

# The Strategic Planning Process of the Missoula County Public Schools (MCPS)

Approved - September 28, 2021, Updated June 21, 2022

## Part I: Planning Horizon: Timeless

### Core Ideology<sup>1</sup> of MCPS

The Core Purpose of MCPS is to engage all students in a high quality education that empowers, inspires and prepares each student for their future.

### Core Values of MCPS:

**Student-Centered:** We value an environment in which each student is engaged, inspired and challenged each and every day.

**Equity:** We value providing opportunities and a high quality, comprehensive education where each student has the necessary supports and resources to meet their needs and circumstances, including but not limited to, race, socio-economic status or other individual circumstances.

**Innovation:** We value a culture of creativity, curiosity, forward-thinking, leadership, and excellence for all.

**Safety:** We value a safe environment where our students and staff feel and are secure and valued.

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<sup>1</sup> **Core Ideology** describes an association's consistent identity that transcends all changes related to its relevant environment. It consists of two elements - **Core Purpose** - the Association's reason for being - and **Core Values** - essential and enduring principles that guide an association. **Envisioned Future** conveys a concrete yet unrealized vision for the association. It consists of a **Big Audacious Goal** - a clear and compelling catalyst that serves as a focal point for effort - and a **Vivid Description** - vibrant and engaging descriptions of what it will be like to achieve the big audacious goal.

**Inclusion:** We value a culture of respect that embraces diversity where individuals feel a strong sense of belonging.

**Relationships:** We value the trust, interdependence, support and collaboration we have with our staff, with families and with our communities.

## Part II: Planning Horizon: 10-15 Years

### Envisioned Future of MCPS

#### **Big Audacious Goal:**

To inspire locally and globally minded citizens through a culture of inclusion, equity, leadership and excellence.

#### **A Vivid Description of the Desired Future:**

MCPS will have successfully achieved its Envisioned Future when the following are commonly agreed to have become present realities:

#### **Each student has been provided with enhanced learning opportunities.**

- Students take ownership of their learning through shared decision-making with established clear outcomes for success.
- Students have ample art and music opportunities to choose from.
- Our programs and services are adaptable and flexible to meet the needs and attributes of students.
- Students have opportunities for learning through before, after and summer programs, recreational programs, community partnerships and engagement experiences, apprenticeships, and other work-based opportunities.
- Students have multiple pathways and are supported to meet graduation goals. As a result we have 100% graduation success.
- Our students are provided with a holistic, multi-disciplinary, multi-cultural and integrated curriculum.
- Our students are technology proficient and have the supports and tools to learn in any setting. At the same time, we teach students the importance of balance in their lives between technology and personal connections.
- Our students are provided with youth leadership opportunities.

#### **Our school environment is inclusive, safe and where students, staff, families and visitors feel a sense of belonging.**

- We have successfully implemented restorative and social justice strategies that support the needs of our students and their families.

- We have successfully transformed discipline issues into learning opportunities for our students, through conflict resolution and other strategies.
- We provide education and other supports to students and staff to make healthy decisions regarding their physical, mental, behavioral, social and emotional well-being.
- We have successfully implemented trauma-informed strategies that support our students, families, and staff.

**Our staff are valued and supported and are provided training to be highly effective in their positions.**

- Our staff are well-versed and trained in our trauma-informed strategies and programming.
- We utilize knowledge and data to drive our decisions keeping students at the center of everything we do.
- We have a culturally diverse and inclusive staff that represent our dynamic and caring community.
- We support our staff through the provision of both tangible and intangible benefits and supports.
- We have increased the number of school counselors, social workers, special education and support staff to meet the on-going needs of our students.
- We have implemented a robust professional development/learning model for all staff that provides opportunities for leadership, professional growth and as a means of implement best practices
- We have improved our team-building and collaboration opportunities for staff.

**Communications, connection to, and engagement with families and our communities are meaningful and effective.**

- We have enhanced the community use and support of school facilities.
- We have succeeded in making our schools community centers for the neighborhoods they serve.
- We have greatly enhanced community and family engagement, partnerships and community programs and services.
- We have enriched the pride in our schools with our staff, students, families and community members. It shows in everything we do.
- We have enhanced the connectivity to and with our rural and urban areas.
- We have seamless, effective and meaningful communication between our District, families, students, and staff.
- In collaboration and through partnerships with our community, we have District-wide sustainable and responsible systems and operations that result in zero waste.

## Part III: Planning Horizon: 3-5 Years

### Outcome-Oriented Goals and Strategies

#### Goal Area 1: Enhanced Learning Opportunities

**Statement of Intended Outcome:** Each student has access to enhanced opportunities that will lead to individual student success now and into their future.

