

Missoula County Public School District Safe Return to School and Continuity of Services Plan

Updated: June 27, 2023

March 2020 - June 2023

1. Missoula County Public School District was ordered to close to in person instruction on March 15, 2020, under an executive order issued by then-Governor Bullock. Districts were provided a two week period of time during which they could remain fully closed to instruction of any kind while developing a plan for remote instruction required by the Governor.
 - a. Although our district was authorized to remain closed, we quickly mobilized and began remote instruction during the timeframe when we were authorized to remain closed. Thereafter, our district continued pursuant to a reopening plan approved by the Governor beginning March 30, 2020.
2. On April 22, 2020, then-Governor Bullock lifted his Stay at Home Order, and Announced a Plan to Begin Phased Reopening of Montana. As part of that plan, effective May 7, 2020, all schools were provided the option to return to in- classroom teaching at the discretion of local school boards.
 - a. During the 2020-21 school year, our means of operation have included:
 - i. In person instruction
 - ii. Hybrid instruction (asynchronous, synchronous, combination of in-person and remote)
 - iii. Remote Instruction
3. Our district developed a plan for reopening to in person instruction, with contingencies, and we implemented that plan for the 2020-21 school year. The reopening plan, details regarding which are provided below, included adoption of various model policies provided by the Montana School Boards Association under its 1900 Series, including model policies aligned with CDC guidance regarding mitigation strategies to limit exposure to and transmission of COVID-19 in school settings. The District provided high quality learning opportunities for students in our community in a safely and effectively throughout the 2020-2021 school year.
4. We embraced a fundamental principle of providing extensive transparency to our community. We publicly noticed, held meetings regarding, and provided extensive opportunities for our community to provide us with feedback through surveys, electronic communications regarding the School District's plans, and our considerable work with the Return to School Work Group comprised of school staff, teachers, administrators, parents, and Missoula community members. Missoula County Public Schools considered such feedback in developing and refining the School District's plans throughout the last 14-15 months. The MCPS COVID-19 Response Plan which includes the District's phased re-opening plan was published August 31, 2020 and placed on the District website.

Safe Return to Schools and Continuity of Services Plan Contents: March 2020-

June 2023

Part I: Documentation of Meaningful Consultation in Developing and Refining the School District's plan from March 2020 Through June 2023:

We noticed, held, and invited public comment on our evolving plans for a safe return to school and continuity of services.

Our invitation for public input during the COVID Task Force Meetings included a general opportunity for the public to provide input and was provided to everyone interested, including:

1. students; families; school and district administrators, special education administrators; teachers, principals, school leaders, other educators, school staff, and their unions; and
2. stakeholders representing the interests of children with disabilities, English learners, children experiencing homelessness, children in foster care, and other underserved students.

Part II: Contents of The School District's plan for Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services:

1. A description of how the District will maintain the health and safety of students, educators, and other staff:

Following the lifting of the Stay-at-Home Order and subsequent reopening of the state on April 22, 2020, Missoula County Public Schools utilized the Montana Public Education Center *Roadmap for Safely Reopening Montana's Public Schools Using Emergency School District Policies* and accompanying MTSBA Model Emergency Policies. Utilizing these resources supported our district's continued service to students with transparency and accountability while ensuring the operations of the school district reflected the circumstances in our community.

The policies ensured our Board of Trustees and school leaders honored the following priorities: quality instruction to students; a healthy and safe setting for students, staff, and the community; needed support of teachers and staff; and responsible financial and operational procedures. The policies provided an actionable plan for completing the 2020-2021 school fiscal year in a manner that met these priorities and secured district funding while providing an operational platform for considering long term innovations in the delivery of education services.

Missoula County Public Schools implemented policy options that facilitated collaboration between the Board of Trustees, administrative team, employees, parents, students,

health officials, and community as we established protocols aligned with CDC guidance addressing how instruction was to be delivered to students; how gatherings and events would take place on school property; how the health and safety of staff and students would be protected and preserved while schools were open; and how financial and operational functions of the school district would continue during the period of public health emergency.

The District reviewed, considered, and addressed numerous areas of operation in our reopening process. On the topic of school district policy and procedures, the District considered emergency policies and procedures, adoption and amendment of policies, suspension of policies, and administrative procedures. To support students' academic, mental, social and emotional success, the district considered alternative grading, counseling, extended school year, student instruction proficiency determinations and declarations, support for particularly vulnerable students, transportation services, access to internet for students, food preparation and service, summer school and additional student instruction resources. To ensure the health and safety of students, teachers, and staff, the district considered cleaning and disinfection, community use of facilities, county board of health orders, diagnosis and confidentiality, hand washing and related hygiene protocols, telework, school closure orders, stay at home orders, symptom monitoring and isolation, travel quarantines, visitors, volunteers, vulnerable individuals, masks and personal protective equipment, and physical distancing.

Following the *Roadmap for Safely Reopening Montana's Public Schools Using Emergency School District Policies* ensured Missoula County Public Schools has remained in compliance with guidance and best practices provided by federal, state, or local health officials. Our school district has continued to adapt and adjust our policies as new and updated guidance and best practices have become available.

Further, the policies provide options for consideration through input from our board of trustees, administrative team, employees, parents, students health officials, and community as collaborative partners as we have worked our way through ever evolving changes due to the pandemic. By considering all possible perspectives and factors when making the decisions to adopt or adjust a policy, or to implement a policy, we focused on the health and safety of our students, staff, and community for delivery of learning and services to our students. The policies have enabled us to adjust our procedures and practices during different phases in compliance with guidance and best practices provided by federal, state, and local agencies.

