, in IXL for standard base instruction, ACE Consortium BPE Professional Development
- **Family Engagement.** Each quarter, teachers and the counselor will send concise progress updates that translate proficiency language into family-friendly terms, highlight current priority standards, and point to the student’s portfolio artifacts. Families will receive simple “how to help at home” guides tied to current success criteria (sample questions, vocabulary, quick practice ideas) and invitations to brief showcase events (virtual or in-person) where students explain their learning targets and growth evidence. For students in intervention, families will get a personalized plan (IEP or 504 Plan) outlining the focus skill, schedule, and how progress will be monitored, with a mid-cycle check-in. Communication will be two-way: provide channels for questions (office hours, call times, or messaging platform) and track contact attempts to ensure no family is missed. Expected outcome: informed, supportive families who understand proficiency progress and partner with the school to sustain gains. The goal is to promote family and community participation in educational programs to improve student learning. Parent/Caregivers will receive letters on scheduled school events or information will be posted on school social media page. The purpose is to encourage parent/caregivers to become active participants of the educational process of their children.

IV. Monitoring and Evaluation

- **Progress Monitoring:** Track benchmark scores and classroom assessment data quarterly to reduce non-proficient rate.
- **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 **district data source for item analysis**
- Ongoing **professional development** on PBE, IXL, Curriculum Training, School Safety.
- Designate specific **Time for PLC collaboration**
- **Intervention materials** and trained staff
- Support from **Administrative Staff, Trustees, & District Coach.**
- **Walk-Through Forms**, focus on instructional practices, and classroom management Review and analyze for data for immediate feedback

• VI. Conclusion

This corrective action plan aims to turn around the Intensive Assistance status of Lane Deer Schools Grades K-12 and elevate to regular accreditation status through systematic use of item analysis and sustainable PBE practices. With collaboration and commitment, all students can succeed. The District will actively engage in all five sequential phases of the Intensive Assistance Process with Fidelity. The District agrees to communicate regularly with OPI staff by responding in a timely manner to emails, attend all scheduled zoom meetings and support network meetings and activities with OPI. The District will provide Biannual progress reports to Board of Public Education (BPE) and participate in Intensive Support Network for the duration of three-year post-exit. The district understands failure to participate and comply will result in non-accredited status.

Stanford K-12 Schools – Stanford School: Corrective Plan

The reason the school is in a corrective plan: Student Performance Standards (SPA-SPB)

Please describe your systematic procedure and timeline for resolving deviations:

MILESTONES

(Summer 2026)

Extended School Year (ESY) for Tier 3 students in 4th thru 7th grade.

Two Weeks prior to start of school

Five (5) students with IEP goals in Reading and Math

Two 4th graders

A single 5th grader

Two sixth graders

PIR Days

Karlee Tchida, M.Ed.- School Mental Health Program Manager, Sustainability Coach

Center for Children, Families and Workforce Development

MAST Training

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STUDY SKILLS/Check & Connect Training with HS/JH Staff

Early Literature Home Based Program

Conversation with Kimberly Evans

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STAR Testing K-2, SPED

PELI Testing - preK

MAST TESTING 3rd-8th

Winter 2026/2027

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ACT Testing- preACT 8/9, preACT, and ACT

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Semester Exams 6-12

FOLLOW UP

Data Analysis - After Fall Testing Window, collect student data and analyze with individual classroom teachers.

Develop T2 interventions

Implement T2 interventions by 2nd Quarter (October 15th)

Re-evaluate after Winter Testing Window

Weekly reminders

Study Skills Lessons

Test Taking Skills Lessons

EXAM WEEK

Practice for Middle School classrooms

DOK questions

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:

GOALS

The Stanford Public School District is in the process of developing a Strategic Plan for the first time since 2014. Academic Achievement is the third of five strategic goals that the District has implemented (see attached). The following goals are in alignment to that strategic goal.

Improve Test Taking and Study Skills amongst Middle School Students

Develop Tier 2 Interventions in Elementary Classrooms

Specifications:

Improve Test Taking Skills and Study Skills amongst Middle School Students

Administered Daily Planners for all grade 6th-8th to be overseen by Advisors and used by all middle school teachers.

Instruct middle school students how to use and access their Infinite Campus portal to track up to date grades and missing assignments.

Implemented a weekly grading deadline for teachers.

Placed students by grade level in advisory with grade specific advisor.

“Check and Connect” model.

STUDY Skills lessons provided.

TEST TAKING Skills lessons provided.

Developed ability level placement for MATH.

Instituted a MATH STUDY SKILLS class for underperforming 7th grade students immediately after the regular MATH class.

Develop Tier 2 Interventions in Elementary Classrooms

preK and Kindergarten enrolled in the Early Literature Home Based program.

1st and 2nd in a combined classroom with support for ELA and Math

Certified Teacher overseeing ELA guided programs administered by paraprofessional and other certified professionals.

Certified teacher presenting MATH instruction to both age groups separately.

3rd grade is not a combined class as it is the first grade that will participate in state-wide assessments. Focus on this group as a foundational level for rigorous instruction for the next six years through 8th grade.

4th and 5th in a combined classroom with paraprofessional support for Tier 2 and Tier3 instruction.

6th grade has transitioned to the Middle School with supports in place.

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.):

Objective 3.2 – Improve Test Taking and Study Skills starting in Middle School

Target:

90% of students will engage in regular Study Skills using planning and notetaking skills as present in their daily planners.

90% will visibly use Test Taking skills while participating in testing.

6th - 8th grade

Strategies:

Grade Level Advisory configuration used to focus on study skills

Common daily planners overseen by Advisors and classroom teachers

Establish Test Taking Skills

Develop a common “Testing Calendar” so as not to overload students with testing

Develop a Study Skills period for 6th grade students

Measures of Success:

Regular Planner assessments

MAPS Growth

STAR Growth

MAST Comprehension

Objective 3.3 – Develop an Intervention/Title I program

Target:

Tier 2 interventions for underperforming students
Tier 3 interventions for Strategic Students in Math
Tier 2 interventions for Gifted & Talented students
Tier 1 classroom instruction for STEM

Strategies:

Individual Elementary Classroom Teachers to develop in class T2 interventions.
Pullout T2 interventions for G&T
Develop ability level placement for Middle School Math
Develop MATH Study Skills class for underperforming Middle school students
Develop “pre-Algebra” for struggling High School students/high achieving Middle School Students
Early Literature home-based program for perK and K students

Measures of Success:

Of those students in T2 interventions, 90% will increase District testing growth by 25% by year end (15% by Winter testing).
Of those middle school students in MATH Study skills, growth will increase by 1.5 full grade level on the STAR Assessment.
Of those students enrolled in "pre-algebra", 90% will improve MAPS Math scores by 25 points by year end (15 by winter assessment)
Of those students enrolled in the Early Literature Home based program, 90% of those parents will gain fidelity in working at home with their child.

Identify responsible parties and deadlines for corrective action:

Pax Haslem, Superintendent
Vance von Bergen, ELA and Math
Nancy Metcalfe, Math
Meredith Phillipe, 4th & 5th
Karli Bodner, 3rd

Describe how progress will be tracked and monitored.

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STAR Testing K-2, SPED
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FOLLOW UP

Data Analysis - After Fall Testing Window, collect student data and analyze with individual classroom teachers.

Develop T2 interventions

Implement T2 interventions by 2nd Quarter (October 15th)

Re-evaluate after Winter Testing Window

Provided evidence that the local board of trustees has approved this plan:

YES



**Superintendent
Stanford Public Schools**

104 4th Ave. S.
Stanford, MT 59479
(406) 566-3000

OPI Accreditation Corrective Plan - Student Performance Standards September 10, 2026

OVERVIEW

“The Accreditation Unit is reaching out to let you know that *Stanford School (SC: 0617)* & *Stanford 7-8 (SC: 1716)* are in Advice Status due to the **Student Performance Standards**. For a district with a school in advice or in deficiency status, the district administrator and the chair of the local board of trustees shall submit to the Superintendent of Public Instruction a corrective plan, including a systematic procedure and timeline for resolving the deviations noted.”

“Due to the failure to meet required reporting, **Stanford School** and **Stanford Junior High** will be transitioned to **Deficiency status**. As a result of this status change, both schools will be required to complete the full accreditation process for the 2026–2027 school year.”

GOALS

The Stanford Public School District is in the process of developing a Strategic Plan for the first time since 2014. Academic Achievement is the third of five strategic goals that the District has implemented (see attached). The following goals are in alignment to that strategic goal.

- 1. Improve Test Taking and Study Skills amongst Middle School Students**
- 2. Develop Tier 2 Interventions in Elementary Classrooms**

Specifications:

- 1. Improve Test Taking Skills and Study Skills amongst Middle School Students**
 - Administered Daily Planners for all grade 6th-8th to be overseen by Advisors and used by all middle school teachers.
 - Instruct middle school students how to use and access their Infinite Campus portal to track up to date grades and missing assignments.
 - Implemented a weekly grading deadline for teachers.
 - Placed students by grade level in advisory with grade specific advisor.
 - “Check and Connect” model.
 - STUDY Skills lessons provided.
 - TEST TAKING Skills lessons provided.

- Developed ability level placement for MATH.
- Instituted a MATH STUDY SKILLS class for underperforming 7th grade students immediately after the regular MATH class.

2. Develop Tier 2 Interventions in Elementary Classrooms

- preK and Kindergarten enrolled in the Early Literature Home Based program.
- 1st and 2nd in a combined classroom with support for ELA and Math
 - Certified Teacher overseeing ELA guided programs administered by paraprofessional and other certified professionals.
 - Certified teacher presenting MATH instruction to both age groups separately.
- 3rd grade is not a combined class as it is the first grade that will participate in state-wide assessments. Focus on this group as a foundational level for rigorous instruction for the next six years through 8th grade.
- 4th and 5th in a combined classroom with paraprofessional support for Tier 2 and Tier3 instruction.
- 6th grade has transitioned to the Middle School with supports in place.

MILESTONES

(Summer 2026)

Extended School Year (ESY) for Tier 3 students in 4th thru 7th grade.

- Two Weeks prior to start of school
- Five (5) students with IEP goals in Reading and Math
 - Two 4th graders
 - A single 5th grader
 - Two sixth graders

PIR Days

- Karlee Tchida, M.Ed.- School Mental Health Program Manager, Sustainability Coach
 - Center for Children, Families and Workforce Development
- MAST Training
- MyACT training for all JH/HS Staff
- STUDY SKILLS/Check & Connect Training with HS/JH Staff

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- Conversation with Kimberly Evans

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FOLLOW UP

- ☐ Data Analysis - After Fall Testing Window, collect student data and analyze with individual classroom teachers.
 - ☐ Develop T2 interventions
 - ☐ Implement T2 interventions by 2nd Quarter (October 15th)
 - ☐ Re-evaluate after Winter Testing Window
- ☐ Weekly reminders
 - ☐ Study Skills Lessons
 - ☐ Test Taking Skills Lessons
- ☐ EXAM WEEK
 - ☐ Practice for Middle School classrooms
 - ☐ DOK questions

Approved by the Stanford Board of Trustees on this date the 15th of September, 2026.

Proposed by Superintendent, Pax Haslem _____

Approved by the Board of Trustees, Chair Billi Jo Taylor _____

Strategic Goal 3: Academic Achievement

Objective 3.1 – Improve overall ACT scores

Target: 90% of students achieve a composite score of 20 or higher

- Current Juniors
- Current Seniors (re-take).

Strategies:

- preACT prep in 9th and 10th grade- Use scores to develop Tier 1 and Tier 2 instruction.
- ACT prep in ELA, Math, Science, and Social Sciences- Use Tier 1 instruction in Core Classrooms.

Measures of Success:

- Winter ACT re-take scores (current seniors); measure growth and achievement
- Spring ACT scores (current Juniors): measure growth and achievement

Objective 3.2 – Improve Test Taking and Study Skills starting in Middle School

Target:

- 90% of students will engage in regular Study Skills using planning and notetaking skills as present in their daily planners.
- 90% will visibly use Test Taking skills while participating in testing.
- 6th - 8th grade

Strategies:

- Grade Level Advisory configuration used to focus on study skills
- Common daily planners overseen by Advisors and classroom teachers
- Establish Test Taking Skills
- Develop a common “Testing Calendar” so as not to overload students with testing
- Develop a Study Skills period for 6th grade students

Measures of Success:

- Regular Planner assessments
- MAPS Growth
- STAR Growth
- MAST Comprehension

Objective 3.3 – Develop an Intervention/Title I program

Target:

- Tier 2 interventions for underperforming students
- Tier 3 interventions for Strategic Students in Math
- Tier 2 interventions for Gifted & Talented students
- Tier 1 classroom instruction for STEM

Strategies:

- Individual Elementary Classroom Teachers to develop in class T2 interventions.
- Pullout T2 interventions for G&T
- Develop ability level placement for Middle School Math
- Develop MATH Study Skills class for underperforming Middle school students
- Develop “pre-Algebra” for struggling High School students/high achieving Middle School Students
- Early Literature home-based program for perK and K students

Measures of Success:

- Of those students in T2 interventions, 90% will increase District testing growth by 25% by year end (15% by Winter testing).
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- Of those students enrolled in "pre-algebra", 90% will improve MAPS Math scores by 25 points by year end (15 by winter assessment)
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Stanford K-12 Schools – Stanford Junior High: Corrective Plan

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Please describe your systematic procedure and timeline for resolving deviations:

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Provided evidence that the local board of trustees has approved this plan:

YES



**Superintendent
Stanford Public Schools**

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Stanford, MT 59479
(406) 566-3000

OPI Accreditation Corrective Plan - Student Performance Standards September 10, 2026

OVERVIEW

“The Accreditation Unit is reaching out to let you know that *Stanford School (SC: 0617)* & *Stanford 7-8 (SC: 1716)* are in Advice Status due to the **Student Performance Standards**. For a district with a school in advice or in deficiency status, the district administrator and the chair of the local board of trustees shall submit to the Superintendent of Public Instruction a corrective plan, including a systematic procedure and timeline for resolving the deviations noted.”

“Due to the failure to meet required reporting, **Stanford School** and **Stanford Junior High** will be transitioned to **Deficiency status**. As a result of this status change, both schools will be required to complete the full accreditation process for the 2026–2027 school year.”

GOALS

The Stanford Public School District is in the process of developing a Strategic Plan for the first time since 2014. Academic Achievement is the third of five strategic goals that the District has implemented (see attached). The following goals are in alignment to that strategic goal.

- 1. Improve Test Taking and Study Skills amongst Middle School Students**
- 2. Develop Tier 2 Interventions in Elementary Classrooms**

Specifications:

- 1. Improve Test Taking Skills and Study Skills amongst Middle School Students**
 - Administered Daily Planners for all grade 6th-8th to be overseen by Advisors and used by all middle school teachers.
 - Instruct middle school students how to use and access their Infinite Campus portal to track up to date grades and missing assignments.
 - Implemented a weekly grading deadline for teachers.
 - Placed students by grade level in advisory with grade specific advisor.
 - “Check and Connect” model.
 - STUDY Skills lessons provided.
 - TEST TAKING Skills lessons provided.

- Developed ability level placement for MATH.
- Instituted a MATH STUDY SKILLS class for underperforming 7th grade students immediately after the regular MATH class.

2. Develop Tier 2 Interventions in Elementary Classrooms

- preK and Kindergarten enrolled in the Early Literature Home Based program.
- 1st and 2nd in a combined classroom with support for ELA and Math
 - Certified Teacher overseeing ELA guided programs administered by paraprofessional and other certified professionals.
 - Certified teacher presenting MATH instruction to both age groups separately.
- 3rd grade is not a combined class as it is the first grade that will participate in state-wide assessments. Focus on this group as a foundational level for rigorous instruction for the next six years through 8th grade.
- 4th and 5th in a combined classroom with paraprofessional support for Tier 2 and Tier3 instruction.
- 6th grade has transitioned to the Middle School with supports in place.

MILESTONES

(Summer 2026)

Extended School Year (ESY) for Tier 3 students in 4th thru 7th grade.