#### **Strategic Objectives: DRAFT (June 2022)**

1.01: Use current, research-based content standards in planning and instruction so that each student has access to high quality learning opportunities.

*Initiative examples: Science curriculum implementation, Social Studies curriculum review, world language curriculum review, Special Education intervention and replacement curriculum review, PK-5 literacy (Science of Reading), AP/IB programs at HS, and Career and Technical Education, special education program, standards-based instruction.*

1.02: Use effective learning strategies, assessments, and interventions, so that each student can realize sustained academic growth in all content areas.

*Initiative examples: Multi-tiered systems of support, balanced assessment practices, K5 Report Card revision/implementation, and standards-based instructional practices.*

1.03: Prepare all students to be ready for the next level of their academic career by providing rigorous, relevant, and innovative learning experiences.

*Initiative examples: K5 Literacy (Science of Reading), academies at HS, CTE innovation at 6-12, workforce development opportunities, AP and IB programs at HS, dual enrollment at HS, specials at K5, exploratories at 6-8, arts integration at all levels, and middle school philosophy framework.*

#### Goal Area 2: Trusted and Valued Staff

**Statement of Intended Outcome:** MCPS values its greatest resource—our staff. We trust our staff with the important work they do every day. Our staff has the support, training and resources needed to be successful.

#### **Strategic Objectives: DRAFT (June 2022)**

2.01: Use meaningful, job-embedded professional development to support student achievement.

*Initiative examples: Academic interventionists, multi tiered systems of support teams, professional learning communities, new faculty mentoring programs, and instructional coaches.*

2.02: Provide opportunities to develop high performance teaching, learning and leadership for all members of our education team.

*Initiative examples: New faculty mentoring programs, classified professional development, professional development tied to curriculum implementation, growth and development of leaders, and professional learning communities.*

2.03: Establish and maintain opportunities for staff support, including those activities that influence retention and emotional well-being.

*Initiative examples: New faculty mentoring programs, educators thriving program, second-step for adults, lifeworks program, and emotional well-being professional development for all staff (Fall, 2022).*

### **Goal Area 3: Inclusion and Equity**

**Statement of Intended Outcome:** We have the necessary support and resources to focus on the individual needs and circumstances of each student and their families so that each student can succeed.

#### **Strategic Objectives: DRAFT (June 2022)**

3.01: Create safe, supportive, engaging and healthy school environments for all students and staff.

*Initiative examples: Social - emotional curriculum standards, wellness committee, my-voice survey and data, K-8 behavior interventionists, and school safety assessments.*

3.02: Provide equitable, comprehensive educational opportunities in every school environment so that all students have access to a high quality educational experience.

*Initiative examples: Middle school philosophy framework, K5 "specials" committee, SPARK! arts integration, one-to-one technology device program, career & technical education audit, AP / IB high school programs, and dual enrollment programs.*

3.03: Provide opportunities for all students to engage in social/emotional learning activities and increase their abilities in resilience and regulation to succeed in the educational environment.

*Initiative examples: social/emotional curriculum standards and program implementation.*

3.04: Prepare all for success in a global community by providing opportunities for students and staff to engage in discussions, learning activities, and experiences to broaden their perspective of diverse cultures and groups that exist within our community.

*Initiative examples: IVALUE (Inclusion, Validation, Action, Learning and Understanding Equity) - MCPS working group, IEFA (Indian Education for All) standards, second language instruction at the K5 level, and social/emotional learning programs.*

### **Goal Area 4: Community Engagement**

**Statement of Intended Outcome:** Our mutual engagement and relationship with our communities and families is vital to our success and the success of each student. We have robust relationships and a strong sense of community within our schools, and within and among our community organizations, community members and families.

**Strategic Objectives: DRAFT (June 2022)**

4.01: Recognize and increase educational partnership opportunities within our community to help support the success of our students and our District.

*Initiative examples: Facility committee - master plan, enrollment, boundaries. Zero by 2050 - recycling, zero waste initiative. Zero to Five - early childhood initiative. Clark Fork watershed - connection with K5 Science. Writing collaborative. SPARK! Arts. School meals coalition (food bank, MCCHD, Garden City Harvest). CTE Community Advisory Boards. Missoula Education Foundation. Individual school partnerships. (NOTE: This list of partnerships does not include all community partnerships. An audit will need to be completed to create an exhaustive list of all school-community partnerships.)*

4.02: Provide opportunities to engage in collaborative dialogue (Mega Issues), with both internal and external stakeholders that influence the work of our school district.