Missoula County Public Schools will continue to follow the policies noted below while engaging in a quarterly reevaluation process to continue to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of our students, teachers, staff, and community through 2024.

2. The extent to which the district has adopted policies, and a description of any such policies, on each of the following safety recommendations established by the CDC:

Topic	School District Policy Reference	Description of Policy (All referenced polices can be found at the end of this document.)	Policy Adopted and Revised Date(s)
COVID-19 Emergency Policy	1900	1900: The term of School District Policies Numbered 1900-1999 shall run concurrent with any emergency related to COVID-19 declared by the President, Congress, Montana Legislature, Governor, Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services, county health department or the board of trustees.	1. 4/14/2020 Terminate & Remove Date 6/27/23
Emergency Measures	1901; 3612; 2168	<p>1901: The School District has adopted the protocols outlined in this policy during the term of the declared public health emergency to ensure the safe and healthy delivery of education services provided to students on school property.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of Transportation Funds During Periods of School Closure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Board of Trustees authorizes expenditures of its budgeted transportation funds that are in addition to traditionally authorized expenditures • Cost Guidelines <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Board of Trustees authorizes the Superintendent to exercise professional judgment and discretion as to the necessity, quality and amount of expenses. <p>Cross Reference:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy 3612 – District Provided Access to Electronic Information Services and Networks • Policy 2168 – Distance, Online, and Technology Delivered Learning 	<p>1. 4/14/2020 2. 8/20/2020</p> <p>Terminate & Remove Date 6/27/2023</p> <p>3612 1. 10/9/2021 2. 9/12/2006 3. 4/13/2010 4. 5/13/2004</p> <p>2168 1. 11/13/2007 2. 2/12/2008 3. 4/10/2012 4. 10/8/2013 5. 10/13/2015</p>

Academic Variance	1902; 1900; 2410; 2420; 2421	<p>1902: The School District has adopted the protocols outlined in this policy during the term of the declared public health emergency to ensure the safe and healthy delivery of education services provided to students on school property.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grading Variance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Given the unique circumstances of the remote learning situation and hardship due to continued education under the COVID-19 restrictions. • Graduation Requirements Variance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Given the unique circumstances of the remote learning situation and hardship due to continued education under the COVID-19 restrictions. <p>Cross Reference:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy 1900 – Temporary COVID-19 Policies • Policy 2410 – Graduation Requirements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Procedure • Policy 2420 – Grading and Progress Reports • Policy 2421 – Promotion Requirements 	<p>1. 4//28/2020</p> <p>Terminate & Remove Date 6/27/2023</p> <p>2410 1. 1/1/2003 2. 5/8/2007 3. 10/26/2021</p> <p>2410P 1. 9/2022</p> <p>2420 1. 1/14/2003</p> <p>2421 1. 1/15/2003</p>
Face Coverings as Personal Protective Equipment	1905	<p>1905:The School District has adopted the protocols outlined in this policy during the term of the declared public health emergency to ensure the safe and healthy delivery of education services provided to students on school property in accordance with Policy 1906, and a safe workplace when staff are present on school property in accordance with Policy 1909, and the safety, health and well-being of parents and community members. The supervising teacher, principal, superintendent or designated personnel are authorized to implement the protocols in coordination with state and local health officials. The policy establishes regulations requiring face coverings as personal protective equipment.</p>	<p>1. 3/30/2021</p> <p>Terminate & Remove Date 6/27/2023</p>
Student Instruction and Services	1906	<p>1906: The School District has adopted the protocols outlined in this policy during the term of the declared public health emergency to ensure the safe and healthy delivery of education services provided to students on school property in accordance with Policy 1906, and a safe workplace when staff are present on school property in accordance with Policy 1909, and the safety, health and well-being of parents and community members. The supervising teacher, principal, superintendent or designated personnel are authorized to implement the protocols in coordination with state and local health officials. The policy establishes regulations regarding the means to satisfy the aggregate number of hours through any combination of onsite, offsite, and online instruction.</p>	<p>1. 5/1/2020 2. 8/20/2020</p> <p>Terminate & Remove Date 6/27/2023</p>

Efforts to provide vaccinations to school communities	3410	<p>Please note that House Bill 702 passed the 2021 Legislature and was signed into law effective May 14, 2021. New Section 1 of that law provides that it is an unlawful discriminatory practice for a governmental entity to refuse, withhold from, or deny to a person any local or state services, goods, facilities, advantages, privileges, licensing, educational opportunities, health care access, or employment opportunities based on the person's vaccination status. The law also provides it is unlawful for an employer to refuse employment to a person, to bar a person from employment, or to discriminate against a person in compensation or in a term, condition, or privilege of employment based on the person's vaccination status.</p> <p>Finally, House Bill 702 provides it is unlawful for a public accommodation to exclude, limit, segregate, refuse to serve, or otherwise discriminate against a person based on the person's vaccination status.</p> <p>3413: Upon initial enrollment, an immunization status form shall be completed by the student's parent or guardian. The certificate shall be made a part of the student's permanent record.</p>	1. 11/11/2003
Appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to health and safety policies.	2161; 2161P	<p>2161: It is the intent of the District to ensure that students who are disabled within the definition of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 are identified, evaluated, and provided with appropriate educational services. For those students who need or are believed to need special instruction and/or related services under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the District shall establish and implement a system of procedural safeguards.</p> <p>2161P: If the parent or legal guardian of a student who qualifies under Section 504 for special instruction or related services disagrees with a decision of the District with respect to: (1) the identification of the child as qualifying for Section 504; (2) the District's evaluation of the child; and/or (3) the educational placement of the child, the parents of the student are entitled to certain procedural safeguards. The student shall remain in his/her current placement until the matter has been resolved through the process set in the policy.</p>	1. 1/14/2003 2. 1/14/2003 3. 9/12/2006