- Two Weeks prior to start of school
- Five (5) students with IEP goals in Reading and Math
 - Two 4th graders
 - A single 5th grader
 - Two sixth graders

PIR Days

- Karlee Tchida, M.Ed.- School Mental Health Program Manager, Sustainability Coach
 - Center for Children, Families and Workforce Development
- MAST Training
- MyACT training for all JH/HS Staff
- STUDY SKILLS/Check & Connect Training with HS/JH Staff

Early Literature Home Based Program

- Conversation with Kimberly Evans

Fall 2026

MAPS Testing K-12

STAR Testing K-2, SPED

PELI Testing - preK

MAST TESTING 3rd-8th

Winter 2026/2027

Semester Exams (*new to the Junior High School faculty and students*)

MAPS Winter Testing k-12

MAST Testing 3rd-8th

Spring 2027

ACT Testing- preACT 8/9, preACT, and ACT

MAST Testing 3rd - 8th

SCIENCE Test 5th/8th

MAPS Testing K-12

Semester Exams 6-12

FOLLOW UP

- ☐ Data Analysis - After Fall Testing Window, collect student data and analyze with individual classroom teachers.
 - ☐ Develop T2 interventions
 - ☐ Implement T2 interventions by 2nd Quarter (October 15th)
 - ☐ Re-evaluate after Winter Testing Window
- ☐ Weekly reminders
 - ☐ Study Skills Lessons
 - ☐ Test Taking Skills Lessons
- ☐ EXAM WEEK
 - ☐ Practice for Middle School classrooms
 - ☐ DOK questions

Approved by the Stanford Board of Trustees on this date the 15th of September, 2026.

Proposed by Superintendent, Pax Haslem _____

Approved by the Board of Trustees, Chair Billi Jo Taylor_____

Strategic Goal 3: Academic Achievement

Objective 3.1 – Improve overall ACT scores

Target: 90% of students achieve a composite score of 20 or higher

- Current Juniors
- Current Seniors (re-take).

Strategies:

- preACT prep in 9th and 10th grade- Use scores to develop Tier 1 and Tier 2 instruction.
- ACT prep in ELA, Math, Science, and Social Sciences- Use Tier 1 instruction in Core Classrooms.

Measures of Success:

- Winter ACT re-take scores (current seniors); measure growth and achievement
- Spring ACT scores (current Juniors): measure growth and achievement

Objective 3.2 – Improve Test Taking and Study Skills starting in Middle School

Target:

- 90% of students will engage in regular Study Skills using planning and notetaking skills as present in their daily planners.
- 90% will visibly use Test Taking skills while participating in testing.
- 6th - 8th grade

Strategies:

- Grade Level Advisory configuration used to focus on study skills
- Common daily planners overseen by Advisors and classroom teachers
- Establish Test Taking Skills
- Develop a common “Testing Calendar” so as not to overload students with testing
- Develop a Study Skills period for 6th grade students

Measures of Success:

- Regular Planner assessments
- MAPS Growth
- STAR Growth
- MAST Comprehension

Objective 3.3 – Develop an Intervention/Title I program

Target:

- Tier 2 interventions for underperforming students
- Tier 3 interventions for Strategic Students in Math
- Tier 2 interventions for Gifted & Talented students
- Tier 1 classroom instruction for STEM

Strategies:

- Individual Elementary Classroom Teachers to develop in class T2 interventions.
- Pullout T2 interventions for G&T
- Develop ability level placement for Middle School Math
- Develop MATH Study Skills class for underperforming Middle school students
- Develop “pre-Algebra” for struggling High School students/high achieving Middle School Students
- Early Literature home-based program for perK and K students

Measures of Success:

- Of those students in T2 interventions, 90% will increase District testing growth by 25% by year end (15% by Winter testing).
- Of those middle school students in MATH Study skills, growth will increase by 1.5 full grade level on the STAR Assessment.
- Of those students enrolled in "pre-algebra", 90% will improve MAPS Math scores by 25 points by year end (15 by winter assessment)
- Of those students enrolled in the Early Literature Home based program, 90% of those parents will gain fidelity in working at home with their child.

ITEM 9

ACTION ON PROVISIONAL ACCREDITATION REQUESTS

Dr. Hannah Nieskens



RISE Charter School of Corvallis
Pathway & Distance Learning Academies



September 10, 2026

Montana Board of Public Education
Helena, Montana

RE: Request for Accreditation Extension – RISE Charter School Grades K–8 (Primary and Middle School):
Pathway Learning Academy and ***Distance Learning Academy***.

Dear Members of the Montana Board of Public Education:

On behalf of Corvallis School District #1, I respectfully request an extension of accreditation for grades K - 8 of the RISE Charter School Distance Learning Academy and Pathway Learning Academy through the 2027–2028 school year.

The purpose of this request is to better align the grades K–8 accreditation (for Primary and Middle School) timeline with the Montana Office of Public Instruction's accreditation cycle for the high school components of both Pathway and Distance Learning Academies. Aligning these timelines will allow the District and OPI to review both schools within a more consistent accreditation structure.

The requested extension will also provide Corvallis School District #1 additional time to continue aligning the missions, instructional models, student supports, curriculum, assessment practices, and accountability structures of the Distance Learning Academy and Pathway Learning Academy with evolving Montana accreditation requirements.

This request is not intended to avoid or reduce accreditation expectations. Rather, it is intended to provide a more orderly and effective process for demonstrating continuous improvement while bringing the grades K–8 schools into alignment with OPI's broader accreditation cycle.



During the extension period, Corvallis School District #1 will continue working collaboratively with OPI to improve implementation, monitoring student achievement, and addressing any areas identified for continued improvement.

For these reasons, I respectfully request that the Montana Board of Public Education approve an accreditation extension for Primary and Middle School for RISE Charter School Distance Learning Academy and Pathway Learning Academy through the 2027–2028 school year.

Thank you for your consideration and continued support of Corvallis School District #1 and Rise Charter School & Academies of Corvallis.

Respectfully,

Pete Joseph

Pete Joseph, Superintendent

Corvallis School District #1

RISE Charter School of Corvallis

❖ **LICENSURE COMMITTEE – (Items 10-16)**

Dr. Ron Slinger

ITEM 10

ACTION TO ACCEPT AND PLACE ON FILE
THE CLASS 7 LICENSURE CRITERIA FOR
THE LITTLE SHELL TRIBE

Matthew Bell

Montana Board of Public Education

Executive Summary

Date:

Presentation	Memorandum of Understanding Between the Little Shell Tribe & the Office of Public Instruction for Class 7 American Indian Language and Culture Specialist License
Presenter	Matthew Bell
Position Title	Language and Culture Specialist Office of Public Instruction
Overview	The Office of Public Instruction and the Little Shell Tribe request the acceptance and filing criteria of a Class 7 American Indian Language and Culture Specialist License per ARM 10.57.436.
Requested Decision(s)	Action Item
Related Issue(s)	
Recommendation(s)	The State Superintendent recommends the acceptance and filing for the Class 7 designation for the Little Shell Tribe.



MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

BETWEEN THE OFFICE OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION AND THE Little Shell TRIBE

The Office of Public Instruction (OPI) and the Little Shell Tribe agree to the following Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

WHEREAS Administrative Rules of Montana (ARM) 10.57.436(2) states: "The Superintendent of Public Instruction shall issue a Class 7 license based upon verification by the authorized representative of a tribal government, that has a memorandum of understanding with the Superintendent of Public Instruction, that the applicant has met tribal standards for competency and fluency as a requisite for teaching that language and culture[Chippewa]"; and

WHEREAS the Little Shell Tribe wishes to have Class 7 American Indian language and cultural specialists as allowed by ARM 10.57.436, the Little Shell Tribal Council adopted or will enter a Resolution_____, that details the following:

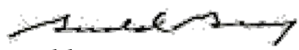
1. The cultural, experiential, character, and other qualifications and criteria which qualify a person as competent to be a specialist in the language and culture for which the license is being requested;
2. The specific requirements for professional development leading to renewal of a Class 7 license; and
3. The name(s) and position(s) of person(s) presented by Tribal Nation documentation are approved as the Tribe's authorized representative(s) to make formal written recommendation on the form supplied by the OPI for an applicant for Class 7 licensure, and approved to verify the professional development plan for license renewal has been met.

The Little Shell Tribe understands and agree that this MOU will be reviewed at least every five years and may be renewed or amended as agreed to by the parties, If no action is taken, the MOU will automatically renew unless terminated by written notice provided at least 30 days prior to termination, by either party.

If the person(s) identified in 3 above is no longer available to make recommendations to the OPI, the Little Shell Tribe understand there will be no Class 7 licenses approved until a replacement person is named as the Tribe's authorized representative. New information provided will be considered an addendum to the existing MOU and must be submitted on tribal letterhead and signed by the Chairman or Vice-Chairman of the Tribe.

The foregoing provision are hereby agreed to on this day of March 20,2026.

For the Little Shell Tribe:


Gerald Gray, Jr.

Chair/President, Little Shell
Tribe

For the OPI:



Superintendent of Public Instruction

ITEM 11

UPDATE ON THE DAWSON COMMUNITY
COLLEGE PARAPATHWAYS
PARTNERSHIP

Patrick Cates, OPI
Nick Staffileno, Dawson Community College
Val Hafele, Glendive Special Education
Director

Montana Board of Public Education

Executive Summary

Date: September 24-25, 2026

Presentation	Update on the Dawson Community College Para Pathways Partnership
Presenter	Patrick Cates, Nick Staffileno, and Val Hafele
Position Title	School Safety and Student Supports, Senior Manager, Office of Public Instruction; Dawson Community College, Education Faculty; and Glendive Special Education Director and Committee Member
Overview	This is an information item to provide an update on the Para Pathways Program with Dawson Community College.
Requested Decision(s)	Information Item
Related Issue(s)	None
Recommendation(s)	n/a



Montana
Office Of Public Instruction
Susie Hedalen, State Superintendent
opi.mt.gov



Montana Parapathways Update BPE September 2026

Project Overview

The Montana Parapathways Program is a sequenced professional development program that includes three levels of training. It is designed for paraprofessionals, but can also support and train administrators, teachers, aides, and other school staff.

Level 1 Update

Level 1 is comprised of training modules through a program called LRP. Each takes ~ 1 hour to complete, and participants learn a wide range of topics in special education. Level 1 contains training modules that are 100% free to anyone who works in education in all of Montana. Additionally, teachers can complete certain Level 1 modules for renewal units.

- 1,052 total Level 1 users across all positions (paras, teachers, administrators, etc.)
- Over 20,000 training modules completed
- 500+ Special Education paraprofessionals enrolled in the Sped tech track
- This includes 233 Level 1 completers who mastered all 40 required modules
- This represents 53 of the 56 Montana counties

Level 2 Update

Level 2 entails 4 college-level courses that are customized for working educators and intended to enhance educator effectiveness. Each course is part of most Bachelor-degree programs across the US.

- In May 2026, 42 students officially finished Level 2
- Of these, 22 have already obtained class 9 Licensure and are working as Special Education Technicians in Montana schools
- DCC currently has 45 more Special Education technician students enrolled in Level 2 classes

Level 3 Update

Level 3 is focused on helping individuals work towards a teaching license. DCC helps each student through advising, whether at DCC or another college in Montana.

- Of the 42 Level 2 completers, 30 hope to become certified teachers
- 23 indicate that they want to earn a special education endorsement as well
- Several completers are working as emergency-licensed teachers

One student was accepted into the Montana Teacher Apprenticeship Program

ITEM 12

ACTION ON THE DRAFT COUNCIL FOR
THE ACCREDITATION OF EDUCATOR
PREPARATION MEMORANDUM OF
UNDERSTANDING

Dr. Julie Murgel
Crystal Andrews

Montana Board of Public Education

Executive Summary

Date: September 24-25, 2026

Presentation	Council for Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) Agreement
Presenter	Julie Murgel, Crystal Andrews
Position Title	Chief Program Officer Senior Manager, School and Educator Effectiveness Office of Public Instruction
Overview	The Partnership Agreement is between three parties: the Montana Board of Public Education, the Montana Office of Public Education, and the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP). CAEP is a nongovernment, voluntary association that is a nationally recognized accreditor by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA). Through an Accreditation Council, CAEP accredits Educator Preparation Programs (EPPs). The purpose of this partnership agreement is to: • Outline preferences about program review options, • Review team compositions for accreditation site review conducted by CAEP of the Montana EPPs, and • Establish the responsibilities that each party has in supporting CAEP Accreditation activities for EPPs voluntarily requesting joint reviews. This partnership agreement is for MT EPPs that elect to have joint accreditation for the state of Montana and CAEP. The agreement is for four years, from July 1, 2026, to June 30, 2030.
Requested Decision(s)	Action Item
Related Issue(s)	None
Recommendation(s)	The State Superintendent recommends a four-year agreement.



Montana
Office Of Public Instruction
Susie Hedalen, State Superintendent
opi.mt.gov

**Montana Board of Public Education,
The Montana State Superintendent of Public Education,
and
The Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP)
Partnership Agreement**

Whereas, CAEP is a nongovernmental, voluntary membership organization committed to the effective preparation of teachers and other P-12 professional educators; and

Whereas, CAEP, through an autonomous Accreditation Council, accredits educator preparation providers (EPPs) and advances excellent educator preparation through evidence-based accreditation that assures quality and supports continuous improvement to strengthen P-12 student learning; and

Whereas, CAEP is a nationally recognized accreditor, having earned recognition by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA); and

Whereas, the Montana Board of Public Education (BPE) and the Montana Office of Public Instruction (OPI) support continuous improvement in educator preparation; and

CAEP, BPE, and OPI hereby enter into this agreement detailing OPI and BPE's preferences with regard to program review options and review team composition for accreditation Site Reviews conducted by CAEP of EPPs operating within the State of Montana and establishing the primary responsibilities each party has in supporting CAEP's accreditation activities involving all such EPPs.

1. CAEP Standards and Scope of Accreditation

The Parties understand and agree that:

The CAEP Board of Directors (CAEP Board or Board) has adopted standards (CAEP Standards or Standards) that serve as the basis for all accreditation reviews undertaken by CAEP.

- 1.1. As a result of the ongoing critical self-review that CAEP undertakes to maintain and improve the quality of CAEP accreditation, the CAEP Board will undertake a comprehensive review and revision of the CAEP Standards on a schedule set by the Board and may, as needed, make interim amendments to the Standards. In making any such changes, CAEP will seek stakeholder and public input, including input from BPE, OPI, and EPPs.
- 1.2. It is the responsibility of BPE, OPI, and any EPPs seeking or continuing CAEP accreditation to stay informed of any changes made to the CAEP Standards and the timeline(s) set by the Board for the implementation of or transition to new or revised Standards.
- 1.3. The CAEP scope of accreditation, defined in policy, distinguishes between two levels of educator preparation:
 - 1.3.1.1. Initial-Licensure Preparation is provided through programs at the baccalaureate or

post-baccalaureate levels leading to initial-licensure, certification, or endorsement that are designed to develop P-12 teachers. All Initial-Licensure Preparation programs within the Scope of Accreditation will be reviewed under CAEP Standards for Initial-Licensure.

- 1.3.1.2. Advanced-Level Preparation is provided through programs at the post-baccalaureate or graduate level leading to licensure, certification, or endorsement. Advanced-Level Programs are designed to develop P-12 teachers who have already completed an initial-licensure program, currently licensed administrators, other certificated (or similar state language) school professionals for employment in P-12 schools/districts. All Advanced-Level programs within the Scope of Accreditation will be reviewed under CAEP Standards for Advanced-Level Preparation.

2. CAEP's Responsibility for Education Preparation Provider (EPP) Accreditation

The Parties understand and agree that:

- 2.1. CAEP, through the Accreditation Council, has sole responsibility for granting CAEP accreditation to an EPP, and for supporting and overseeing accredited EPPs through continuous accreditation and the CAEP eligibility processes described in CAEP policy.
- 2.2. The process required for accreditation by CAEP is outlined in policies and procedures. Policies and procedures may be revised from time to time. It is the responsibility of any EPP seeking CAEP accreditation to stay informed of any such changes as they may impact the CAEP accreditation process from the time of their adoption or publication. It is the responsibility of CAEP to timely inform BPE and OPI of any such changes.

