

The Strategic Public Schools Adopted:



Malta Public Schools
A Tradition of Excellence

Plan of Malta

September 10,

2025

Revised: December 10, 2025

Overview

Malta Public Schools has created a new direction for the school district to strategically focus its resources on identified wants, preferences, and needs of its community. As part of this process, Malta Public Schools has been engaging in strategic planning and thinking process that is intended to lead to a stronger and more vital school district. This strategic plan is intended to help Malta Public Schools in focusing its resources in a manner which will best benefit the children enrolled in Malta Public Schools.

The Malta Board of Trustees and Staff Leadership Team regularly revisit and refine this Plan to reinforce its commitments to each child, to families, to our staff, to our community. The Board and Staff, through this process, to date have discussed at length how it could best meet the present and future needs of each student of the Malta Public Schools.

Malta Public Schools' Board and Staff Leadership Team embrace the method of strategic planning as a continual and ongoing process to set the direction of the District for years to come. This is not a "strategic planning project" that is completed. Adoption of a strategic plan is an affirmation of the general intent and direction articulated by the Core Ideology, Envisioned Future and Goals and Strategic Objectives. It is understood that progress toward achieving strategic objectives will be assessed annually, and the plan will be updated based on achievement and changes in the needs of each child served by the Malta Public Schools.

Executive Summary

The key components of the District's Strategic Plan are summarized on the following page: A more comprehensive description of these components is included in this publication following this Executive Summary:

CORE PURPOSE:

Aligned with Article X, Section 1 of the Montana Constitution, the Core Purpose of the District is to provide opportunities for well-rounded development and support each student's full educational potential through high standards and a positive school environment.

CORE VALUES OF MALTA PUBLIC SCHOOLS:

1. **Commitment to Excellence:** *We uphold a culture of high standards and expectations, ensuring that education, conduct, and student involvement are valued and recognized.*
2. **Community Engagement:** *We foster mutual collaboration with our community, demonstrating that the school supports local initiatives while benefiting from the community's support.*
3. **Resilience and Resourcefulness:** *We cultivate a culture of grit, perseverance, and determination which empowers individuals to make the most of available resources and face challenges with tenacity.*

OUR LONG-TERM ENVISIONED FUTURE:

To establish a pioneering Montana Public School that serves as a model of educational excellence, providing individualized learning pathways, enhancing career readiness, attracting top talent and and fostering strong partnerships with families and local businesses.

OUR SHORT-TERM GOALS/PRIORITIES AND STATEMENTS OF INTENDED OUTCOME ARE AS FOLLOWS:

Goal Area 1: Facilities/Infrastructure: Statement of Intended Outcome: *We have improved and modernized our school facilities to enhance the educational experience and operational efficiency in our district.*

Goal Area 2: Students: Statement of Intended Outcome: *We have enhanced student learning through individualized instruction and expanded educational opportunities while recognizing student achievements.*

Goal Area 3: Staff: Statement of Intended Outcome: *We have attracted and retained high-quality staff by enhancing compensation, fostering collaboration, and improving workplace culture.*

Goal Area 4: Community: Statement of Intended Outcome: *We have strengthened relationships with parents and the community to foster trust, collaboration, and meaningful engagement in education.*