<p>Coordination with State and local health officials.</p>	<p>1900; 1905; 3417</p>	<p>1900: In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Board of Trustees has found it necessary to adopt temporary policies related to emergency school closures, the ongoing provision of educational services to students, meetings of the Board, gatherings on school property, health and safety of students, staff and community members, human resource matters and budgetary matters. To ensure clarity and transparency, the board has organized all emergency school policies into a temporary chapter. School District Policies Numbered 1900- 1999 are intended to govern during any emergency related to COVID-19 declared by the President, Congress, Montana Legislature, Governor, Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services, County Health Department or the Board of Trustees.</p> <p>1905: The School District has adopted the protocols outlined in this policy during the term of the declared public health emergency to ensure the safe and healthy delivery of education services provided to students on school property in accordance with Policy 1906, and a safe workplace when staff are present on school property in accordance with Policy 1909, and the safety, health and well-being of parents and community members. The supervising teacher, principal, superintendent or designated personnel are authorized to implement the protocols in coordination with state and local health officials.</p> <p>3417: The District will manage common communicable diseases in accordance with Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services guidelines and communicable diseases control rules. When information is received by a staff member or a volunteer that a student is afflicted with a serious communicable disease, the staff member or volunteer will promptly notify a school nurse or other responsible person designated by the Board to determine appropriate measures to be taken to protect student and staff health and safety. A school nurse or other responsible person designated by the Board, after consultation with and on advice of public health officials, will determine which additional staff members, if any, have need to know of the affected student's condition.</p>	<p>1.4/14/2020</p> <p>Terminate & Remove Date 6/27/2023</p> <p>1. 2/9/2021</p> <p>Terminate & Remove Date 6/27/2023</p> <p>1. 5/26/2020</p>
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<p>How the district will ensure continuity of services, including but not limited to services to address students' academic needs and students' and staff social, emotional, mental health, and other needs, which may include student health and food services.</p>	<p>1906; 1902; 1310; 2140; 2145; 2161; 2168; 2221; 2410; 2421; 3121; 3122; 3212; 3310; 4330; 5130; 5224; 5321</p>	<p>1906: The School District has adopted the protocols outlined in this policy to govern during the term of the declared public health emergency to ensure the delivery of education services to students onsite at the school, offsite at other locations using available resources including but not limited to online methods. The supervising teacher, principal, superintendent or designated personnel are authorized to implement this policy. The Board of Trustees may revise the school calendar to adjust the completion of the school year for particular grade levels and groups once students have satisfied the required number of applicable aggregate hours.</p> <p>The Board of Trustees authorizes offsite and online instruction of students in a manner that satisfies the aggregate number of instructional hours outlined in the School District's adopted or revised calendar for a school year affected by a public health emergency. Offsite and online delivery methods shall include a complete range of educational services offered by the School District and shall comply with the requirements of applicable statutes. Students completing course work through an offsite or online instructional setting shall be treated in and have their hours of instruction calculated in the same manner as students attending an onsite institutional setting.</p> <p>The Board of Trustees authorizes proficiency-based ANB calculation in situations when a student demonstrates proficiency in a course area as determined by the Board of Trustees using district assessments consistent with the School District's adopted Plan of Action, District Policy 1005FE, or other measures approved by the Board of Trustees during the course of a school year affected by a public health emergency.</p> <p>The Board of Trustees authorizes a summer program of instructional offerings for the purpose of remediation of credit, maintenance of skills, and enrichment. All classes offered for credit must meet minimum state requirements for accreditation and may be delivered at the school or at another offsite location. Remediation credit courses shall be offered, grades 9-12, in accordance with District advancement requirements. Credit course offerings must be approved by the Board of Trustees</p> <p>In accordance with District Policy Section 20-1-301, MCA, and any applicable collective bargaining agreement covering the employment of affected employees, the Board of Trustees may establish a school calendar with an earlier start date and a later end date from non-emergency school years to ensure students receive the minimum number of aggregate instructional hours.</p> <p>Students shall receive services in accordance with the applicable Individualized Education Plan or Section 504 Plan based on methods and locations agreed upon and documented by the applicable team to meet the student's needs and goals. Students shall have access to regular school counseling services whether their instruction is provided in an onsite, offsite or online setting. Staff shall promptly report any suspected student distress or concern to their supervisor for review and referral. Students receiving</p>	<p>1. 5/1/2020 2. 8/20/2020 Terminate & Remove Date 6/27/223</p>
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		<p>instruction in an offsite setting are governed by the staff obligation to report suspected child abuse or neglect. This policy in no way limits or adjusts the School District’s obligations to homeless students or students in foster care. Applicable District policies serving these students, or this population of students remain in full effect.</p> <p>As outlined in District Policy 2100, and except for students determined by the School District to be proficient using School District assessments, the adopted calendar has a minimum number of 720 aggregate instructional hours for students in kindergarten through third grade; 1,080 hours for students in fourth through eleventh grade and 1,050 hours for students in twelfth grade.</p> <p>The School District may satisfy the aggregate number of hours through any combination of onsite, offsite, and online instruction. The District administration is directed to ensure that all students are offered access to the complete range of educational programs and services for the education program required by the accreditation standards adopted by the Montana Board of Public Education.</p> <p>For the purposes of this policy and the School District’s calculation of ANB and “aggregate hours of instruction” within the meaning of that term in Montana law, the term “instruction” shall be construed as being synonymous with and in support of the broader goals of “learning” and full development of educational potential as set forth in Article X, section 1 of the Montana Constitution. Instruction includes innovative teaching strategies that focus on student engagement for the purposes of developing a students’ interests, passions, and strengths. The term instruction shall include any directed, distributive, collaborative and/or experiential learning activity provided, supervised, guided, facilitated, work based, or coordinated by the teacher of record in a given course that is done purposely to achieve content proficiency and facilitate the learning of, acquisition of knowledge, skills and abilities by, and to otherwise fulfill the full educational potential of each child.</p> <p>Staff shall calculate the number of hours students have received instruction as defined in this policy through a combined calculation of services received onsite at the school or services provided or accessed at offsite or online instructional settings including, but not limited to, any</p>	