3. BPE's Responsibility for Program Approval

The Parties understand and agree that:

- 3.1. BPE has responsibility for program approval. In granting program approval, BPE will utilize information generated from CAEP's review(s) of an EPP, including but not limited to an Accreditation Council decision on CAEP accreditation and the assignment of any Areas for Improvement (AFIs) and Stipulations, as described in CAEP policy. Although BPE may elect to have state-specific standards and/or requirements incorporated into the CAEP review, consistent with the program review options outlined below, only information gathered on an EPP's compliance with CAEP Standards and requirements will be used by the Accreditation Council to make a decision.

BPE will periodically review its program review requirements against the CAEP Standards and policies and will, in a timely manner, make CAEP aware of any conflicts or potential inconsistencies so that all parties to this agreement are aware of any such issues and can work constructively together to minimize any challenges that may arise from them.

4. CAEP Accreditation Cycle

The Parties understand and agree that:

- 4.1. The CAEP accreditation cycle involves an EPP in continuous improvement and requires an EPP to demonstrate that it meets CAEP's high standards of quality required to improve P-12 student learning.
- 4.2. To merit full accreditation by CAEP, an EPP must meet all CAEP Standards on the basis of sufficient and accurate evidence.
- 4.3. A Site Review, carried out by an Evaluation Team, is an essential part of the accreditation process. Members of the assigned team investigate the quality of an EPP's evidence, including the accuracy and consistency of the evidence provided in relation to CAEP Standards. In accordance with CAEP policy, CAEP may utilize a virtual site review or may have one or more Evaluation Team members participating using electronic means.
- 4.4. BPE elects that CAEP's reviews of EPPs in the State of Montana will be carried out using Evaluation Teams composed as follows:
 - 4.4.1. **Joint Review Team.** For any review except one required in conjunction with an accreditation decision of Accreditation with Stipulations or Probationary Accreditation, the composition of the Evaluation Team will be as follows:
 - 4.4.1.1. For a Review involving only one level of accreditation (i.e., initial or advanced), the Joint Review Team includes four national reviewers appointed by CAEP and one reviewer appointed by OPI.
 - 4.4.1.2. For a Review involving both levels of accreditation, initial and advanced-level, the Evaluation Team will include five CAEP-appointed reviewers and one OPI-appointed reviewer.
 - 4.4.1.3. For a Stipulation or Probation review, the Evaluation Team is comprised of two CAEP-appointed reviewers. OPI may choose to add one reviewer for a total of a three-person team. The lead reviewer is appointed by CAEP.
 - 4.4.1.4. OPI shall provide CAEP with its recommended Evaluation Team members within any timelines established by CAEP. If OPI is unable to appoint members, CAEP will appoint from its pool of volunteers trained to serve as Evaluation Team members a CAEP-only team. All such teams are led by an Evaluation Team chair (or Evaluation Team leader) appointed by CAEP.
- 4.5. Prior to assignment to any CAEP Evaluation Team, an individual must have successfully completed CAEP training for review team members and must acknowledge understanding of, and agreement to, adhere to CAEP's code of conduct, including with regard to confidentiality and conflicts of interest.
- 4.6. Each Evaluation Team shall include a P-12 practitioner, when possible. OPI will make recommendations for P-12 practitioners through the CAEP accreditation platform.
- 4.7. At OPI's discretion, the State of Montana's teachers' association(s) may appoint one (1) representative per association to observe the Site Review. Any expenses associated with the attendance of an observer must be covered by the association(s). Prior to participation, any observer

must acknowledge understanding of an agreement to adhere to CAEP's policies and procedures regarding Site Reviews and the CAEP code of conduct, including with regard to confidentiality and conflicts of interest.

- 4.8. All Site Review activities undertaken by a CAEP Evaluation Team will be conducted in accordance with CAEP policies and procedures.
- 4.9. CAEP is not responsible for Site Review expenses for OPI-assigned personnel.
- 4.10. An EPP that is subject to BPE's jurisdiction may choose from among any of the following program review options for CAEP accreditation:
 - 4.10.1. **Specialty Program Review with National Recognition.** The goal of the specialized professional association (SPA) Program Review with National Recognition is to align specialty licensure area data with national standards developed by SPAs in order to receive national recognition at the program level. The Evaluation Team will consider evidence that the EPP presents as gathered from the National Recognition decision-making process and made available in SPA program level reports to meet the sufficiency criteria related to CAEP Standard R1, Component R1.2 (Initial) and/or Standard RA.1, Component RA1.2 (Advanced).
 - 4.10.2. **OPI Review by BPE Authority.** OPI conducts program reviews for purposes of BPE approval and to inform CAEP accreditation. An EPP undergoing the OPI Review option will follow BPE rules. OPI provides forms and instructions on how to meet all BPE standards for licensure/certificate program approval. Upon an EPP's completion of the OPI authority forms, trained reviewers are selected and assigned within appropriate content areas. Reviewers make recommendations for further action and/or approval. BPE makes the final decision on the approval of any program. The CAEP Evaluation Team will consider evidence that the EPP presents as gathered from the OPI Review process to meet the sufficiency criteria related to CAEP Standard R1, Component RA1.2 (Initial) and/or Standard RA1, Component RA1.2 (Advanced).
 - 4.10.3. **CAEP Evidence Review of Standard 1/A.1.** Evidence for the CAEP Evidence Review of Standard 1/A.1 process is developed through the analysis of an EPP's outcome assessment data aligned to specialty licensure area standards delineated in CAEP Standard R1, Component RA1.2 (Initial) and/or Standard A1, Component RA1.2 (Advanced). Evidence from the EPP's internal assessment may be used by OPI to determine its alignment with BPE standards in the respective area(s) of licensure to demonstrate candidates' ability to apply content and pedagogical knowledge in the area of licensure.
- 4.11. The specific timeline established for the review of an EPP, as well as CAEP's consideration of any request for an extension, will be decided by CAEP or the Accreditation Council, as appropriate, on a case-by-case basis and in accordance with CAEP policies.
- 4.12. Once granted full accreditation by CAEP, an EPP's term of accreditation shall be seven (7) years. Shorter terms are granted with a decision of Accreditation with Stipulations or Probationary

Accreditation. Throughout its term, to maintain accreditation, an EPP must comply with CAEP policies, including policies regarding payment of annual dues and the submission of annual reports.

- 4.13. An EPP for which the Accreditation Council issues a decision to deny or revoke accreditation may have a right to petition for an appeal subject to CAEP's policy on appeals.
- 4.14. BPE will provide to CAEP its policy leading to a "Change in State Status." BPE will notify CAEP within thirty (30) days of action taken when a CAEP-accredited EPP has had a "Change in State Status" as a result of a decision on specialized professional association (SPA) program status by BPE.
- 4.15. Accreditation-specific terminology and definitions used by CAEP as part of its EPP review and accreditation processes may vary from similar terms and definitions used by BPE and OPI. Any definitions of key terms and glossaries created by CAEP are available on the CAEP website [<http://caepnet.org/glossary>]. BPE and OPI should inquire with CAEP about the definition of any term if there is uncertainty regarding its meaning in the CAEP accreditation context.

5. Opportunities for BPE and OPI Input

The Parties understand and agree that:

- 5.1. CAEP will afford BPE and OPI multiple opportunities to provide CAEP, the Evaluation Team, and members of the Accreditation Council with any information or data BPE or OPI deems relevant to the accreditation of an EPP, as follows:
- 5.2. At least sixteen (16) weeks prior to any scheduled Site Review, CAEP will give OPI notice of the upcoming Site Review. At any time, up to six (6) weeks before the scheduled Site Review, the BPE and OPI may provide CAEP with comments and information on the EPP for consideration by the Evaluation Team. EPPs will be given an opportunity to respond to any such comments prior to the Site Review.
- 5.3. At any time, BPE or OPI may file a complaint regarding an EPP with the Accreditation Council for investigation and consideration as part of the EPP's ongoing cycle of CAEP accreditation. In accordance with CAEP policy, adverse action may result from any such investigation.
- 5.4. In the event an EPP within the State of Montana petitions for the appeal of an adverse action of the Accreditation Council, CAEP will notify BPE and OPI that such petition has been received. Any notification of a decision made by an ad-hoc appeal panel will be made in accordance with Section 7, below, and the detailed notification provisions included in CAEP policy.

6. Decisions of the Accreditation Council and an Ad-Hoc Appeals Council

The Parties understand and agree that:

- 6.1. The Accreditation Council makes decisions regarding the accreditation of EPPs at meetings held not less than two (2) times each year.

- 6.2. Following any decision of the Accreditation Council to deny or revoke the accreditation of an EPP, the EPP is promptly informed of its option to file a petition for an appeal and appeal requirements. Appeals criteria and process information are included in CAEP's policies on appeals.
- 6.3. CAEP provides written notice of each decision of the Accreditation Council and an Ad-hoc Appeal Panel in accordance with CAEP policies.
- 6.4. The written notice CAEP provides regarding its accrediting decisions, includes notice to BPE and OPI. CAEP's policies regarding notices specify any other parties to which notice must be provided and the respective timelines for each.

7. Data Sharing

The Parties understand and agree that:

- 7.1. The CAEP Standards and process for CAEP Accreditation require an EPP to collect and share data. To the extent that OPI maintains data necessary for CAEP's review of an EPP, subject to any data sharing agreement that may exist between an EPP and OPI, CAEP expects that OPI will make the relevant data available to EPPs at no cost, in a timely manner, with all personally identifiable information removed or redacted, and with all appropriate permissions to use the data for CAEP accreditation activities. Any requests for data must be made according to OPI's data sharing policy, and all data sharing must be done in accordance with state and federal law and pursuant to a data-sharing agreement.
- 7.2. In order to facilitate the reviews necessary for CAEP accreditation, CAEP will provide OPI and each dues-paying EPP in the State of Montana with access to the CAEP accreditation platform, CAEP's data and information management system. Should OPI or any EPP fail to pay annual dues to CAEP in a timely manner, CAEP reserves the right to suspend access to the CAEP accreditation platform until any outstanding dues are paid.
- 7.3. CAEP policies and the CAEP accreditation platform include information on the confidential nature of information maintained within the CAEP accreditation platform. All CAEP accreditation platform users must acknowledge CAEP's confidentiality policy and agree to adhere to it.

8. Partnership Dues, OPI Benefits, and Fees for Additional Services

The Parties understand and agree that:

9. OPI will be responsible for payment of annual State Partnership dues (See Appendix A). Dues may be reviewed and updated annually by CAEP according to the formula set forth in Appendix A. Should the amount of OPI's annual State Partnership dues be changed during the term of this agreement, CAEP will notify OPI of the new dues amount and the effective date.
- 9.1. CAEP will provide up to three (3) individuals employed by OPI with access to the CAEP accreditation platform.

- 9.2. During each year covered by this agreement, CAEP will waive the CAEP State Clinic and CAEP Conference registration fee for one (1) designated OPI representative; however, the OPI or OPI representative must assume other expenses associated with conference participation.
- 9.3. CAEP offers states access to CAEP National Training for up to five (5) site reviewers a year, including training and travel (additional participants may be added based on need and on a cost-recovery basis). CAEP may also offer supplemental training opportunities for OPI reviewers. Supplemental training events that are arranged, including events in the State of Montana, will be provided by CAEP on a cost-recovery basis and with specific arrangements negotiated according to CAEP's policies regarding fees and expenses for training.
- 9.4. OPI will work with associations that represent P-12 educators (NEA, AFT, NBPTS), EPPs, and education administrators to establish credit toward continuing education units or professional development requirements at the local district level in return for the State of Montana's P-12 educators' professional contributions to the work of CAEP as site review team members

10. BPE, OPI, and CAEP Contacts

The Parties understand and agree that the following are the designated liaisons to serve as primary contacts for the other parties throughout the term of this agreement. If any party changes its designated contact, it must timely notify all other parties of the change:

- 10.1. OPI's designated liaison is:
- 10.2. BPE's designated liaison is:
- 10.3. CAEP's designated liaison is:

11. Agreement Term and Amendments

The Parties understand and agree that:

- 11.1. CAEP, OPI, and BPE enter into this partnership agreement for the four (4)-year period beginning July 1, 2026, and ending on June 30, 2030.
- 11.2. The Parties will review this agreement at least annually and, as necessary, propose any amendment deemed appropriate and which may be adopted upon the agreement of the Parties.
- 11.3. Should any provision of this agreement be determined to be in conflict with CAEP policy, CAEP policy will be the prevailing authority and this agreement will be required to be amended to resolve the conflict.
- 11.4. State may rescind this agreement at any time if it is found that CAEP's accreditation process does not comply with state or federal law.
- 11.5. Notwithstanding the annual review described above, this agreement may be modified by consent of the Parties at any point.

Christopher Koch, President
Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation

DATE

By signing this agreement, the undersigned agrees to be bound by the terms outlined above and affirms that he or she has the authority to enter into this agreement on behalf of the State (BPE).

Tim Tharp, Chair
Montana Board of Public Education

DATE

Susie Hedalen, Superintendent
Montana Office of Public Instruction

DATE

Appendix A: State Dues Structure

Annual costs for supporting activities associated with State Partnerships have both fixed and proportional components which include costs associated with the CAEP Clinic, fall and spring CAEP Conferences, staff time, technology costs for maintaining workspaces within CAEP's accreditation platform, and other indirect expenses.

For the fixed and proportional amounts, states would be assessed \$1,500 annually (reviewed on an annual basis) to cover expenses for the spring convening and conference registration plus a portion of indirect expenses which are based on the actual percentage of CAEP member EPPs within each state.

Example 1: Joint Reviews

State A has 25 CAEP member EPPs, or 3.99% of total CAEP EPPs.

- The fixed amount is set at \$1,500 per state.
- The proportional amount is set at 3.99% of \$325,000 (current total=services to all states) = \$12,960.
- The variable joint review fee (for 25 joint reviews) is $25 \times \$2,500 = \$62,500 / 7 \text{ years} = \$8,930$.

Therefore, the total fees for State B will be:

$\$1,500 \text{ (fixed)} + \$12,960 \text{ (proportional)} + \$8,930 \text{ (variable joint review fee)} = \$23,390$.

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**

Crystal Andrews

Montana Board of Public Education

Executive Summary

Date: September 24-25, 2026

Presentation	Recommend Approval of the State Accreditation Program Report for Stone Child College's Educator Preparation Program (EPP) in the College of Education.
Presenter	Crystal Andrews
Position Title	School and Educator Effectiveness Senior Manager Office of Public Instruction
Overview	The State Superintendent of Public Instruction recommends approval of the 2026 State Program Report for Stone Child College's EPP in the College of Education and Regular Accreditation status. The State Final Report is included in the BPE Agenda Packet. Susan Sutherland and Jeremy MacDdonald, Co-Heads of the Education Department, will be available virtually to provide final comments and respond to questions from the BPE.
Requested Decision(s)	Action Item
Related Issue(s)	
Recommendation(s)	Approve the State Program Report and Regular Accreditation Status for Stone Child College's EPP in the College of Education, as recommended by State Superintendent Hedalen.



Montana
Office Of Public Instruction
Susie Hedalen, State Superintendent
opi.mt.gov



May 29, 2026

TO: Wilma Tyner
Dean of Academics
Stone Child College

FROM: Crystal Andrews
Senior Manager, Accreditation Unit
Montana Office of Public Instruction

SUBJECT: **Final State Accreditation Program Report 2026**

On April 29-30, 2026, the State Accreditation review of the Educator Preparation Provider (EPP) in the College of Education took place virtually at Stone Child College. 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 teachers, college professors, administrators and content specialists reviewed the Institutional Reports provided by Stone Child College (SCC) 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 was 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 state 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
- 10.58.532 Elementary

The Final State Accreditation Program Report 2026 is attached.

The EPP may submit an optional rejoinder to the report concerning errors or omissions within 30 days after the report is received and before it is submitted to the BPE for action. This written response allows the EPP to state whether or not they agree with the evaluation team's findings; however, the EPP cannot include new and/or additional evidence with the rejoinder. The rejoinder should be submitted to Crystal Andrews at the OPI by June 19, 2026.