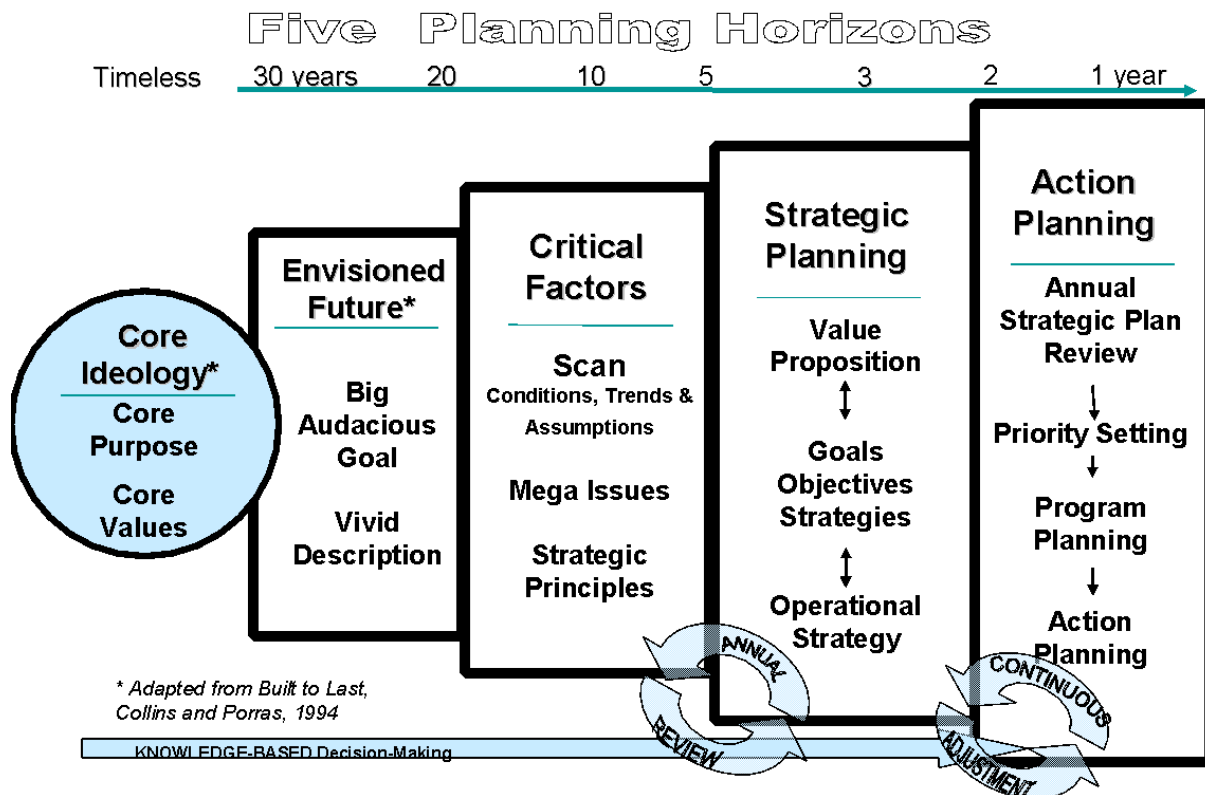
Goal Area 5: Financial/Budgeting: Statement of Intended Outcome: *We have ensured financial sustainability and transparency in our budgeting practices to support educational programs and initiatives.*

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Strategic Planning Framework

The framework used by Malta Public Schools for its strategic planning process was adapted from a model developed by Jim Collins, author of “Built to Last” and “Good to Great.” The Board focused on five different planning horizons, starting with the long-term issues first to provide focus to shorter-term efforts.



Part I: Planning Horizon: Timeless Core Ideology¹ of the Malta Public Schools

The Core Purpose of Malta Public Schools is to:

Aligned with Article X, Section 1 of the Montana Constitution, the Core Purpose of the District is to provide opportunities for well-rounded development and support of each student's full educational potential through high standards and a positive school environment.

Core Values of Malta Public Schools:

1. **Commitment to Excellence:** *We uphold a culture of high standards and expectations, ensuring that education, conduct, and student involvement are valued and recognized.*
2. **Community Engagement:** *We foster mutual collaboration with our community, demonstrating that the school supports local initiatives while benefiting from the community's support.*
3. **Resilience and Resourcefulness:** *We cultivate a culture of grit, perseverance, and determination which empowers individuals to make the most of available resources and face challenges with tenacity.*

Part II: Planning Horizon: 10-15 Years Envisioned Future² of the Malta Public Schools

Big Audacious Goal:

To establish a pioneering Montana Public School that serves as a model of educational excellence, providing individualized learning pathways, enhancing career readiness, attracting top talent and and fostering strong partnerships with families and local businesses.

Vivid Descriptors of Our Desired Future:

As a result of our efforts, we have accomplished the following:

Vivid Descriptors of the Goal:

- ***Innovative Learning Environment:*** *Launch a new elementary school equipped with state-of-the-art technology and resources, including personalized academic coaching and coding programs that ignite students' passion for learning.*
- ***Career-Focused Pathways:*** *Create comprehensive career paths that offer students the opportunity to earn certifications and degrees, ensuring they graduate with the skills and confidence needed for the workforce.*

¹ **Core ideology** describes a school district's consistent identity that transcends all changes related to its relevant environment. It consists of two elements - **Core Purpose** - the school district's reason for being - and **Core Values** - essential and enduring principles that guide a school district.

² **Envisioned Future** conveys a concrete yet unrealized vision for the school district. It consists of a **Big Audacious Goal** - a clear and compelling catalyst that serves as a focal point for effort - and **Vivid descriptions** - vibrant and engaging descriptions of what it will be like to achieve the big audacious goal.