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		<p>combination of physical instructional packets, virtual or electronic based course meetings and assignments, self- directed or parent-assisted learning opportunities, and other educational efforts undertaken by the staff and students that can be given for grade or credit. Staff shall report completed hours of instruction as defined in this policy to the supervising teacher, building principal, or district administrator for final calculation.</p> <p>In order to comply with the requirements of the calendar, District Policy and Section 20-1-301, MCA, the District shall implement the instructional schedules and methods identified in this policy.</p> <p>The Board of Trustees authorizes offsite instruction of students in a manner that satisfies the aggregate number of instructional hours outlined in the School District’s adopted or revised calendar for a school year affected by a public health emergency. Offsite delivery methods shall include a complete range of educational services offered by the School District and shall comply with the requirements of applicable statutes. Students completing course work through an offsite instructional setting shall be treated in and have their hours of instruction calculated in the same manner as students attending an onsite institutional setting.</p> <p>Offsite instruction is available to students:</p> <p>meeting the residency requirements for that district as provided in 1-1-215; living in the district and eligible for educational services under the Individuals With Disabilities Education Act or under 29 U.S.C. 794; or attending school in the district under a mandatory attendance agreement as provided in 20-5-321; attending school in the nearest district offering offsite instruction that agrees to enroll the student when the student’s district of residence does not provide offsite instruction in an equivalent course in which the student is enrolled. A course is not equivalent if the course does not provide the same level of advantage on successful completion, including but not limited to dual credit, advanced placement, and career certification. Attendance under this provision is subject to approval of the Trustees.</p> <p>The Board of Trustees authorizes the supervising teacher or district administrator to permit students to utilize an offsite or online instructional setting at when circumstances require.</p> <p>The Board of Trustees authorizes proficiency-based learning and ANB calculation in situations when a student demonstrates proficiency in a course area as determined by the Board of Trustees using District assessments consistent with District Policy 1005FE, or other measures approved by the Board of Trustees.</p> <p>The Board of Trustees waives the minimum number of instructional hours for students who demonstrate proficiency in a course area using district assessments that include, but are not limited to, the course or class teacher’s determination of proficiency as defined by the Board of Trustees. This</p>	
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		<p>determination shall be based on a review of the student’s completed coursework, participation in course delivery, and other methods applicable to the specific course or class. The Board of Trustees authorizes the use of the proficiency determination process for students who have selected this method of delivery, students for whom the School District is unable to document satisfaction of the required minimum aggregate number of hours through the offsite or onsite methods outlined in this policy, or other students whom School District personnel determine satisfy the definition of proficient or meeting proficiency.</p> <p>This provision is based in the declaration by the Montana Legislature that any regulation discriminating against a student who has participated in proficiency-based learning is inconsistent with the Montana Constitution.</p> <p>2168: For purposes of this policy, “distance learning” is defined as: instruction in which students and teachers are separated by time and/or location with synchronous or asynchronous content, instruction, and communication between student and teacher (e.g., correspondence courses, online learning, videoconferencing, streaming video).</p> <p>The District may receive and/or provide distance, online, and technology-delivered learning programs, provided the following requirements are met:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The distance, online, and technology-delivered learning programs and/or courses shall meet the learner expectations adopted by the District and be aligned with state content and performance standards; 2. The District shall provide a report to the Superintendent of Public Instruction, documenting how it is meeting the needs of students under the accreditation standards, who are taking a majority of courses during each grading period via distance, online, and/or technology-delivered programs; 3. The District will provide qualified instructors and/or facilitators as described in ARM 10.55.907(3)(a)(b)(c); 4. The District will ensure that the distance, online, and technology-delivered learning facilitators receive in-service training on technology-delivered instruction as described in ARM 10.55.907(3)(d); and 5. The District will comply with all other standards as described in ARM 10.55.907(4)(5)(a-e). <p>The District will permit a student to enroll in an approved distance learning course, in order that such student may include a greater variety of learning experiences within the student’s educational program.</p> <p>Credit for distance learning courses may be granted, provided the following requirements are met:</p>	
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		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prior permission has been granted by the principal; 2. The program fits the education plan submitted by the regularly enrolled student; 3. The course does not replace a required course offered by the District; 4. The course is needed as credit retrieval and cannot fit into the student’s schedule; and 5. Credit is granted for schools and institutions approved by the District after evaluation for a particular course offering. <p>The District will not be obligated to pay for a student’s distance learning courses unless otherwise specified in Policy 2170. Any course es the District does not pay for will not be included in the ANB calculation in accordance with Policy 3121.</p> <p>The minimum aggregate hours are not required for any pupil demonstrating proficiency pursuant to 20-9-311(4)(d), MCA.</p> <p>The District recognizes that the District and students may have a need for greater flexibility in the educational program due to funding, teacher availability, individual learning styles, health conditions, employment responsibilities, lack of success in traditional school environments or a desire for students to accelerate their learning and work at the college level before leaving high school. The District acknowledges that online learning solutions offered by the Montana Digital Academy (MTDA) may fulfill these needs.</p> <p>MTDA is authorized by Montana law to charge fees for students to access offered courses. The District shall pay fees for students enrolled in an MTDA class that is required for graduation as specified in District policy or the student handbook or as determined by the Superintendent or designee. The District may charge students a reasonable fee for an MTDA course or activity not required for graduation. The Board of Trustees authorizes the Superintendent to waive the fee in cases of financial hardship. Any courses the District does not pay for will not be included in the ANB calculation in accordance with Policy 3121.</p> <p>The Superintendent, and/or designees, shall be responsible for developing procedures for the online learning program that address related topics that may include but are not limited to specification and determination of graduation requirements and fee collection for classes that are not required. Further, the online learning solutions providers ensure that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A. Online course providers are accredited by a nationally recognized accreditation program or agency or are approved and endorsed by the Montana Office of Public Instruction. B. Qualified district staff provides information and guidance to students and parents regarding the selection of appropriate online courses to meet their needs, as well as a suitable number of online courses in which a student may enroll. C. The curriculum requirements of the state and school district are met. D. All online courses taken by the students will be approved by the administration in advance of enrollment. E. All teacher-led online courses include licensed, highly qualified teachers. 	