Below are the next steps and the projected timeline for the Board of Public Education (BPE) approval process.

- Stone Child College may submit a rejoinder to OPI by June 19, 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 July 2026 (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 College of Education at Stone Child College at the September 2026 (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	AFI
10.58.313	Initial Candidate Quality, Recruitment, and Selectivity	Met
10.58.314	Initial Program Impact	Stipulation
10.58.315	Initial Provider Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement	Stipulation

Teaching Program Standards

ARM	TITLE	STATUS
10.58.501	Teaching Standards Elementary	Met with notation
10.58.532	Elementary Undergraduate	Met with notation

OVERALL COMMENDATIONS

The Review Team evaluated the Stone Child College Teacher Education Program's institutional environment and candidate support systems. The program utilizes its small campus community to facilitate direct interaction between administration, faculty, and teacher candidates. Stakeholder feedback from current candidates, completers, faculty, employers, and community members indicates regular access to faculty guidance during coursework and clinical experiences. Interviews reflect that this structural model supports student retention and supports candidates during field placements.

Stone Child College
Educator Preparation Provider Accreditation Review
Spring 2026

Initial Standards Narrative Report

Number and Name of Standard: 10.58.311 Initial Content and Pedagogical Knowledge

Summary of findings: The evidence submitted indicates that the teacher education program has structured a system for developing, assessing, and evaluating candidate proficiency in content and pedagogical knowledge. While the system has been developed to align clinical evaluations, course syllabi, and handbooks, the implementation of the program is inconsistently applied in practice. Stone Child College has one undergraduate program which leads to licensure and endorsement. Overall, the evidence indicates gaps in candidate's development and application of content and pedagogical knowledge.

Evidence consistent with meeting the standard: Stone Child College's teacher preparation program partially aligns with ARM 10.58.311 standards. Evidence shows proficiency in Montana teaching standards (learner development/supportive environments) and demonstrates training in instructional strategies. The program culturally integrates the Cree Medicine Wheel into its framework.

Evidence inconsistent with meeting the standard: Based on evidence gathered for the accreditation of Stone Child College's teacher education program, the program is currently unable to demonstrate that all candidates meet the required standards for Initial Content and Pedagogical Knowledge (10.58.311). Evidence indicates significant deficiencies in core areas of practice and application. Specifically, evidence suggests that candidates consistently struggle with the utilization of educational technology and face challenges in implementing proactive classroom and behavior management strategies.

Recommendations for New Areas for Improvement and/or Stipulations Including a Rationale for Each: To address deficiencies, Stone Child College's teacher education program should implement targeted, evidence-based improvements focused on integrating technology, structured classroom management, and continued measurement and evaluation of professional dispositions. Key recommendations include: 1) integrating active learning technology strategies to foster engagement and pedagogical skill; 2) implementing simulation-based classroom behavior management training to provide candidates with consistent, proactive discipline strategies; and 3) establishing a formal, reflective professional disposition portfolio system to foster ongoing development in professional dispositions. These actions align candidate training with modern, high-needs school environments, ensuring they are prepared to manage classrooms effectively and demonstrate professional disposition growth, directly addressing the identified weaknesses.

Recommendation: Met with notation

Stone Child College
Educator Preparation Provider Accreditation Review
Spring 2026

Initial Standards Narrative Report

Number and Name of Standard: 10.58.312 Initial Clinical Partnerships and Practice

Summary of findings: Stone Child College provided evidence in the form of handbooks, the initial conceptual framework, performance assessment plans along with the institutional report. Virtual interviews were conducted during the site visit. The resources described were used to evaluate the EPP's alignment to ARM 10.58.312 Initial Clinical Partnerships and Practice.

While conducting the interviews, it was noted that the EPP has experienced staffing changes in the past seven years. With the changes in program staff and leadership, there have been some inconsistencies between presented evidence and information gained from the interviews conducted during the site visit. It is believed the inconsistencies are a result of the changes needing to be made during staffing transitions but not all aspects of the requirements were implemented in a timely manner.

Evidence consistent with meeting the standard: Evidence presented supports that the EPP makes every effort to provide opportunities for candidates to student-teach in preferred districts. The EPP works closely with the site administrators to ensure a qualified cooperating teacher is available to provide mentorship and support. Candidates participate in community partnerships and supervised clinical practice.

Evidence inconsistent with meeting the standard: The program has a system in place to engage candidates in clinical partnerships and practice; however, minimal evidence supports the establishment of formalized, collaborative processes with community partners. The program lacks a documented system for gathering and utilizing feedback from local K-8 teachers regarding curriculum design. The program does not demonstrate a formalized structure for shared accountability of candidate outcomes. The program failed to provide evidence of ongoing, collaborative professional development initiatives for clinical educators that include both SCC faculty and P-12 personnel to gather feedback and make adjustments to ongoing improvements. The absence of a formal advisory panel that meets on a regular basis indicates that the program does not maintain the systematic, meaningful partnerships required to ensure high-quality clinical preparation, as outlined in 10.58.312.

Recommendations for New Areas for Improvement and/or Stipulations Including a Rationale for Each: Stone Child College's Teacher Education Program must establish a formalized, documented system for 10.58.312 Initial Clinical Partnerships and Practice to address key deficiencies. Recommendations include establishing a formal advisory panel with regular, documented meetings, establishing a system to document teacher feedback on curriculum, creating shared accountability measures for candidate outcomes with

stakeholders, and implementing joint professional development with K-8 partners to strengthen clinical experiences.

Recommendation: Area for Improvement

**Stone Child College
Educator Preparation Provider Accreditation Review
Spring 2026**

Initial Standards Narrative Report

Number and Name of Standard: 10.58.313 Initial Candidate Quality, Recruitment, and Selectivity

Summary of findings: The standard is considered met based on evidence from a variety of components, indicating that candidates are supported from recruitment to program completion.

Evidence consistent with meeting the standard: The small-scale campus setting enables administration and faculty to collaborate closely with candidates, creating a nurturing, "family-like" culture that promotes both student success and retention. This commitment to tailored support extends into clinical teaching and the broader community, ensuring that candidates feel well-supported during their field experiences. This intimate organizational structure serves as a vital foundation for candidate growth, ultimately producing educators for the local community.

Evidence inconsistent with meeting the standard: To ensure compliance with the 10.58.313 (1)(g) standard of initial candidate quality, recruitment, and selectivity, the program should implement a documented process ensuring all candidates receive and acknowledge understanding of the complaint procedure. While the 2025 Student Handbook outlines general, high-level policies for students, there is an absence of concrete evidence showing that the Teacher Education program specifically informs candidates of a formalized, step-by-step, documented protocol for complaints regarding the program.

Recommendations for New Areas for Improvement and/or Stipulations Including a Rationale for Each:

None

Recommendation: Met

Stone Child College
Educator Preparation Provider Accreditation Review
Spring 2026

Initial Standards Narrative Report

Number and Name of Standard: 10.58.314 Initial Program Impact

Summary of findings: Stone Child College teacher education program failed to provide sufficient evidence demonstrating a formalized, consistent process for assessing program impact. Specifically, the evidence lacked documented mechanisms detailing how the institution evaluates completer effectiveness in P-12 schools, stakeholder satisfaction, and how this data drives systematic program improvements.

Evidence consistent with meeting the standard: The program assesses how well completers are prepared for their professional responsibilities using data from graduate and employer surveys and case studies. While validated assessments are administered at program completion to document instructional capacity, the Completer Survey suffers from low participation, potentially impacting data validity and trend identification. No longitudinal evidence from case studies or employer surveys was provided.

Evidence inconsistent with meeting the standard: Based on the provided review, Stone Child College failed to meet standard 10.58.314 because it did not provide sufficient evidence of a formal, consistent process for assessing program impact. Interviews revealed that data collected was not verified through audits, representative of the full scope, shared with stakeholders, or actionable. The program did not demonstrate a consistent process for assessing program impact. Additionally, data is not accumulated over time to support longitudinal analysis and evidence is not used in actionable feedback loops to drive program improvements.

Recommendations for New Areas for Improvement and/or Stipulations Including a

Rationale for Each: Based on the review indicating failure to meet standard 10.58.314, Stone Child College must establish a formalized, reviewed, and longitudinally tracked program assessment system. Recommendations include creating documented data collection procedures, implementing stakeholder sharing protocols, and establishing an action-oriented feedback loop to ensure data drives improvements. To address the lack of a formal and consistent assessment process identified in the review, it is recommended that SCC establish and document a formalized system for evaluating program impact, complete with defined methodologies and schedules. Because interview evidence showed that existing data collection lacked sufficient scope and review, the college should initiate regular data verification assessments and expand collection methods to fully represent the program. Furthermore, to move beyond snapshot evaluations, SCC should continue utilizing Watermark to accumulate and analyze longitudinal data, allowing for the tracking and sharing of long-term trends. Finally, to ensure that data effectively drives program enhancements, a structured feedback loop must be developed to facilitate actionable improvements and the formal sharing of results with all stakeholders.

Recommendation: Stipulation

Stone Child College
Educator Preparation Provider Accreditation Review
Spring 2026

Initial Standards Narrative Report

Number and Name of Standard: 10.58.315 Initial Provider Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement

Summary of findings: Evidence provided shows that Stone Child College's teacher preparation program inconsistently meets the standards for a quality assurance and continuous improvement system. Based on the review of available documentation, evidence does not currently demonstrate that SCC's teacher education program meets the standards for a robust quality assurance and continuous improvement system. The findings suggest the program is in a transitional phase where a new system has been adopted, but not yet fully evidenced through longitudinal data.

Evidence consistent with meeting the standard: Stone Child College developed a comprehensive assessment system to guide P-12 student learning, monitor professional teacher dispositions, and evaluate clinical practice. However, the system is yet to be implemented. Submitted evidence included the Conceptual Framework, Assessment Plan, the Professional Actions and Critical Disposition assessment, Clinical I and Clinical II Evaluation Tools, and the Student Teaching Assessment.

Evidence inconsistent with meeting the standard: Stone Child College does not meet Standard 10.58.315, as it failed to provide evidence that its quality assurance program is relevant, verifiable, representative, and cumulative. While the college has formally adopted Watermark as its central quality assurance system, the transition is incomplete. Consequently, the institution lacks the data necessary to demonstrate the system's effectiveness or its impact on continuous improvement over time.

Recommendations for New Areas for Improvement and/or Stipulations Including a Rationale for Each: The Stone Child College Teacher Education Program's transition to Watermark highlights a gap between system adoption and the generation of mature, actionable data required by Montana Administrative Rule 10.58.315. To meet this standard, SCC must demonstrate that its quality assurance system is relevant, verifiable, representative, and cumulative. To address these inconsistencies, Stone Child College should focus on calibrating how specific Watermark data points align with every sub-standard of 10.58.315.

Recommendation: Stipulation

Stone Child College
Educator Preparation Provider Accreditation Review
Spring 2026

Narrative Report

Number and Name of Standard: 10.58.501 Teaching Standards - Elementary

Validating Statement: Alignment is evident with standards and available in course syllabi. Stronger evidence is required that indicates candidate performance for the program's critical assessments as it lacks disaggregated data and actionable analysis.

Sources of Evidence: Evidence gathered from general bulletin and catalog, course syllabi (including assessment descriptions and calendars), candidate clinical and student teaching expectations, and program-level alignment to the conceptual framework.

Assessment Aligned to Standards: Content topics in the assessments are consistent with the standards in ARM 10.58.501. This includes attention to core professional skills and knowledge regarding learners and their development, curricular concepts and tools of inquiry, professionalism in multiple contexts, and meaningful integration of Indian Education for All Essential Understandings.

Assessments address the range of knowledge, skill, and dispositions that are delineated in the standard and its respective substandards (as noted). This includes attention to:

- Learner growth and development, both as individuals and cultural contexts (a), (b), (g) and collaboratively work with others to do so (c) in EDU 220, EDU 235, EDU 301, EDU 309, EDU 311, EDU 335, EDU 337, EDU 340, EDU 380, EDU 480, EDU 490, HPE 285, and the Teacher Candidate Handbook.
- Supporting candidates by creating environments for learning and effectively assessing that learning across content areas (d), (e), (f), (h), including EDU 200, EDU 307, EDU 330, EDU 349, EDU 344, EDU 380, EDU 490, and the Teacher Candidate Handbook.
- Engagement in professionalism through a variety of settings and with various stakeholders (i), (j), (k), (l), including EDU 225, EDU 305, EDU 305, EDU 235, EDU 311, EDU 490 and the Teacher Candidate Handbook.

The assessments are congruent with the complexity, cognitive demands, and skill requirements described in the standards. For example, the Reflective Essay / Evidence assessments allow for responsiveness to course design and candidate progression while providing clear and consistent language. Communication skills are also assessed through

both interview and resume, supporting well-rounded attention to the demands of the profession.

Scoring guides are clear and the levels of candidate proficiency are distinct and appropriate. Clear common rubrics are included in student-facing documents and referred to consistently in course syllabi.

Evaluation: The required courses and aligned assessments provided in the IR meet the standards outlined in ARM 10.58.501 (a)-(l). However, to fully align with the standard, this area requires documentation showing how candidates apply skills in practice, rather than just covering them in theory.

Commendations: The teaching program demonstrates an intentional pedagogical progression and culturally responsive curriculum. A variety of assignments and expectations support candidates' creation of classroom learning, community integration, multimodal learning, and their reflection on themselves as learners as well as their impact of their choices on future learners.

Improvements: The evidence provided does not sufficiently indicate candidate performance for the program's critical assessments, as it lacks disaggregated data and actionable analysis. Documentation is insufficient to demonstrate candidate proficiency in providing effective instruction for English Language Learners (ELL) or the integration and application of educational technology in teaching. The program must produce evidence demonstrating how candidates use technology to support student learning and how they adapt instruction to support ELL students.

Accreditation Recommendation: Met with notation

Stone Child College
Educator Preparation Provider Accreditation Review
Spring 2026

Narrative Report

Name and Number of Standard: 10.58.532 Elementary Education

Validating Statement: Supporting materials were reviewed, including the Institutional Report, general bulletin and catalog, program matrices, course syllabi, assessment descriptions, and clinical experience documentation. Evidence reflects multiple required courses and field-based experiences demonstrating alignment to Administrative Rule of Montana (ARM) 10.58.532 for Elementary Education Program evidence was sufficient to demonstrate alignment across all substandards (a)–(p).

Sources of Evidence: Evidence gathered from general bulletin and catalog, course syllabi, assessment descriptions, candidate clinical and student teaching expectations, and program-level alignment documentation.

Assessment Aligned to Standards: The content topics addressed in the assessments are consistent with the Professional Educator Preparation Program Standards (PEPPS) outlined in ARM 10.58.532. Across coursework and clinical experiences, assessments require candidates to demonstrate content knowledge, pedagogical application, culturally responsive practices, and instructional decision making aligned to Montana Content Standards and Indian Education for All Essential Understandings.

Assessments collectively address the range of knowledge, skills, and dispositions delineated in the standards, including:

- Application of developmental theory through case studies, lesson planning, and reflections (EDU 220, EDU 309, EDU 340, EDU 490)
- Design and implementation of standards-aligned lessons across content areas (EDU 307, EDU 330, EDU 340, EDU 344, EDU 350, EDU 380, EDU 430, EDU 440, EDU 490)
- Differentiated instruction and support for diverse learners, including candidates with disabilities and culturally diverse populations (EDU 337, EDU 235, EDU 311, EDU 490)
- Use of formative and summative assessments to analyze student learning and adjust instruction (EDU 307, EDU 380, EDU 337, EDU 480, EDU 490)
- Integration of technology and current and emerging instructional tools (EDU 270, EDU 480, EDU 490)

The complexity, cognitive demands, and skill requirements of the assessments align with expectations for elementary teacher candidates. Candidates are required to plan, teach, assess, reflect, and revise instruction, demonstrating increasing levels of autonomy and professional judgment across the program.

Scoring guides and evaluation rubrics are present across clinical and methods courses and are structured to identify multiple levels of candidate proficiency. Rubrics distinguish between developing, proficient, and advanced performance and are appropriate for measuring progression toward program standards.