*Initiative examples: facility committee, Superintendent advisory councils, Board work sessions regarding mega issue topics. Missoula Education Foundation collaboration, PTA and booster groups at individual schools.*

4.03: Elevate public awareness regarding the external influences (funding, laws, policies), which impact the goal of creating high quality educational environments within MCPS.

*Initiative examples: Levy requests (operational & building reserve), Board engagement with local lawmakers, Board engagement through MTSBA both prior and during legislative session.*

4.04: Increase and enhance community and family engagement in our District and our schools.

*Initiative examples: volunteer portal, communications, parent nights, PTAs, student recognition opportunities, open house events, booster clubs, neighborhood schools program, and grade level transitions.*

# Appendices to Strategic Plan

## Strategic Planning Process Tool:

### Megatrend Analysis - Planning Horizon: 5-10 Year

#### Assumptions Regarding the Relevant Future for MCPS

In order to make progress toward our Envisioned Future, we must constantly anticipate the strategic factors likely to affect our ability to succeed and assess the implications of those factors. This process of building foresight about the future will help Montana's Public Schools innovate and adapt to succeed in the face of barriers to our success. Periodic review and update of these factors will help ensure the ongoing relevance of our Vision for the future and our efforts to achieve it.

**Assumptions:** The following have been collectively identified as *the most* (but not all) critical trends, challenges, or issues facing MCPS at this time that could affect our ability to achieve our Envisioned Future.

#### Demographics:

- We anticipate a growing population in Missoula and communities that feed into MCPS.
- We anticipate continued diversity of our population and the students we serve.
- We anticipate continued economic disparity in our community and the students we serve.

#### Business and Economic Climate:

- We anticipate continuation of the strong community and business support.
- We anticipate a continued rise in the cost of living (wages v. cost).
- We anticipate our business community to continue thriving.

#### Legislation and Regulation:

- We anticipate a continued movement of using public resources for private education.
- We anticipate continued reliance on passage of local bonds and levies to support MCPS schools.
- We anticipate additional flexibilities for local control, flexibilities in teacher licensure and enhanced opportunities for students.

#### Technology and Science:

- We anticipate continued increasing costs of keeping up with technologies that support student learning,
- We anticipate that technology will continue to be a driving force to enabling our staff and students to connect and engage globally.
- We anticipate that ongoing climate changes and challenges will continue to impact us locally and globally.

#### Politics and Social Values:

- We anticipate continue polarization and the need for respect of viewpoints and opinions of others.

- We anticipate that politics and social values will continue to impact voting outcomes and funding for public education.
- We anticipate that it will be vital for our youth to be engaged in civics, politics and issues that will impact them during their lives.

**Mega Issues that will likely impact our students, staff and the MCPS community:**

**2022/23 Examples for Mega Issue Discussions**

- 1. Community growth or decline will impact enrollment and operations (for example: budget, staffing, boundaries and facilities).**
- 2. Availability of workforce will continue to impact operations and initiatives.**
- 3. Educational funding established through the 2023 legislative process will impact District budget and initiatives.**
- 4. The sunset of ESSER funds will impact COVID recovery efforts and initiatives.**
- 5. Providing equitable educational opportunities for all students in their neighborhood schools will continue to be an important topic of discussion in our community.**
- 6. Emotional well-being of both students and staff will impact our abilities to help all experience success in their educational/work environment.**
- 7. School schedule (start/stop times), calendar will continue to impact operations, academic growth, family/community engagement, and our ability to provide growth and collaboration opportunities for our staff.**

## **Strategic Planning Process Tool:**

### **Knowledge-Based Decision Making Questions**

The Board will prioritize the above-referenced mega issues and decide which of these issues require immediate attention on the part of the Board. Once the identified mega-issues are prioritized, the Board will set aside time at scheduled meetings to analyze a particular mega-issue. At such meetings, the Board's primary focus will be on the mega-issue at hand. All other business (routine or otherwise) will be conducted at the end of the meeting once the dialogue and deliberation on the mega-issue has been concluded for that meeting. When analyzing mega-issues, the Board will utilize a knowledge-based decision making process. This will keep the focus of the Board on relevant factors to consider as it develops strategies to overcome particular impediments/barriers that may impact the Board's strategic direction. The Board will analyze mega-issues by answering the following questions, informed by background papers prepared by staff to support the quality of such dialogue:

- 1. What do we know about the wants, needs and preferences of our stakeholders that are relevant to this decision?**
- 2. What do we know about the current realities and evolving dynamics facing our stakeholders that is relevant to this decision?**
- 3. What do we know about the capacity/strategic position of MCPS that is relevant to this decision?**
- 4. What are the ethical implications of our choices?**