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		<p>3110: The trustees will enroll and admit a child to a school in the district when the child is 5 years of age or older on or before the tenth (10th) day of September of the school year in which the child is to enroll but is not yet 19 years of age who is a resident of the District. Parents may request a waiver of the age requirement. All waivers are granted in the sole discretion of the Trustees.</p> <p>Non-resident students may be admitted at the discretion of the Trustees. Children will be enrolled in the grade identified in accordance with District policy or at the discretion of the of the administration in consultation with the student’s parents or guardians. The District requires proof of identity and an immunization record for every child to be admitted to District schools.</p> <p>The trustees may at their discretion assign and admit a child to a school in the district who is under 5 years of age or an adult who is 19 years of age or older if there are exceptional circumstances that merit waiving the age provision. The trustees may also admit an individual who has graduated from high school but is not yet 19 years of age even though no special circumstances exist for waiver of the age provision of this Policy.</p> <p><u>School Entrance</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The District requires that a student’s parents, legal guardian, or legal custodian present proof of identity of the child1 to the school within forty (40) days of enrollment, as well as proof of residence in the District. Students who are not residents of the District may apply for admission pursuant to Policy 3141. 2. To be admitted to District schools, in accordance with the Montana Immunization Law, a child must have been immunized against varicella, diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, poliomyelitis, rubella, mumps, and measles in the manner and with immunizing agents approved by the department. Immunizations may not be required if a child qualifies for conditional attendance or an exemption is filed as provided by Montana law. 3. The above requirements are not to serve as barriers to immediate enrollment of students designated as homeless or foster children as required by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and the McKinney-Vento Act as amended by ESSA. The District shall work with the local child welfare agency, the school last attended, or other relevant agencies to obtain necessary enrollment documentation and ensure a student receives education services in the best interests of the child. The Superintendent or designee shall serve as point of contact with all applicable agencies to review records, facilitate services and resolve disputes. <p>Since accurate enrollment and attendance records are essential both to obtain state financial reimbursement and to fulfill the District’s responsibilities under the attendance laws, staff shall be diligent in maintaining such records.</p>	
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ·A resident of the district attending a Montana job corps program under an interlocal agreement with the district under Section 20-9-707, MCA; or ·A resident of the district attending a Montana Youth Challenge Program under an interlocal agreement with the district under Section 20-9-707, MCA. ·A student with a disability who is over 19 years old but under 21 years of age, has been enrolled by the Board of Trustees in accordance with Policy 3110, and qualifies in accordance with Section 20-9-311(7), MCA, to remain enrolled and be served by schools, if the following criteria are satisfied: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the student has not graduated; • the student is eligible for special education services and is likely to be eligible for adult services for individuals with developmental disabilities due to the significance of the student's disability; and • the student's individualized education program has identified transition goals that focus on preparation for living and working in the community following high school graduation since age 16 or the student's disability has increased in significance after age 16. <p>In order for a student who is served through distance learning or offsite delivery methods to be included in the calculation of average number belonging, the student must meet one or more of the conditions for participating in offsite instruction pursuant to Section 20-7-118, MCA.</p>	
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		<p>Any additional absence related to COVID will be deducted from the employee’s accrued sick leave. If the employee has exhausted their leave banks, the employee may request Leave without Pay from the Superintendent.</p> <p>The District may consider allowing an employee who is impacted by COVID to temporarily work remotely on a case-by-case basis <u>only</u>. Prior authorization from the principal/supervisor is required. The option to work remotely is not a guarantee. All requests will be carefully evaluated to determine whether it is in the best interest of Students and District operations. Prior approval of working remotely is not a guarantee of continued approval.</p> <p>5230: All District personnel shall be advised of routine procedures to follow in handling body fluids. These procedures, developed in consultation with public health and medical personnel, shall provide simple and effective precautions against transmission of diseases to persons exposed to the blood or body fluids of another. The procedures shall follow standard health and safety practices. No distinction shall be made between body fluids from individuals with a known disease or infection and from individuals without symptoms or with an undiagnosed disease.</p> <p>The District shall provide training on procedures on a regular basis. Appropriate supplies shall be available to all personnel, including those involved in transportation and custodial services.</p> <p>The District shall provide soap and disposable towels or other hand-drying devices shall be available at all handwashing sinks. Common-use towels are prohibited. The District shall provide sanitary napkin disposal in teachers' toilet rooms and nurses' toilet rooms. The District shall provide either sanitary napkin dispensers in the girls', nurses', and teachers' toilet rooms or some other readily available on-site access to sanitary napkins.</p> <p>If a staff member develops symptoms of any reportable communicable or infectious illness while at school, the responsible school officials shall do the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) isolate the staff member immediately from students or staff (b) consult with a physician, other qualified medical professional, or the local county health authority to determine if the case should be reported. <p>5130: Through its overall safety program and various policies pertaining to school personnel, the Board shall promote the safety of employees during working hours and assist them in the maintenance of good health. It shall encourage all its employees to maintain optimum health through the practice of good health habits.</p>	