Evaluation: Required courses and aligned assessments provided in the Institutional Report meet the standards outlined in ARM 10.58.532 (a)–(p). Evidence supports alignment across content knowledge, pedagogy, assessment, differentiation, communication, classroom environment, and clinical practice.

Commendation: The Elementary Education program demonstrates a coherent system of coursework and clinical experiences that intentionally build candidate knowledge, application, and reflective practice across all domains of ARM 10.58.532. The strong integration of Indian Education for All, developmental theory, standards-aligned planning, and supervised clinical practice reflects a thoughtful approach to preparing candidates to meet the needs of Montana’s diverse K–12 students.

Improvements: Identified areas to strengthen include explicit elementary pedagogy language in selected arts courses (ART 110 and MUS 110), clarifying media arts inclusion within EDU 440, and adding explicit expectations in EDU 490 requiring demonstration of arts integration. Documentation could be enhanced by identifying a small number of signature assignments and providing sample artifacts to illustrate candidate performance for key standards. 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, the Four-part processor and Ehri’s phases of development.

Accreditation Recommendation: Met with notation

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**

Crystal Andrews

Montana Board of Public Education

Executive Summary

Date: September 24-25, 2026

Presentation	Recommend Initial Approval of the University of Montana's Request to Implement: Special Education Standalone endorsement.
Presenter	Crystal Andrews
Position Title	School and Educator Effectiveness Senior Manager Office of Public Instruction
Overview	The State Superintendent recommends initial approval of the University of Montana's request to implement a Standalone Special Education Endorsement. Program guidelines and timeline are included in the BPE Agenda Packet. University of Montana's Director of Accreditation, Kristi Steinberg, 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 initial approval of the University of Montana's request to implement a Special Education Standalone endorsement.



Montana
Office Of Public Instruction
Susie Hedalen, State Superintendent
opi.mt.gov



APPROVAL OF NEW CURRICULAR PROGRAMS **APPLICATION GUIDELINES**

University of Montana **Standalone Bachelor of Arts in Special Education** Administrative Rules of Montana 10.58.802

Step 1: Initial Approval	Date Submitted
Educator Preparation Provider (EPP) curriculum process and procedures.	December 2025
Institutional body implements policy to add new programs.	December 2025
Institutional governing body, i.e., board of directors, institutional leadership, or Board of Regents, as applicable, approves new program application.	December 2025
Verification of regional accreditation.	December 2025

Step 2: Application Process	Date Submitted
EPP completes the Institutional Self-Study Report (ISSR) to address Administrative Rules of Montana (ARM)10.58.802 Approval of New Curricular Programs.	January-April 2026
EPP completes sections of the ISSR unit standards addressing how the new curricular program is aligned with ARM 10.58.311 – 315	January-April 2026
EPP completes sections of the ISSR: ARM 10.58.501 Teaching Standards for endorsement subject areas; and specific sections of ARM related to the new program.	January-April 2026
EPP provides support material and resources as needed to respond to the Specific ISSR Sections – use electronic links as applicable, e.g., online Web links containing additional resources and support material, catalogs, programs of studies, assessment system information, surveys of need.	January-April 2026

Step 3: Application Submission	Date Submitted
EPP submits completed ISSR electronically to the OPI.	April 18, 2026

Step 4: Office Audit/Review	Date Submitted
OPI conducts the audit/review of the application materials.	June 2026
OPI provides an electronic report to EPP with comments and specific requests for additional documentation.	July 2026
EPP submits a follow-up report to OPI, as necessary.	N/A

Step 5: Site Visit	Date Submitted
If the EPP is scheduled for a regular site review, the new program is included in the regular review.	Spring 2028
If the EPP is not scheduled for a regular review within the next two years, the OPI will conduct a site review to verify the ISSR of the new curricular program meets the PEPP Standards.	N/A
OPI facilitates the site review to verify the ISSR meets the PEPP Standards of the new program.	Spring 2028
Site Visits follow the approved state protocol based on the PEPP Standards.	Spring 2028

Step 6: Final Approval Process	Date Submitted
Site visitor team submits the state exist report to the state superintendent.	May 2028
State Superintendent of Public Instruction makes recommendation to approve/disapprove the proposed new curricular program to the BPE based upon the site team report.	July 2028
BPE takes final action on the Superintendent's recommendation.	September 2028

Bachelor of Arts in Special Education

Proposal Summary and Overview

- In contrast to other special education endorsement programs, this pathway leads to a bachelor's degree and standalone licensure in special education and is not added to a general education teaching area.
- After completing the first two years of general education coursework, students progress through a four-semester sequence of education courses and immersive clinical experiences culminating in a capstone special education-specific student teaching experience.
- Students in this program can participate in Montana Teacher Residency, with the possibility to work within Apprenticeship frameworks in the future.
- 2+2 articulation agreements are currently underway with five Montana community colleges.
- The program can be completed from anywhere with no time required on the UM campus. The required courses are currently scheduled in online and distance-based modalities.

Rationale

While the UM Department of Teaching and Learning currently offers endorsements in special education at the undergraduate and graduate level, the current requirement to add this to a general education licensure area makes this an extensive program of study and does not offer the level of flexibility desired by many aspiring special educators.

We seek to offer a high-quality, clinically-based, standalone special education licensure at the undergraduate level to help mediate well-documented teacher shortages across the state. This will also offer options for those in Montana's current para pathways and Class 9 special education technician licensure initiatives to continue their education in a flexible way.

Throughout conversations with stakeholders, several themes emerged:

- **Content Knowledge:** Standalone special education licensure still requires a general understanding of the content taught by general education teachers, including specific needs in the areas of math and reading/language arts. This BA pathway provides flexibility for students completing AA and general education requirements, while still aligning to P-12 classroom needs.
- **Pedagogy-related Need Areas:** Beyond what was already required in the special education endorsement program of study, this standalone BA focuses on pedagogy in the teaching of reading and literacy (9 credits) and math (6 credits).
- **Mentorship:** The program includes mentored clinical experiences directly connected to course content.

- Scope of Coursework for Diverse Learners: As a non-categorical licensure field in Montana, the program of study includes specific focuses on early childhood, high school-to-community transitions, the inclusion of gifted education, and low-incidence disabilities.

Special Education P-12 Major Course Requirements

Course	General Education/Content/Specialty Courses	Pre-Req.	Credits	Term	Grade
M 132	Numbers & Ops for K-8 Teachers	M 095 or placement	3		
M 133	Geometry & Measurement for K-8 Teachers	M 132	3		
M 234	Higher Math for K-8 Teachers	M 132	3		
HSTA 101H HSTA 102H HSTR 101H HSTR 102H GPHY 121S GPHY 141S PSCI 210S PSCI 220S	American History I (Select one course from this box.) American History II Western Civilization I Western Civilization II Introduction to Human Geography World Regional Geography Intro to American Gov't Intro to Comparative Government		3-4		
HSTA 255	Montana History (fall only)		3		
NASX 105H	Native American Studies		3		
EDU 362	K-8 Health Enhancement & Well-being		3		
EDU 222	Educational Psychology and Child Development		3		
EDU 331	Literature and Literacy for Children	WRIT 101 or equivalent	3		

Admission to the Teacher Education Program is required to enroll in the courses listed below.

LEVEL 1* (13 credits)				
EDU 395	Clinical Experience: Level 1	1		
EDU 397	Methods: PK-4: Early Numeracy	3		
EDU 397	Methods: PK-3: Early Literacy	3		
EDU 340	Classroom Management	3		
EDSP 462	Special Education Law, Policy, and Practice	3		
LEVEL 2* Spring only (16 credits)				
EDSP 395	Clinical Experience: Special Education	1		
EDEC 408	Early Childhood Principles and Practices	3		
EDU 438	Literacy Diagnosis, Assessment, and Instruction (pre-req EDU 397 Literacy)	3		
EDU 497	Methods: 5-8 Mathematics	3		
EDSP 426	Introduction to Transitions and Community Supports	3		
EDSP 461	Positive Behavior Supports	3		
LEVEL 3* Autumn only (13-16 credits)				
EDU 395	Clinical Experience: Level 3	1		
EDU 339	Methods: PK-8 Language Arts	3		
EDU 461	Intro to Gifted Education	3		
EDSP 405	Assessment for Students with Exceptionalities	3		
EDSP 456	Intro to Methods for Low Incidence Disabilities	3		
EDU 407E	Ethics and Policy Issues (may be taken in a different semester or in the summer)	3		
LEVEL 4 Student Teaching* (15 credits)				
EDSP 495	Student Teaching: Special Education	11		
EDSP 454	Advanced Academic Interventions	3		
EDU 494	Seminar	1		

*******Time Certain at 4:30 PM*******

ITEM 15

**ACTION ON SURRENDER AND MOTION TO
DISMISS BPE CASE #2026-01, DAVIS**

Brenton Craggs

ITEM 16

**ACTION ON SURRENDER AND MOTION TO
DISMISS BPE CASE #2026-06, WHITNEY**

Dr. Ron Slinger

September 25, 2026

CALL TO ORDER

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

❖ **CHARTER SCHOOL COMMITTEE – (Items 17-18)**

Lisa Schmidt

ITEM 17

**UPDATE ON COMMUNITY CHOICE
SCHOOLS COMMISSION**

Cathy Kincheloe



Design to Launch Program Overview



Policy

20-11-112. Charter contract -- terms.

(1) An initial charter contract must be granted for a term of 5 operating years, commencing on the community choice school's first day of operation. **An approved choice school may delay its opening for 1 school year to plan and prepare for the school's opening.** If the school requires an opening delay of more than 1 school year, the school shall request an extension from its authorizer. The authorizer may grant or deny the extension depending on the school's circumstances. **(7) Authorizers may establish reasonable pre-opening requirements or conditions to monitor the startup progress of a newly approved choice school to ensure that the school is prepared to open smoothly on the date agreed and to ensure that each school meets all building, health, safety, insurance, and other legal requirements for school opening.**

The Goal of the Program is to ensure the Choice School is prepared to:

1. Offer a quality education program;
2. Provided in a safe environment for students;
3. In alignment with its mission and contractual requirements.

Program Description

The Design to Launch (D2L) Program is an opportunity for school leaders to engage in guided planning to ensure their school is ready to open. The Program takes place over the year prior to opening consisting of a cohort of school leaders engaging in workshops to lead them through accomplishment of the key milestones to ensure a successful launch to their school. School leaders will work to fully build out their school model as outlined in their application and contract aligned with the modules of the Performance Framework: Mission, Academics, Environment, Operations, and Finance. The year will be driven by the Ready to Open Checklist with guidance for the school leader offered in workshops providing training and resources, 1-1 sessions with the Commission Director, and residency in existing Choice Schools (as available). The Program is an integral component to the long-term success of Community Choice Schools.

Modules

School leaders will simultaneously engage in building out their school model according to their application and contract around these six modules:

1. Mission: Delivering on the Promise
2. Academics: Designing for Academic Success
3. Environment: Creating a Safe and Welcoming Environment Conducive to Learning
4. Governance: Proper Oversight of a Successful Choice School
5. Operations: Ensuring an Effective and Viable Organization
6. Finance: Establishing Systems for Sound Fiscal Management

Ready to Open Checklist

The Ready to Open (R2O) Checklist encompasses all deliverables according to the Choice School's application and contract critical to a successful opening and first year of operations. It is a shared document between the Choice School and the Commission intended as a resource for schools/governing boards to use in managing the key deliverables of their Start-up Plan. The R2O details key timebound milestones that must be met.

Obligation

Regardless of the school leader's ability or the governing board's choice to participate in the Program, the deliverables outlined in the Ready to Open Checklist and the Pre-Opening Checklist must be met. The workshops and the resources in the Program are an integral component to the long-term success of Community Choice Schools.



Policy for Pre-Opening Requirements and Conditions



Policy

20-11-112. Charter contract -- terms. (1) An initial charter contract must be granted for a term of 5 operating years, commencing on the community choice school's first day of operation. An approved choice school may delay its opening for 1 school year to plan and prepare for the school's opening. **If the school requires an opening delay of more than 1 school year, the school shall request an extension from its authorizer. The authorizer may grant or deny the extension depending on the school's circumstances.**

20-11-112. Charter contract -- terms. (7) Authorizers may establish **reasonable pre-opening requirements or conditions** to monitor the startup progress of a newly approved choice school to ensure that the school is prepared to open smoothly on the date agreed and to ensure that each **school meets all building, health, safety, insurance, and other legal requirements for school opening.**

Procedure to Determine Satisfaction of Requirements and Conditions

The Ready to Open (R2O) Checklist encompasses all deliverables according to the Choice School's application and contract critical to a successful opening and first year of operations. The R2O details key timebound milestones that must be met. These include all building, health, safety, insurance, and other legal requirements for school opening.

Readiness to Open Requirements and Conditions

1. Enrollment and Budget Requirements
 - a. The school must have evidence of at least 50% of planned student enrollment met three months prior to the first day of school. If it is not, the Choice School must revise the budget proving it can manage with fewer students and still maintain financial viability.
 - b. The school must have evidence of at least 80% of planned student enrollment met one month prior to the first day of school. If it is not, the Choice School must revise the budget proving it can manage with fewer students and still maintain financial viability.
2. Operational Requirements
 - a. The School shall provide the Commission copies of any lease, purchase agreement, financing arrangements, and/or other such facility agreements and such certificates and permissions as are necessary to operate the Choice School in the facility. The School shall comply with all applicable state laws, regulations, and building codes, and shall obtain all requisite use permits and certificates of occupancy.
 - i. Lease or Warranty Deed by April 1 of pre-opening year
 - ii. Financing Agreement by April 1 of pre-opening year
 - iii. Certificate of Occupancy by July 1 of pre-opening year
 - b. The Choice School will purchase insurance protecting the School and its Board, employees, and volunteers, and the Commission where appropriate, consisting of comprehensive general liability insurance, errors and omissions liability insurance (also known as school entity liability insurance), and auto liability insurance if applicable. The Choice School will also purchase statutory workers' compensation insurance coverage. Valid and complete insurance must be active and on file with the Commission prior to any staff and/or students being in the building.
 - i. Insurance Policy by July 1 of pre-opening year
3. Other Circumstances
 - a. Delays in construction, materials procurement, staffing vacancies, etc. may be considered if the school team is able to present contingency plans that satisfy the professional judgment of the Commission. The plans must ensure the school is able to offer a quality education program; provided in a safe environment for students; in alignment with its mission and contractual requirements.

Satisfaction of Ready to Open Site Visit

The final Ready to Open Site Visit Checklist shall be satisfied no later than ten business days prior to the first day of school and serves as the final check to indicate the school is cleared to open. If any required deliverables are not satisfied per the requirements, the school may request an extension with the Commission. The Commission may grant or deny the extension depending on the school's circumstances and the Commission's professional judgement.

ITEM 18

**ACTION ON MOUNT ASCENSION
LEARNING 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: Mount Ascension Learning Academy

District: Helena Public Schools

Primary Contact: Rex Weltz

Date of Request: 07/15/2026

2. Amendment Summary

Type of Amendment: Academic

Description of Proposed Change: Withdraw the Mount Ascension Learning Academy Grades 1 to 8 from Charter status (Continue Mount Ascension grades 9-12), reserve the right to reinstate should conditions change, for example: more community desire to participate, more expansion opportunities, less state testing requirements. Etc.

3. Rationale

Reason for Amendment: The main two reasons for the amendment are: 1) lack of student enrollment in the Elementary and Middle School levels of Mount Ascension, 2) parents of partial and home school enrollment populations have chosen to not participate in state student performance testing, causing the public charter school to not have reportable state student performance measures.

What has changed since your Public Charter School application was approved? Clarity around the needs and wants of home school families compared to state student performance measure requirements.

4. Impact on Performance Framework

Does this change how the school is evaluated? ☒ Yes ☐ No

Affected Areas: Grades 1 to 8 won't participate in the performance framework process

Description of Changes: Grades 1 to 8 won't participate in the performance framework process

Updated Measures: none

5. Enrollment and Financial Impact

Current Enrollment: (last year by ANB)

K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total
0	3	3	3	3	3	4	4	4	11	10	10	10	68

Revised Enrollment (if applicable):

K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	11	10	10	10	41

Please explain how this will impact your ANB: Mount Ascension Learning Academy will not count students in Grades 1 to 8. Mount Ascension Learning Academy will continue with grades 9-12.

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. Mount Ascension grades 1 to 8 will not have expenses for staffing, facilities, or budget allocations. Grades 1 to 8 didn't collect funds from the basic entitlement due to ANB under the minimum required threshold. The school district will still offer the main school offering to students, should they desire to participate.

6. Alignment to Charter Contract

Does this change the mission, model, or scope? ☒ Yes ☒ No

Explanation: Grades 1 to 8 will not be offered. Grades 9 to 12 will continue to be offered

7. Implementation

Proposed Effective Date: 07/15/2026

Implementation Timeline: start of the 2026-2027 school year (08/27/2026)

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. Communication with stakeholders will be through one-to-one contact and via email regarding the status change and collaboration with stakeholders on their next learning opportunity with the Helena Schools.

9. **Charter Governing Board Approval**

Date Approved: 07/15/2026

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: Click or tap here to enter text.

Signatures

 9/15/26
Charter Governing Board Chair Date

Board of Public Education Chair Date

Board of Public Education Determination: ☐ Approved ☐ Denied

❖ **MSDB LIAISON – (Item 19)**

Lisa Schmidt

ITEM 19

MSDB REPORT

Action Items:

- **Action on Out of State Travel Request**
- **Action on Personnel Items**

Superintendent Paul Furthmyre

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

Agenda Action Items:

1. [Personnel Action Plan](#)
 - 1 Hire
 - 2 Resignations
2. Out of State Travel
 - [COSB / APH Annual Meetings in Louisville](#)
 - [MTSS Fellowship](#)

Attached Documents:

- [MSDB Committee Bi-Monthly Meeting Agenda](#)
- [MSDB Committee Bi-Monthly Meeting Minutes](#)
- [PIR Week Activities](#)
- [Proficiency Based Learning Boot Camp](#)
- [Fiscal Year End Report - 2026](#)
- [PPE 7-24-26 Financial Report](#)
- [PPE 7-24-26 Wages & Benefits Report](#)
- [PPE 7-24-26 Expenses Report](#)
- [Current Enrollment 8.17.2026.](#)
- [Inquiry/Referrals 8.17.2026s](#)
- [Outreach 2025-26 walk through data](#)

**MSDB Personnel Action for BPE Meeting
September Meeting 2026**

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

Hire

Ivy LeDeau - Paraprofessional

Resignation

Jonathan Davis - Workplace and Lifeskills Teacher

Cheyenne Tucker - Residential Advisor

Retirement

Probationary Layoff

Nonrenewal of Nontenure Teacher

Positions currently advertised

- 1 - Teacher of the Visually Impaired
- 1 - Teacher of the Deaf Hard / Hearing
- 1 - Paraprofessional
- 3 - Residential Advisor

Positions to be advertised

- 1 - Residential Advisor
- 4 - Teacher of the Visually Impaired Consultant
- 2 - Teacher of the Deaf Outreach Consultant
- 1 - Workplace and Lifeskills Teacher

STATE OF MONTANA

REQUEST AND JUSTIFICATION
FOR OUT-OF-STATE TRAVEL

1) Agency Number/Name School for Deaf and Blind		2) Division	
3) Org Number	4) Name of Person(s) Traveling/Employee ID# Furthmyre, Briggs		

5) Justification

Attend the 2026 Council of Schools and Services for the Blind Leadership Institute.
Attend the 2026 Annual American Printing House Meeting (Mandatory for Briggs).

6) Itinerary

Destination: Louisville, KY

Travel Dates: October 25 - 31, 2026

7) Estimated Costs

Transportation \$ 2600	Meals \$ 882	Lodging \$ 1968	Other \$ 1433.92
------------------------	--------------	-----------------	------------------

Total estimated cost \$ 6883.92

Provide details to support estimated costs:

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

COSB Registration / \$321.96 (\$643.92)

APH Registration / \$395 (\$790)

Airfare / \$1200 (\$2400)

Meals / \$441 (\$882)

Ground Transportation / \$100 (\$200)

Lodging / \$984 (\$1968)

8) Submitted By	Title	Date
<i>Paul Furthmyre</i>	Superintendent	8/17/26

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

MSDB / BPE Bi-Monthly Meeting Agenda
2:00 PM - 3:30 PM

Date: 8/18/2026

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	• OSS Travel for American Printing House and Council for Schools of the Blind Annual Meetings • MTSS by Design Fellowship • PIR Week Activities • Proficiency Based Learning Boot Camp ◦ Beta Project for LINKS • CPR / AED Training Completed • Crisis Prevention Institute Training Completed • HB 5 Project Updates ◦ Parking Lot ◦ HVAC System ◦ Vocational Building • Maintenance Issues ◦ Hot Water Tanks Mustang Center ◦ Siding on Residential Building and Aspen • MOU with UFCW • ASL Teacher Endorsement vs Sign Language Elective Endorsement • Foundation Update	• Action Items Needed ◦ Personnel Action ◦ APH / COSB ◦ MTSS Fellowship

Human Resources	• Personnel Action Plan • LinkedIn • Local Recruitment Plan	
Business Office	• New Business Manager started on 7/13/26 to begin training. I will retire in April of 2027. • Fiscal Year End Report - 2026 • PPE 7-24-26 Financial Report • PPE 7-24-26 Wages & Benefits Report • PPE 7-24-26 Expenses Report • PPE 7-24-26 Payroll Forecast	
Residential	• Cottage Refresh • New Travel Structure • Trainings	
Education: School	• Current Enrollment 8.17.2026. • LEAP students • Inquiry/Referrals 8.17.2026s • First day of school 8.24.2026	
Education: Outreach	• Family Learning Weekend (FLW) • End of year walk through data • Great Beginnings Great Families Conference • Outreach Data Base • International Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired Conference (AER) • Office of Public Instruction - Discretionary Grant • Fall Campus Enrichment Days (CED) • Northern Rockies Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired (NRAER)	

Public Relations	• Annual Report • Email Signature Standardization • Logo Refresh • Website	

Board of Public Ed Meeting

BOPE Meeting - Summary- August 18, 2026

Those in attendance - Paul Furthmyre, Tim Tharp, Lisa Schmidt, McCall Flynn,
Julia Maxwell, Donna Schmidt, Belinda Neill, Jacquie Fogerty,
Alissa Kline, Miranda Briggs, Julie-Dee, Linnette Haman

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
 - APH/COSB

Administration - Paul Furthmyre

- Paul went over the action items including the personnel action plan, approval for out-of-state travel requests to Louisville, participation in an MTSS fellowship in Chicago, and a possible discretionary grant application through OPI.
- PIR week will include approximately 110 staff members returning for the new school year. Will have required training, new-staff introductions, policy and technology updates, strategic-plan review, staff recognition, mission and vision discussions, and activities focused on the Journey of the Learner.
- The school is transitioning from a competency-based model to a proficiency-based learning model. Staff participated in extensive training, and the Journey of the Learner framework is being integrated into instruction, diagnostics, gradebooks, and report cards. MSDB may also pilot links, an accessible software program for lesson planning and standards tracking.
- Paul gave a report on progress on several campus projects. The parking lot is nearly finished, while the vocational building project is entering the architectural and engineering selection phase. The school is also addressing HVAC improvements, hot-water system replacements, deteriorating siding, and incomplete camera and phone wiring.
- Admin is working with UFCW and state legal representatives on an MOU involving residential, maintenance, and food-service employees. The school is considering separate Residential Advisor I and II classifications to better support cottage operations.
- Paul discussed concerns about OPI's classification of ASL as a world language and the related ASLPI endorsement requirement. MSDB questioned the fairness and applicability of the test, particularly for experienced educators and regional sign-language users. Possible solutions include classifying sign language as an elective,

requesting a variance, and continuing discussions with OPI.

Human Resources - Jacquie Fogerty

- Jacquie reported several recent hires and continued recruitment for teaching, Paraprofessional, Residential, Outreach, and Workplace-skills positions. Jackie is also developing MSDB's LinkedIn presence and a local recruitment plan, with particular attention to filling residential positions.

Business Office - Donna Schmidt

- Donna reported MSDB ended the fiscal year with approximately \$438,000 in unspent general-fund balances, although some funds were restricted or unavailable because expected grant funding was not received. The preliminary carry-forward estimate is approximately \$146,000, which may be used for approved facility and operational needs after the state completes its review.

Residential - Alissa Kline

- The cottage refresh project is replacing outdated beds, mattresses, bedding, living-room furniture, dining furniture, and other furnishings. The goal is to create a more comfortable, welcoming, and less institutional environment for students. Additional furniture deliveries are expected through October.
- Students will return home most weekends under the new travel structure, with overnight arrangements considered for longer routes. Residential staff are also developing a zones-based behavior-support system that emphasizes positive reinforcement, consistency, and clear responses to student behavior.

Education: Julie-Dee Alt

- MSDB expects approximately 36 students, although enrollment remains subject to changes in referrals and placements. The school is adding outreach students to Infinite Campus and coordinating services such as driver's education, speech-language support, and teacher-of-the-deaf services. Five LEAP students and preschool/pre-K students are expected to begin or return on August 31.

Education: Outreach - Miranda Briggs

- Outreach reported positive feedback from the first combined Family Learning Weekend for deaf and blind families. Staff continue visiting schools, supporting families, conducting evaluations, responding to referrals, and building community partnerships. Additional work includes preparing a discretionary grant application, improving the outreach database, and planning fall enrichment activities and conference participation.

Public Relations - Linnette Haman

- Public Relations is restructuring the annual report to represent MSDB as one unified organization. Additional priorities include creating a standardized email, refreshing the existing logo for improved accessibility and usability, and updating the website with accurate information.

Upcoming Date/Reminders:

- The Board of Public Education meeting is scheduled for September 24–25 in Glendive.

Montana School for the Deaf and the Blind
Pupil Instruction Related (PIR) Schedule
August 19-21, 2026

Wednesday August 19

Location: Heritage Hall, MSU - Great Falls

All MSDB Staff Expected to Attend

Start at 8:30 and other times are tentative

- 8:30 AM Welcome Back and Welcome to the Family!!
[New Staff](#)
[Staff PowerPoint](#)
- 9:00 AM The Mandatory
[Blood Borne Pathogens](#)
[Mandatory Reporting](#)
Privacy Laws and MSDB
[FERPA](#)
[FERPA and HIPPA](#)
[Privacy Laws QR Code](#)
- 10:15 AM Break
- 10:30 AM MSDB Updates
Personnel Update
[Organizational Position Changes](#)

Building Update

[Policy Update](#)
5012-F(1) Sexual Harassment of Employees - Reporting/Intake Form
5015-F(1) Bullying/Harassment/Intimidation
Form 5232-F(1): Abused and Neglected Child Reporting
Policy 5460: Electronic Resources and Social Networking
Policy 8121: School-Owned Vehicles
- 11:15 AM [Review of 2022 - 2025 Strategic Plan](#)
- 11:45 AM [25-26 Staff Longevity Pins and Awards](#)
[Governor Award Nominees](#)
- 12:00 PM Lunch from "Smoked" Provided by MSDB Foundation

Heritage Hall Breakout Room

1:00 PM MSDBs Vision, Mission, Beliefs

2:15 PM Break

2:30 PM [Journey of a Learner](#)

3:30 PM Union Meeting
MFPE in Heritage Hall

Thursday August 20
Location: Bitterroot IMC, MSDB Campus
All Education Staff Expected to Attend
Outreach will be given instructions by Miranda Briggs.
Student Life will be given instructions by Alissa Kline.

8:00 AM Align Proficiency Based Education with MTSS Design

Dr. Samantha Mullins, Founder and CEO of MTSS by Design, works nationally and internationally with district and building leadership teams to strengthen instructional systems and build coherence across MTSS systems anchored in Tier 1, and is the author of an upcoming ISTE + ASCD book focused on designing aligned MTSS systems that serve every learner.



11:30 AM Lunch on Your Own

1:00 PM Second Session with Dr. Mullins

3:15 PM Closing Remarks

Friday August 21
Location: MSDB Campus
Same Schedule as Thursday August 20

Take a Break and Have Some Ice Cream Today!

Frosty's Ice Cream Truck will be Outside Bitterroot 1:30 - 2:00.
Might adjust Friday's Schedule to accommodate.

Summer Institute
Dr. Alcock
Journey of a Learner & Self-Navigation Tools
8:00-4:00

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8:00-9:00	Overview of the work and tasks for work sessions Welcome	3 Work Session	5 Work Session	7 Work Session	9 Work Session
9:15-10:30	Training on Learning Targets LINKS: The Anatomy of Effective Learning Targets BW version PDF version	Training - YLC LINKS: YLC Basics (by content area) PDF link LINKS: Journey of a Learner: YLC	Training - SNT structure and use how to teach motivation LINKS: Brain Research 9:45-10:45	Training - SNT assessments 2.0 Here feedback and samples	Training - SNT learning strategies LINKS: Reflection & Self Navigation Strategies
10:30-12:00	1st work session	WIN	WIN 10:45-12	WIN	WIN
Lunch 12-1	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
1:00-2:30	2 Work Session	4 Work Session	6 Work Session	8 Work Session	10 Work Session
2:30-3:30	Training - Learning Targets 2.0	Training - YLC 2.0 2:30-3:30	Training - SNT - assessments Here 1 also Thursday	Training - SNT - BEV Here also Friday and	Training - BEV the first year launch
3:45-4:00	Prep for Morning work session - Reflections	Prep for Morning work session - Reflections	Prep for Morning work session - Reflections	Prep for Morning work session - Reflections	Prep for morning work session - Reflections
	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner

Acquisition

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8:00-9:00	11 Work Session- Here is the link for JOL I Can Statements Assessments	13 Work Session	15 Work Session -	17 Work Session	19 Work Session
9:15-10:15	Competency based scoring with diagnostic assessments Here	Brain science behind language - developments around neurodiversity	Designing JOL Assessments & Instruction	Crosswalking JOL with all content areas	Implementing JOL learning targets in assessments and scoring
10:30-12:00	WIN-Sheri D meet with Marie	WIN	WIN - Jessteene with Marie	WIN	WIN - party
Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
1:00-2:45	12 Work Session	14 Work Session	16 Work Session	18 Work Session	20 Work Session
3:00-3:45	Competency based instruction - 3 lesson plans aligned to LT	Brain science behind mathematics - developments around neurodiversity LINKS: Brain Research	Designing JOL Assessments & Instruction	Implementing JOL learning targets in the curriculum	Launching JOL learning targets in 2026
3:45-4:00	Prep for Morning work session - Reflections	Prep for Morning work session - Reflections	Prep for Morning work session - Reflections	Prep for Morning work session - Reflections	Celebration
	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner

51130 School for the Deaf & Blind ORG Budget Summary by OBPP Prog, Fund, Subclass

Data Selected for Month/FY: 01 (Jul)/2026 through 12 (Jun)/2026

This report compares ORG Budgets (ORG_BD) to Actuals expended amounts

Business Unit	(All)
Program Year	2026
FY_BudPer	(All)
Month	(All)
Source of Auth	(All)
Fund Type	(All)
Account	(All)
Org	(All)
Acct Lvl 2	(All)
Account Type	E
Project	(All)
Ledger	(All)

[Menu!A1](#)

[Menu!A1](#)