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		<p>Under the circumstances defined below, the District may require physical examinations of its employees. Results of such physical examinations shall be maintained in separate medical files and not in the employee's personnel file and may be released only as permitted by law.</p> <p><u>Physical Examinations</u> If the work is of a physically demanding nature, subsequent to a conditional offer of employment and prior to a commencement of work, the District may require an applicant to have a medical examination and to meet any other health requirements that may be imposed by the State. The District may condition an offer of employment on the results of such examination, if all entering employees in the applicable job category are subject to such examination. If approved by personnel services, a thirty-(30)-day grace period beginning from the date of employment may be allowed for the employee to obtain the required medical examination.</p> <p>All bus drivers, including full-time, regular part-time or temporary part-time drivers, are required by state law to have a satisfactory medical examination prior to employment.</p> <p><u>Communicable Diseases</u> An employee with a communicable disease shall not report to work during the period of time in which the employee is infectious. An employee afflicted with a communicable disease capable of being readily transmitted in the school setting (e.g., airborne transmission of tuberculosis) shall report the existence of the illness in case there are precautions that must be taken to protect the health of others. The District reserves the right to require a statement from the employee's primary care provider prior to the employee's return to work.</p> <p>If a staff person has a communicable disease that person must notify the school nurse or other responsible person designated by the Board that they have a communicable disease. The school nurse or designee must determine, after consultation with and on the advice of public health, if appropriate measures have been taken to protect for health and safety of all.</p> <p><u>Confidentiality</u> In all instances, District personnel shall respect the individual's right to privacy and treat any medical diagnosis as confidential information. Any information obtained regarding the medical condition or history of any employee shall be collected and in separate medical files and be treated as confidential information. Only those individuals with a legitimate need to know (i.e., those persons with a direct responsibility for the care of or for determining work place accommodation for the</p>	
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		<p>staff person) will be provided with necessary medical information.</p> <p>Supervisors and managers may be informed of the necessary restrictions on the work or duties of the employee and necessary accommodations. First aid and safety personnel may be informed, when appropriate, if the requires emergency treatment.</p> <p>5224: School District employees will abide by all district policies, state and federal laws in the course of their employment. Where applicable, employees will abide by and honor the professional educator code of conduct.</p> <p>All employees are expected to maintain high standards of honesty, integrity, professionalism, decorum, and impartiality in the conduct of District business. All employees shall maintain appropriate employee-student relationship boundaries in all respects, including but not limited to personal, speech, print, and digital communications. Failure to honor the appropriate employee student relationship boundary will result in a report to the Department of Public Health and Human Services and the appropriate law enforcement agency.</p> <p>In accordance with state law, an employee shall not dispense or utilize any information gained from employment with the District, accept gifts or benefits, or participate in business enterprises or employment that creates a conflict of interest with the faithful and impartial discharge of the employee’s District duties. A District employee, before acting in a manner which might impinge on any fiduciary duty, may disclose the nature of the private interest which would create a conflict. Care should be taken to avoid using or avoid the appearance of using official positions and confidential information for personal advantage or gain. Curriculum or materials created within the course of the employee’s duties for the District using District resources are considered to be the property of the District.</p> <p>Further, employees are expected to hold confidential all information deemed not to be for public consumption as determined by state law and Board policy. Employees also will respect the confidentiality of people served in the course of an employee’s duties and use information gained in a responsible manner. The Board may discipline, up to and including discharge, any employee who discloses confidential and/or private information learned during the course of the employee’s duties or learned as a result of the employee’s participation in a closed (executive) session of the Board. Discretion should be used even within the school system’s own network of communication and confidential information should only be communicated on a need to know basis. Employees shall not record or cause to be recorded a conversation by use of a hidden electronic or</p>	
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		<p>mechanical device which may include any combination of audio or video that reproduces a human conversation without the prior knowledge of all parties to the conversation.</p> <p>Administrators and supervisors may set forth specific rules and regulations governing staff conduct on the job within a particular building.</p> <p><u>Firearms and Weapons</u> Employees of the District shall not injure or threaten to injure another person; damage another's property or that of the District; or possess any firearm or other non- firearm weapon on school property at any time.</p> <p>For the purposes of this policy, the term "firearm" means (A) any weapon which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive; (B) the frame or receiver of any such weapon; (C) any firearm muffler or firearm silencer; or (D) any destructive device pursuant to</p> <p>18 U.S.C. 921 (4). Such term does not include an antique firearm pursuant to 18 U.S.C. 921 (16). For purposes of this policy, "non-firearm weapon" means any object, device, or instrument designed as a weapon or through its use is capable of intimidating threatening or producing bodily harm or which may be used to inflict injury, including but not limited to air guns; pellet guns; BB guns; fake or facsimile weapons; all knives; blades; clubs; metal knuckles; nun chucks; throwing stars; explosives; fireworks; mace or other propellants; stun guns; ammunition; poisons; chains; arrows; and objects that have been modified to serve as a weapon.</p> <p>District administrators are authorized to appropriate action, as circumstances warrant, to enforce this section of the policy including but not limited to requesting the assistance of law enforcement in accordance with Montana law.</p> <p>For the purposes of this policy, "school property" means within school buildings, in vehicles used for school purposes, or on owned or leased school land or grounds. "Building" specifically means a combination of any materials, whether mobile, portable, or fixed, to form a structure and the related facilities for the use or occupancy by persons or property owned or leased by a local school district that are used for instruction or for student activities as specified in Section 50-60- 101(2), MCA and Section 45-8-361, MCA. The term is construed as though followed by the words "or part or parts of a building" and is considered to include all stadiums, bleachers</p>	
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		<p>and other similar outdoor facilities, whether temporary or permanently fixed.</p> <p>This section does not apply to a law enforcement officer acting in the officer's official capacity or an individual previously authorized by the Board of Trustees to possess a firearm or weapon in a school building.</p> <p>The Board of Trustees shall annually review this policy and update this policy as determined necessary by the trustees based on changing circumstances pertaining to school safety.</p> <p>5321: The District maintains a complete personnel record for every current employee and former employee. The employees' personnel records shall be maintained in the District's administrative office, under the Superintendent's direct supervision. An employee will be given access to his or her personnel records, according to the guidelines developed by the Superintendent.</p> <p>In addition to the Superintendent or other designees, a committee or member of the Board, when authorized through Board action, may have access to cumulative personnel files. Counsel retained by the Board or the employee shall also have access to a cumulative personnel file, when specifically authorized by the Board or Superintendent, respectively.</p> <p>Access to information contained in the personnel records of District employees is governed by Policy 4340.</p> <p>Personnel records must be kept for 10 years after termination.</p> <p>DISTRICT OPERATIONS</p> <p>1310: The policies contained in this manual are adopted, implemented, and enforced in accordance with the supervisory authority vested with the Board of Trustees in accordance with Article X, section 8 of the Montana Constitution and related statutes, regulations and court decisions.</p> <p>Proposed new policies and proposed changes to existing policies shall be presented in writing for reading and discussion at a regular or special Board meeting. Interested parties may submit views, present data or arguments, orally or in writing, in support of or in opposition to proposed policy. Any written statement by a person, relative to a proposed policy or amendment, should be directed to the District Clerk prior to the final reading. The final vote for adoption shall take place not earlier than at the second (2nd) reading of the particular policy. New or revised policies that are required, or have required language changes based on State or Federal law, or are required changes by administrative rule, may be adopted after the first (1st) reading if</p>	
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		<p>sufficient notice has been given through the board agenda.</p> <p>All new or amended policies shall become effective on adoption; unless a specific effective date is stated in the motion for adoption. Policies, as adopted or amended, shall be made a part of the minutes of the meeting at which action was taken and also shall be included in the District’s policy manual. Policies of the District shall be reviewed on a regular basis.</p> <p>The Superintendent shall develop and maintain a current policy manual which includes all policies of the District. Every administrator, as well as staff, students, and other residents, shall have ready access to District policies.</p> <p>Under circumstances that require waiver of a policy, the policy may be suspended by a majority vote of the trustees present. To suspend a policy, however, all trustees must have received written notice of the meeting, which includes the proposal to suspend a policy and an explanation of the purpose of such proposed suspension.</p> <p>The Superintendent shall develop such administrative procedures as are necessary to ensure consistent implementation of policies adopted by the Board.</p> <p>When a written procedure is developed, the Superintendent shall submit it to the Board as an information item.</p> <p>2221: The Superintendent may order closure of schools in the event of extreme weather or other emergency, in compliance with established procedures for notifying parents, students, and staff.</p> <p>The Board of Trustees is authorized to declare that a state of emergency exists within the community. A declaration issued by the Board of Trustees is distinct from any declaration in effect or previously issued by local, state or federal authorities. An emergency declaration issued by the Board of Trustees authorizes the School District to take extraordinary measures to protect students and staff while delivering education services in a manner authorized by law. The method and location of instruction and related educational services shall be implemented in a manner that serves the needs of students, their families, and staff and preserves the School District’s full entitlement of funding.</p> <p>The trustees may order the emergency closure of schools for one (1) school day each year, without the need to reschedule the lost pupil instruction time when the closure is the result of an emergency. The 1-school- day closure under this subsection is not subject to the reduction in BASE aid pursuant to Section 20-9-805, MCA.</p>	
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		<p>In the event of a declared emergency, the School District shall avail itself of all flexibilities allowed by law, rule, or regulation and shall be otherwise governed by the school finance laws and rules of the state of Montana. The School District shall comply with auditing requirements and reserves the authority to assert its rights to manage school district funds or seek state and federal funds in a manner consistent with the full flexibility available under all applicable laws.</p> <p>If a declaration of emergency is declared by the Board of Trustees, it may later adopt a resolution that a reasonable effort has been made to reschedule the pupil-instruction time lost because of the unforeseen emergency. If the trustees adopt the resolution, the pupil-instruction time lost during the closure need not be rescheduled to meet the minimum requirement for aggregate hours that a school district must conduct during the school year in order to be entitled to full BASE aid. At least 75% of the pupil-instruction time lost due to the unforeseen emergency must have been made up before the trustees can declare that a reasonable effort has been made.</p> <p>For the purposes of this and related policies, "reasonable effort" means the rescheduling or extension of the school district's instructional calendar to make up at least 75% of the hours of pupil instruction lost due to an unforeseen emergency through any combination of the following as outlined in accordance with Policies 2050 and 2100: extending the school year beyond the last scheduled day; the use of scheduled vacation days in the district's adopted school calendar the conduct of pupil instruction on Saturdays; extending instructional hours during the school day.</p> <p>4330: School facilities are available to the community for educational, civic, cultural, and other noncommercial uses consistent with the public interest, when such use will not interfere with the school program or school-sponsored activities. Use of school facilities for school purposes has precedence over all other uses. Persons on school premises must abide by District conduct rules at all times.</p> <p>Student and school-related organizations shall be granted the use of school facilities at no cost. Other organizations granted the use of school facilities shall pay fees and costs. The Superintendent will develop procedures to manage community use of school facilities, which will be reviewed and approved by the Board. Use of school facilities requires the Superintendent's approval and is subject to the procedures.</p>	
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		<p>Administration will approve and schedule various uses of school facilities. A master calendar will be kept in the office for scheduling dates to avoid conflicts during the school year. Should a conflict arise, the District reserves the right to cancel an approved request when it is determined that the facilities are needed for school purposes. Requests for use of school facilities must be submitted to the Superintendent’s office in advance of the event.</p> <p>The School Facilities and Grounds Use and Liability Release Agreement can be obtained by contacting the District Office. The School Facilities and Grounds Use and Liability Release Agreement must be completed, signed, and returned to the [Superintendent, district office, school office, administration, Athletic Director] [PICK APPROPRIATE PERSONNEL] prior to the use of the facilities or grounds.</p> <p>The requesting organization or individual must complete, sign, and return an “assumption of risk” statement prior to the use of the facilities or grounds.</p>	
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June 2021