OBPP Program	Fund	Subclass	Acct Lvl 1	ORG Budget	Actuals Amt	A Accrual Amt	ORG Bud Balance
01 ADMINISTRATION PROGRAM				937,187.25	919,969.84	66.46	17,150.95
	01100 General Fund			919,435.00	902,217.59	66.46	17,150.95
		300H1 ADMINISTRATION		661,838.00	644,620.59	66.46	17,150.95
			61000 Personal Services	629,857.00	618,070.93	0.00	11,786.07
			62000 Operating Expenses	31,981.00	26,549.66	66.46	5,364.88
		300H5 STATE ITSD (RST)		257,597.00	257,597.00	0.00	(0.00)
			62000 Operating Expenses	257,597.00	257,597.00	0.00	(0.00)
	02050 School Trust Interest/Income			3,394.00	3,394.00	0.00	0.00
		300H1 ADMINISTRATION		3,394.00	3,394.00	0.00	0.00
			61000 Personal Services	3,394.00	3,394.00	0.00	0.00
	02259 MSDB MISC MOUS			14,358.25	14,358.25	0.00	0.00
		300A1 DIGITAL ACADEMY		14,358.25	14,358.25	0.00	0.00
			61000 Personal Services	13,895.08	13,895.08	0.00	0.00
			62000 Operating Expenses	463.17	463.17	0.00	(0.00)
02 GENERAL SERVICES				832,184.91	768,079.92	4,250.00	59,854.99
	01100 General Fund			832,184.91	768,079.92	4,250.00	59,854.99
		305F4 FY2024 CARRYFORWARD		1,060.91	1,039.76	0.00	21.15
			62000 Operating Expenses	1,060.41	1,039.76	0.00	20.65
			63000 Equipment & Intangible Assets	0.50	0.00	0.00	0.50
		305H1 GENERAL SERVICES		831,124.00	767,040.16	4,250.00	59,833.84
			61000 Personal Services	397,182.00	366,975.52	0.00	30,206.48
			62000 Operating Expenses	371,327.00	366,901.00	4,250.00	176.00
			68000 Transfers-out	1,000.00	0.00	0.00	1,000.00
			69000 Debt Service	61,615.00	33,163.64	0.00	28,451.36
03 STUDENT SERVICES				2,290,049.00	2,109,452.43	3,284.50	177,312.07
	01100 General Fund			2,255,320.00	2,084,330.29	3,284.50	167,705.21
		310H1 STUDENT SERVICES		2,255,320.00	2,084,330.29	3,284.50	167,705.21
			61000 Personal Services	2,053,236.00	1,938,673.23	0.00	114,562.77
			62000 Operating Expenses	202,084.00	145,657.06	3,284.50	53,142.44
	03167 National School Lunch			34,729.00	25,122.14	0.00	9,606.86
		310H1 STUDENT SERVICES		34,729.00	25,122.14	0.00	9,606.86

RESTRICTED

RESTRICTED

RESTRICTED

	62000 Operating Expenses	34,729.00	25,122.14	0.00	9,606.86	RESTRICTED
04 EDUCATION		7,347,911.00	6,681,637.29	13,154.52	653,119.19	
01100 General Fund		6,398,990.00	6,123,722.44	5,994.19	269,273.37	
315H1 EDUCATION		6,335,857.00	6,106,281.49	5,994.19	223,581.32	
	61000 Personal Services	5,924,317.00	5,750,019.26	0.00	174,297.74	
	62000 Operating Expenses	411,540.00	356,262.23	5,994.19	49,283.58	
315H8 INTERPRETER PROF DEV (OTO)		61,000.00	17,440.95	0.00	43,559.05	
	62000 Operating Expenses	61,000.00	17,440.95	0.00	43,559.05	RESTRICTED
315Z1 WORKERS COMP. REDUCTION		2,133.00	0.00	0.00	2,133.00	
	61000 Personal Services	2,133.00	0.00	0.00	2,133.00	RESTRICTED
02050 School Trust Interest/Income		302,341.00	302,341.00	0.00	0.00	
315H1 EDUCATION		302,341.00	302,341.00	0.00	0.00	
	61000 Personal Services	302,341.00	302,341.00	0.00	0.00	
03012 E.C.I.A. Chapter I		52,861.00	50,466.01	0.00	2,394.99	
315H1 EDUCATION		52,861.00	50,466.01	0.00	2,394.99	
	61000 Personal Services	52,861.00	50,466.01	0.00	2,394.99	RESTRICTED
03064 EHA, Part B		119,219.00	80,000.00	0.00	39,219.00	
315H1 EDUCATION		119,202.00	80,000.00	0.00	39,202.00	
	61000 Personal Services	55,000.00	55,000.00	0.00	0.00	
	62000 Operating Expenses	64,202.00	25,000.00	0.00	39,202.00	DID NOT RCV FUNDS
315Z1 WORKERS COMP. REDUCTION		17.00	0.00	0.00	17.00	
	61000 Personal Services	17.00	0.00	0.00	17.00	
03235 DPHHS Grant		28,500.00	12,998.92	7,160.33	8,340.75	
315AS PRE-ETS		28,500.00	12,998.92	7,160.33	8,340.75	
	62000 Operating Expenses	28,500.00	12,998.92	7,160.33	8,340.75	DID NOT RCV FUNDS
03396 DPHHS Grand - Newborn Hearing		35,000.00	31,274.45	0.00	3,725.55	
315AT NEWBORN HEARING		35,000.00	31,274.45	0.00	3,725.55	
	61000 Personal Services	22,000.00	18,274.45	0.00	3,725.55	DID NOT RCV FUNDS
	62000 Operating Expenses	13,000.00	13,000.00	0.00	(0.00)	
03590 Federal Literacy Grant		411,000.00	80,834.47	0.00	330,165.53	
315AU MT READS GRANT 9/30/26		411,000.00	80,834.47	0.00	330,165.53	
	61000 Personal Services	2,720.00	0.00	0.00	2,720.00	ROLLS INTO 2027
	62000 Operating Expenses	408,280.00	80,834.47	0.00	327,445.53	ROLLS INTO 2027
Grand Total		11,407,332.16	10,479,139.48	20,755.48	907,437.20	

3.85% 438,819.96 Unrestricted unspent funds at FYE.

146,273.32 Possible Carryforward

51130 School for the Deaf & Blind

ORG Budget Summary - No A Accruals

Data Selected for Month/FY: 01 (Jul)/2027 through 02 (Aug)/2027

This report compares ORG Budgets (ORG_BD) to Actuals expended amounts

All

Business Unit	(All)
Program Year	2027
FY_BudPer	(All)
Month	(All)
Source of Auth	(All)
Fund Type	(All)
Account	(All)
Org	(All)
Acct Lvl 2	(All)
Account Type	E
Project	(All)
Ledger	(All)

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OBPP Program	Fund	Subclass	Acct Lvl 1	ORG Budget	Actuals Amt	Balance
01 ADMINISTRATION PROGRAM				1,246,518.00	76,005.64	1,170,512.36
	01100 General Fund			1,243,124.00	76,005.64	1,167,118.36
		300H1 ADMINISTRATION		986,580.00	71,988.20	914,591.80
			61000 Personal Services	960,200.00	68,846.10	891,353.90
			62000 Operating Expenses	26,380.00	3,142.10	23,237.90
		300H5 STATE ITSD (RST)		256,544.00	4,017.44	252,526.56
			62000 Operating Expenses	256,544.00	4,017.44	252,526.56
	02050 School Trust Interest/Income			3,394.00	0.00	3,394.00
		300H1 ADMINISTRATION		3,394.00	0.00	3,394.00
			61000 Personal Services	3,394.00	0.00	3,394.00
02 GENERAL SERVICES				804,063.00	55,615.04	748,447.96
	01100 General Fund			804,063.00	55,615.04	748,447.96
		305H1 GENERAL SERVICES		804,063.00	55,615.04	748,447.96
			61000 Personal Services	469,871.00	33,525.05	436,345.95
			62000 Operating Expenses	271,577.00	22,089.99	249,487.01
			68000 Transfers-out	1,000.00	0.00	1,000.00
			69000 Debt Service	61,615.00	0.00	61,615.00
03 STUDENT SERVICES				2,050,734.00	122,658.97	1,928,075.03
	01100 General Fund			2,016,005.00	122,658.97	1,893,346.03
		310H1 STUDENT SERVICES		2,016,005.00	122,658.97	1,893,346.03
			61000 Personal Services	1,813,536.00	116,989.53	1,696,546.47
			62000 Operating Expenses	202,469.00	5,669.44	196,799.56
	03167 National School Lunch			34,729.00	0.00	34,729.00
		310H1 STUDENT SERVICES		34,729.00	0.00	34,729.00
			62000 Operating Expenses	34,729.00	0.00	34,729.00
04 EDUCATION				7,485,750.53	547,066.37	6,938,684.16
	01100 General Fund			6,681,164.00	546,370.60	6,134,793.40
		315H1 EDUCATION		6,620,164.00	546,370.60	6,073,793.40
			61000 Personal Services	6,352,215.00	504,335.58	5,847,879.42
			62000 Operating Expenses	267,949.00	42,035.02	225,913.98
		315H8 INTERPRETER PROF DEV (OTO)		61,000.00	0.00	61,000.00
			62000 Operating Expenses	61,000.00	0.00	61,000.00
	02050 School Trust Interest/Income			302,341.00	0.00	302,341.00
		315H1 EDUCATION		302,341.00	0.00	302,341.00
			61000 Personal Services	302,341.00	0.00	302,341.00
	03012 E.C.I.A. Chapter I			52,861.00	0.00	52,861.00
		315H1 EDUCATION		52,861.00	0.00	52,861.00
			61000 Personal Services	52,861.00	0.00	52,861.00
	03064 EHA, Part B			119,219.00	0.00	119,219.00
		315H1 EDUCATION		119,219.00	0.00	119,219.00

	61000 Personal Services	49,219.00	0.00	49,219.00
	62000 Operating Expenses	70,000.00	0.00	70,000.00
03590 Federal Literacy Grant		330,165.53	695.77	329,469.76
315AU MT READS GRANT 9/30/26		330,165.53	695.77	329,469.76
	61000 Personal Services	2,720.00	0.00	2,720.00
	62000 Operating Expenses	327,445.53	695.77	326,749.76
Grand Total		11,587,065.53	801,346.02	10,785,719.51

51130 School for the Deaf & Blind

ORG Budget Summary - No A Accruals

Data Selected for Month/FY: 01 (Jul)/2027 through 02 (Aug)/2027

This report compares ORG Budgets (ORG_BD) to Actuals expended amounts

Just Personnel

Business Unit	(All)
Program Year	2027
FY_BudPer	(All)
Month	(All)
Source of Auth	(All)
Fund Type	(All)
Account	(All)
Org	(All)
Acct Lvl 2	(All)
Account Type	E
Project	(All)
Ledger	(All)

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OBPP Program	Fund	Subclass	Acct Lvl 1	ORG Budget	Actuals Amt	Balance
01 ADMINISTRATION PROGRAM				963,594.00	68,846.10	894,747.90
	01100 General Fund			960,200.00	68,846.10	891,353.90
		300H1 ADMINISTRATION		960,200.00	68,846.10	891,353.90
			61000 Personal Services	960,200.00	68,846.10	891,353.90
	02050 School Trust Interest/Income			3,394.00	0.00	3,394.00
		300H1 ADMINISTRATION		3,394.00	0.00	3,394.00
			61000 Personal Services	3,394.00	0.00	3,394.00
02 GENERAL SERVICES				469,871.00	33,525.05	436,345.95
	01100 General Fund			469,871.00	33,525.05	436,345.95
		305H1 GENERAL SERVICES		469,871.00	33,525.05	436,345.95
			61000 Personal Services	469,871.00	33,525.05	436,345.95
03 STUDENT SERVICES				1,813,536.00	116,989.53	1,696,546.47
	01100 General Fund			1,813,536.00	116,989.53	1,696,546.47
		310H1 STUDENT SERVICES		1,813,536.00	116,989.53	1,696,546.47
			61000 Personal Services	1,813,536.00	116,989.53	1,696,546.47
04 EDUCATION				6,759,356.00	504,335.58	6,255,020.42
	01100 General Fund			6,352,215.00	504,335.58	5,847,879.42
		315H1 EDUCATION		6,352,215.00	504,335.58	5,847,879.42
			61000 Personal Services	6,352,215.00	504,335.58	5,847,879.42
	02050 School Trust Interest/Income			302,341.00	0.00	302,341.00
		315H1 EDUCATION		302,341.00	0.00	302,341.00
			61000 Personal Services	302,341.00	0.00	302,341.00
	03012 E.C.I.A. Chapter I			52,861.00	0.00	52,861.00
		315H1 EDUCATION		52,861.00	0.00	52,861.00
			61000 Personal Services	52,861.00	0.00	52,861.00
	03064 EHA, Part B			49,219.00	0.00	49,219.00
		315H1 EDUCATION		49,219.00	0.00	49,219.00
			61000 Personal Services	49,219.00	0.00	49,219.00
	03590 Federal Literacy Grant			2,720.00	0.00	2,720.00
		315AU MT READS GRANT 9/30/26		2,720.00	0.00	2,720.00
			61000 Personal Services	2,720.00	0.00	2,720.00
Grand Total				10,006,357.00	723,696.26	9,282,660.74

51130 School for the Deaf & Blind

ORG Budget Summary - No A Accruals

Data Selected for Month/FY: 01 (Jul)/2027 through 02 (Aug)/2027

This report compares ORG Budgets (ORG_BD) to Actuals expended amounts

Just Operating

Business Unit	(All)
Program Year	2027
FY_BudPer	(All)
Month	(All)
Source of Auth	(All)
Fund Type	(All)
Account	(All)
Org	(All)
Acct Lvl 2	(All)
Account Type	E
Project	(All)
Ledger	(All)

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OBPP Program	Fund	Subclass	Acct Lvl 1	ORG Budget	Actuals Amt	Balance
01 ADMINISTRATION PROGRAM				282,924.00	7,159.54	275,764.46
	<u>01100 General Fund</u>			282,924.00	7,159.54	275,764.46
		<u>300H1 ADMINISTRATION</u>		26,380.00	3,142.10	23,237.90
			:62000 Operating Expenses	26,380.00	3,142.10	23,237.90
		<u>300H5 STATE ITSD (RST)</u>		256,544.00	4,017.44	252,526.56
			:62000 Operating Expenses	256,544.00	4,017.44	252,526.56
02 GENERAL SERVICES				334,192.00	22,089.99	312,102.01
	<u>01100 General Fund</u>			334,192.00	22,089.99	312,102.01
		<u>305H1 GENERAL SERVICES</u>		334,192.00	22,089.99	312,102.01
			:62000 Operating Expenses	271,577.00	22,089.99	249,487.01
			:68000 Transfers-out	1,000.00	0.00	1,000.00
			:69000 Debt Service	61,615.00	0.00	61,615.00
03 STUDENT SERVICES				237,198.00	5,669.44	231,528.56
	<u>01100 General Fund</u>			202,469.00	5,669.44	196,799.56
		<u>310H1 STUDENT SERVICES</u>		202,469.00	5,669.44	196,799.56
			:62000 Operating Expenses	202,469.00	5,669.44	196,799.56
	<u>03167 National School Lunch</u>			34,729.00	0.00	34,729.00
		<u>310H1 STUDENT SERVICES</u>		34,729.00	0.00	34,729.00
			:62000 Operating Expenses	34,729.00	0.00	34,729.00
04 EDUCATION				726,394.53	42,730.79	683,663.74
	<u>01100 General Fund</u>			328,949.00	42,035.02	286,913.98
		<u>315H1 EDUCATION</u>		267,949.00	42,035.02	225,913.98
			:62000 Operating Expenses	267,949.00	42,035.02	225,913.98
		<u>315H8 INTERPRETER PROF DEV (OTO)</u>		61,000.00	0.00	61,000.00
			:62000 Operating Expenses	61,000.00	0.00	61,000.00
	<u>03064 EHA, Part B</u>			70,000.00	0.00	70,000.00
		<u>315H1 EDUCATION</u>		70,000.00	0.00	70,000.00
			:62000 Operating Expenses	70,000.00	0.00	70,000.00
	<u>03590 Federal Literacy Grant</u>			327,445.53	695.77	326,749.76
		<u>315AU MT READS GRANT 9/30/26</u>		327,445.53	695.77	326,749.76
			:62000 Operating Expenses	327,445.53	695.77	326,749.76
Grand Total				1,580,708.53	77,649.76	1,503,058.77

**9089 Mont Sch for
Deaf & Blind District**

3911 Central Avenue, Great Falls, MT 59405
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Student Enrollment Summary Report

Effective Date: 08/24/2026 Enrollment Types: P, S, N
Total Race/Ethnicities: 5 of 7 Total Schools: 2
Race/Ethnicity Source: Federal Male/Female/Total: 18/18/36

Student Population by Race/Ethnicity and Grade Level (Male/Female/Total)

MT Sch For Deaf & Blind EI

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	-	0/1/1	-	-	-	-	-	0/1/1
02	-	-	-	-	-	1/1/2	-	1/1/2
04	-	-	-	-	-	2/1/3	-	2/1/3
06	-	-	-	-	-	2/3/5	-	2/3/5
07	-	-	-	-	-	1/0/1	1/1/2	2/1/3
08	-	-	-	-	-	0/1/1	-	0/1/1
KG	-	-	-	-	-	3/1/4	-	3/1/4
PK	0/1/1	-	-	-	-	0/2/2	-	0/3/3
All Grades	0/1/1	0/1/1	-	-	-	9/9/18	1/1/2	10/12/22

MT Sch For Deaf & Blind HS

Grade	1:Hispanic/Latino	2:American Indian or Alaska Native	3:Asian	4:Black or African American	5:Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	6:White	7:Two or more races	Total
09	-	-	1/0/1	-	-	0/2/2	0/1/1	1/3/4
10	-	-	1/0/1	-	-	1/0/1	-	2/0/2
11	-	2/0/2	-	-	-	0/2/2	1/0/1	3/2/5
12	-	1/0/1	-	-	-	1/1/2	-	2/1/3
All Grades	-	3/0/3	2/0/2	-	-	2/5/7	1/1/2	8/6/14

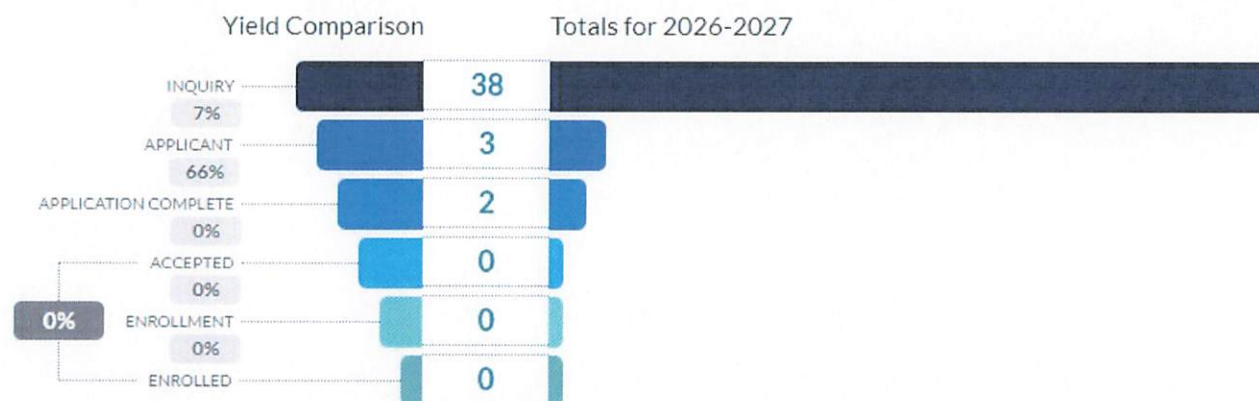
Student Population Excluding White not of Hispanic Origin

School	Total	Percentage
MT Sch For Deaf & Blind EI	4	18.18%
MT Sch For Deaf & Blind HS	7	50.00%
Total	11	30.56%

2026-2027 ▼

Total numbers and current counts for each stage of the admissions process

Filter options >



Admissions

INQUIRY		APPLICANT		APPLICATION COMPLETE		ACCEPTED	
Inquiry	1	Applicant	0	Application Complete	0	Accepted	0
Inquiry Completed	1	Application Withdrawn By Parent	0	Review In Progress	2	Did Not Enroll	0
Inactive Inquiry	4	Collecting Educational Documents	0	Waitlisted	0	Enrollment Date Selected	0
Inquiry For Campus Services	1	Collecting Medical Documents	1	Applicant Ineligible For Services	0	Parent Declined	0
Inquiry For Outreach Services	16			Current Ten Day In Process	0		
Inquiry For Special Events Services	0			Document Review Meeting Scheduled	0		
Inquiry For Student Group Activities Services	0			Ten Day Observation Scheduled	0		
Inquiry Referred To Outreach In Progress	7						
Inquiry Referred To Outreach Qualified	4						
Inquiry Referred To Outreach Unqualified	1						

MSDB Outreach Walkthrough Data

January 2026-June 2026

Service Category	Total Volume	Percentage Share
School District Consultation	4,701	53%
Family/Student Consultation	2,186	25%
Community Partnerships	1,039	12%
Consultant Professional Development	527	6%
Student Evaluations	190	2%
New Referrals	94	1%
Regional Events Attended	61	<1%
Trainings Delivered by Consultants	43	<1%
Total Reach Across Montana	8,841	100%

Highlights & Insights

- Core Focus (78%)
 - Direct consultations with School Districts and Families/Students account for nearly 4 out of every 5 interactions statewide.
- Community Footprint (12%)
 - Over 1,000 interactions were driven through collaborative Community Partnerships, bridging local support networks.
- Professional Growth & Evaluation (10%)
 - Internal professional development, evaluations, referrals, and events make up the remaining outreach efforts.

❖ **MACIE LIAISON – (Item 20)**

Julia Maxwell

ITEM 20

MACIE REPORT

- **Action on Montana School Boards Association, Indian School Board Caucus Member**
- **Action on MACIE Renewal**

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
September 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 School Boards Association Indian School Board Caucus Member 2. Approve extension of MACIE as an advisory council to the Board of Public Education and Office of Public Instruction, in accordance with <u>2-15-122, MCA</u>.
Related Issue(s)	September MACIE Meeting MACIE Mission and Goals MACIE Membership
Recommendations	Approve the extension of MACIE.

Montana School Boards Association Indian School Board Caucus Member
Kim Knobloch, Birney, MT

Kim Knobloch is a longtime educator and community member in the Lame Deer and Birney area. She has a longstanding connection with local schools, including experience working with students and serving the educational needs of the Northern Cheyenne community. She has also been involved in supporting students and families in the area.

Kim currently serves on the Lame Deer Public Schools Board of Trustees, representing the Birney community. Her experience in education and her connection to the Birney and Lame Deer communities provide a valuable perspective on the needs of students, families, and schools in the region.

Approve MACIE Extension

2-15-122, MCA Creation of Advisory Councils:

(1)(c) The board of public education, the board of regents of higher education, the state board of education, the attorney general, the state auditor, the secretary of state, and the superintendent of public instruction may create advisory councils, which shall serve at their pleasure, without the approval of the governor. The creating authority shall file a record of each council created by it in the office of the governor and the office of the secretary of state in accordance with subsection (9).

(10) An advisory council may not be created to remain in existence longer than 2 years after the date of its creation or beyond the period required to receive federal or private funds, whichever occurs later, unless extended by the appointing authority in the manner set forth in subsection (1).

Mission Statement

The Montana Advisory Council on Indian Education (MACIE) was created by the Montana Board of Public Education in 1984 to advise the Board and the Superintendent of Public Instruction on matters related to Indian education. The purpose of the Council is to provide for more effective and meaningful participation by Indian people in planning, implementation, and administration of relevant educational services and programs under the authority of local school boards.

Goals

1. Community, family, and parental engagement with local school system.

Goal 1: MACIE will advocate for and alongside communities, families, parents, and school systems that serve any Native American/American Indian student populations with the intent of recognizing the impact of historical and contemporary trauma while promoting efforts to ensure safe, secure, and stable educational environments where students and parents/ guardians feel welcome and supported.

2. School programs targeting systemic racism, disparate discipline, student achievement, and historical, generational, and contemporary trauma.

Goal 2: MACIE will encourage the adoption of practices/models/initiatives which address the presence of systemic racism and the associated disparate discipline of Native American/ American Indian students in public schools with the intent of supporting efforts focused on the impact these conditions have upon student achievement.

3. Culture, language, and culturally relevant curriculum.

Goal 3: MACIE will act as an advocate and advisor for the meaningful integration of culture and Indigenous language in Montana schools. MACIE will promote the adoption of culturally relevant resources, curriculum, and instruction in support of the expression of Native American/American Indian student self-identity and self-actualization.

4. Equitable access to quality public education.

Goal 4: MACIE supports school-based programs that are focused on providing equitable access to a quality public education for our Native American/American Indian students to close the academic achievement gap.



**MONTANA ADVISORY COUNCIL ON INDIAN EDUCATION
ADVISORY TO THE BOARD OF PUBLIC EDUCATION AND
SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION**

MACIE Member	Representing
Voting Members	
VACANT	Blackfeet Tribe
Jeremy MacDonald	Chippewa Cree
Michael Dolson	Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes
Levi Black Eagle, Vice-Chair	Crow
Michelle Crazy	Fort Belknap
Rena Lambert	Fort Peck
Iris Kill Eagle	Little Shell
Norma Bixby	Northern Cheyenne
VACANT	Class 7
Dawn Bishop-Moore, Secretary	Indian Impact Schools of Montana
Jordann Lankford Forster, Chairperson	Montana Federation of Public Employees
VACANT	Montana Indian Education Association
VACANT	Montana School Boards Association Indian School Board Caucus
Bonnie Rosette	School Administrators of Montana
Marcy Cobell	Urban- Billings
Dugan Coburn	Urban- Great Falls
Billie Jo Juneau	Urban- Missoula

Ex-Officio Members	Representing
Julia Maxwell	Board of Public Education
Rodney Bird	Bureau of Indian Education
Angela McLean	Montana University System
Brooke Gondara	Office of Public Instruction
Corey Sangrey- Billy	Tribal Colleges
VACANT	Tribal Head Start
Rotating	Youth

❖ **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE – (Item 21)**

Dr. Tim Tharp

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



**MONTANA
ADMINISTRATIVE
REGISTER**



BOARD OF PUBLIC EDUCATION

NOTICE OF PROPOSED RULEMAKING

MAR NOTICE NO. 2026-177.1

Summary

Amendment of ARM 10.64.301 pertaining to the Montana School Bus Standards

Hearing Date and Time

Tuesday, November 10, 2026, at 10:00 a.m.

Virtual Hearing Information

Please click the link below to join the webinar:

<https://mt-gov.zoom.us/j/84143141109>

Comments

Comments may be submitted using the contact information below. Comments must be received by Friday, November 13, 2026, at 5:00 p.m.

Accommodations

The agency will make reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities who wish to participate in this rulemaking process or need an alternative accessible format of this notice. Requests must be made by Friday, October 30, 2026, at 5:00 p.m.

Contact

General Reasonable Necessity Statement

The Board of Public Education is responsible for adopting and enforcing standards for the design, construction, and operation of school buses in Montana pursuant to 20-10-111, MCA. The current rule incorporates the *Standards for School Buses in Montana – 2022*, which are based in part on the National Congress on School Transportation (NCST) National School Transportation Specifications and Procedures.

The proposed amendments update the *Standards for School Buses in Montana* to reflect current federal motor vehicle safety requirements, recommendations of the National Congress on School Transportation where appropriate, technological advancements in school bus equipment, and operational best practices identified through collaboration with the Office of Public Instruction, the Montana Highway Patrol, school transportation professionals, and the Montana Pupil Transportation Advisory Council.

The revisions are necessary to ensure Montana's school bus standards remain current, promote consistency in the procurement, inspection, and operation of school buses statewide, and enhance the safety of students, drivers, and the public. The amendments also clarify existing requirements, remove outdated provisions, and improve the usability of the standards for school districts, school bus contractors, manufacturers, and enforcement personnel.

A complete summary of the proposed revisions to the Standards for School Buses in Montana are available for public review on the Board of Public Education's website at bpe.mt.gov. Specific revisions include adding a provision encouraging schools districts to create policies and procedures for home parking of school buses, differentiation of the requirements for bus use for activity trips, and the inclusion of Electronic Vehicle provisions.

Rulemaking Actions

AMEND

The rules proposed to be amended are as follows, stricken matter interlined, new matter underlined:

10.64.301 SCHOOL BUS REQUIREMENTS

- (1) The Board of Public Education adopts and incorporates the Standards for School Buses in Montana – ~~2022~~2026. A copy of this document is available from the Office of Public Instruction, Pupil Transportation Division, P.O. Box 202501, Helena, Montana 59620-2501 and is available at the following web address: www.bpe.mt.gov.
- (2) The Board of Public Education adopts standards for school buses in Montana in part from the National School Transportation Specifications and Procedures, as adopted in ~~2015~~2025 by the ~~Sixteenth~~Seventeenth National Congress on School Transportation (NCST). The NCST occasionally issues an interpretation on its adopted specifications and procedures. Any interpretation adopted by the NCST shall be the official interpretation of the corresponding Montana standard unless that interpretation is specifically redefined or preempted by a corresponding Montana standard, law, or regulation. The National School Transportation Specifications and Procedures and additional information regarding the NCST are available at www.NCSTOnline.org.

Authorizing statute(s): Mont. Const. Art. X, sec. 9, 20-2-114, 20-2-121, MCA

Implementing statute(s): Mont. Const. Art. X, sec. 9, 20-2- 121, 20-3-106, 20-7-101, 20-10-111, MCA

Small Business Impact

The Board of Public Education adopts rules that primarily impact teachers, administrators, and school district operations. The board works in cooperation with public schools across the state to implement the rules that are adopted. Given that the board does not work directly with small businesses, the small business impact analysis performed as required under 2-4-111, MCA, indicates that no small businesses are likely to be directly impacted by the proposed rule changes.

Bill Sponsor Notification

The bill sponsor contact requirements of 2-4-302, MCA, do not apply.

Interested Persons

The board maintains a list of interested persons who wish to receive notices of rulemaking actions proposed by this agency. Persons who wish to have their name added to the list shall make a written request that includes the name, email, and mailing address of the person to receive notices and specifies for which program the person wishes to receive notices. Notices will be sent by email unless a mailing preference is noted in the request. Such written request may be mailed or delivered to the contact person above or may be made by completing a request form at any rules hearing held by the board.

Rule Reviewer

McCall Flynn

Approval

Dr. Tim Tharp
Board Chair



Board of Public Education

Board of Public Education Proposed Chapter 64 Rulemaking Timeline Transportation Standards

BPE authorization to publish Proposal Notice, including public hearing date	September 24-25, 2026
BPE approves rulemaking timeline	September 24-25, 2026
Proposal Notice to SOS for publication in MAR	October 6, 2026
MAR publication of Proposal Notice	October 16, 2026
▪ Public comment begins	
Public hearing date	November 10, 2026
Final public comment deadline	November 13, 2026
Respond to comments	November 18-20, 2026
BPE authorization to publish Adoption Notice	January 14-15, 2027
Adoption Notice to SOS for publication in MAR	January 26, 2027
MAR publication of Adoption Notice	February 5, 2027
Effective date of rules	February 6, 2027

The Board of Public Education may revise the above dates, based on the requirements of the Montana Administrative Procedure Act and the rulemaking statutes.

❖ **STRATEGIC PLANNING – (Item 22)**

Dr. Tim Tharp

ITEM 22

**WORK SESSION ON BOARD OF PUBLIC
EDUCATION STRATEGIC PLAN**

McCall Flynn



Board of Public Education

Montana Board of Public Education Strategic Plan DRAFT Adopted {DATE}

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
- FAFSA completion
- Future Ready Incentive 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:** ~~Strengthen~~ Ensure consistent and coherent policies and reduce barriers to that support recruitment, preparation, and retention of and high-quality preparation of 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:** Ensure 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:** Ensure-Strengthen coordination and alignment across key-sectorsMontana's public education system, including partnerships between the Board and the Board of Regents and their respective constitutional roles as the state's education boards. Work across P-12, higher education, and the workforce to 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

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.

*******TIME CERTAIN AT 11:00AM*******

❖ LICENSURE COMMITTEE – (Item 23)

Dr. Ron Slinger

ITEM 23

ACTION ON CONTESTED CASE HEARING
BPE CASE #2026-04, KNIGHT

Dr. Ron Slinger

❖ **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE – (Item 24)**

Dr. Tim Tharp

ITEM 24

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

McCall Flynn

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