Part III – Updated Compliance for the District’s Previously Adopted Plan for the Safe Return to In-person Instruction and Continuity of Services:

Section 2001(i)(3) of the ARP Act states that a school district that developed a plan for the safe return to in-person instruction and continuity of services prior to the date of enactment of the ARP Act will be deemed to have met the requirement to develop a plan under section 2001(i)(1) as long as the plan meets the statutory requirements (*i.e.*, is publicly available on the LEA's website and was developed after the LEA sought and took into account public comment).

The School District’s plan meets the requirements of Section 2001(i)(1) and (i)(2) of the ARP Act. The School District’s plan is available on our website and, as noted above, was developed through a process that included extensive public comment. Further, we have, as part of the organization of the School District’s plan for purposes of the ARP Act, revised the School District’s plan at a meeting held on June 7, 2021 with the COVID Task Force that included not just a notice of opportunity for public input but which specifically invited meaningful consultation with and input from:

1. students; families; school and district administrators, special education administrators; teachers, principals, school leaders, other educators, school staff, and their unions; and
2. stakeholders representing the interests of children with disabilities, English learners, children experiencing homelessness, children in foster care, migratory students, children who are incarcerated, and other underserved students.

We have considered the input of all affected parties and have carefully deliberated regarding the best possible means by which our district can provide safe effective learning environments for each of our students.

June 2021 - September 30, 2024

Part IV – Schedule for Future Review and Updates:

Consideration of this Safe Return to Schools and Continuity of Services Plan shall be added as a standing agenda item on each regular and special meeting of the board of trustees throughout the 2021-24 school years. The agenda item shall, at a minimum, include notice of any changes to the plan recommended by the administration with an invitation for input, notice of opportunity for public input, and consultation with:

1. students; families; school and district administrators (including special education administrators); teachers, principals, school leaders, other educators, school staff, and their unions; and
2. stakeholders representing the interests of children with disabilities, English learners, children experiencing homelessness, children in foster care, children who are incarcerated, and other underserved students.
3. opportunities for input were also given via survey, board listening sessions, and building listening sessions.

June 2022 – December 2022

No significant changes to district operations or student learning due to COVID-19. Plans remain in place in case of escalating changes and/or situations due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Board will be asked to review and adopt the continuation of this plan in December 2022.

June 2023

On February 10, 2023, the President temporarily extended the declared national emergency for COVID-19. However, this announcement concluded with the statement, "I anticipate terminating the emergency concerning the COVID-19 pandemic on May 11, 2023." This statement is a signal that the declared national emergency will conclude on or around May 11, 2023.

Missoula County Public Schools Policy Listing: <https://www.mcpsmt.org/policy>

Missoula County Public Schools COVID Information: <https://www.mcpsmt.org/COVID-19>

[MT-PEC](#) *A Roadmap for Safely Reopening Montana's Public Schools Using Emergency School District Policies.*