- **Community-Centric Collaboration:** Cultivate robust communication channels between schools and families, fostering a collaborative spirit that empowers parents to engage in their children's educational journeys and reinforces the importance of education.
- **Sustainable Practices:** Develop a self-sustaining greenhouse that provides whole food sources for students, staff and our community while teaching them about sustainability and nutrition.
- **Recognition and Celebration:** Implement a system that highlights and celebrates student achievements in academics and extracurricular activities, ensuring every student feels valued and recognized for their efforts.
- **Resource Investment:** Commit to providing top-tier resources, such as advanced technology and transportation solutions, including innovative options that ensure equitable access for every student.

Part III: Planning Horizon: 5-10 Years

Assumptions Regarding the Relevant Future for the Malta Public Schools

In order to make progress toward the 10-15 year Envisioned Future, Malta Public Schools must constantly anticipate the strategic factors likely to affect its ability to succeed and assess the implications of those factors. This process of building foresight about the future will help Malta Public Schools to constantly recalibrate its view relevant future view, a basis upon which to update the strategic plan on an annual basis. As the outcome-oriented goals that will form the basis of the long-range strategic plan will be based on this foresight, an annual review of these statements will be an appropriate method of determining and ensuring the ongoing relevance of the strategic plan.

See Appendix "A" for the Assumptions about the future that impact the success of our District and our students.

Part IV: Planning Horizon: 1-5 Years

Outcome-Oriented Goals and Strategic Objectives

The following thinking represents priorities for the next five years. They are areas in which Malta Public Schools will explicitly state the conditions or attributes it wants to achieve. These outcome statements will define, "what will constitute future success." The achievement of each goal/priority will move the school district toward the realization of its Envisioned Future. Strategic Objectives provide direction and actions on how the school district will accomplish its articulated goals. All strategies included in the strategic plan should be considered accomplishable at some point in the future. Strategic Objectives are reviewed annually by the Malta Public Schools Board, Staff Leadership Team, and those specified below are identified using a 1-2 year timeframe.

NOTE: The District will populate Appendix "B" as it makes progress on this Strategic Plan.

Goals of the Malta Public Schools

Goal Area 1: Facilities/Infrastructure: *Statement of Intended Outcome: We have improved and modernized our school facilities to enhance the educational experience and operational efficiency in our district.*

1-2 Year Strategic Objectives:

1. *Prioritize renovations and upgrades to the elementary school facilities to create a safe and conducive learning environment.*

2. *Invest in advanced technology infrastructure to ensure equitable access and effective utilization for both educational offerings and district operations.*
3. *Expand and enhance transportation access by upgrading equipment and optimizing routes to ensure reliable and safe transportation for all students.*

Goal Area 2: Students: Statement of Intended Outcome: *We have enhanced student learning through individualized instruction and expanded educational opportunities while recognizing student achievements.*

1-2 Year Strategic Objectives:

1. *Implement strategies to increase individualized instruction and support services tailored to meet the diverse needs of each student.*
2. *Expand high school offerings, including advanced courses and extracurricular activities, to provide students with enhanced educational and career opportunities.*
3. *Develop and implement a recognition program that acknowledges student accomplishments in both academics and extracurricular activities to foster motivation and pride.*

Goal Area 3: Staff: Statement of Intended Outcome: *We have attracted and retained high-quality staff by enhancing compensation, fostering collaboration, and improving workplace culture.*

1-2 Year Strategic Objectives:

1. *Review and revise salary and benefit packages to ensure competitiveness in the job market and enhance staff retention.*
2. *Develop targeted recruitment strategies to attract qualified candidates to the district, including outreach to local colleges and universities.*
3. *Collaborate with the Union, Administration, Staff and Community Stakeholders to create initiatives that support recruitment and retention efforts while ensuring staff voices are heard through feedback mechanisms on school culture and working conditions.*

Goal Area 4: Community: Statement of Intended Outcome: *We have strengthened relationships with parents and the community to foster trust, collaboration, and meaningful engagement in education.*

1-2 Year Strategic Objectives:

1. *Develop and implement a communication plan that enhances collaboration and effective messaging with parents and community stakeholders.*

2. *Establish initiatives to build trust and support between the school and families, encouraging open dialogue and partnership.*
3. *Create opportunities for parental engagement in educational activities, supporting parents' active participation in their children's education.*

Goal Area 5: Financial/Budgeting: Statement of Intended Outcome: *We have ensured financial sustainability and transparency in our budgeting practices to support educational programs and initiatives.*

1-2 Year Strategic Objectives:

1. *Explore and pursue diversified funding sources, such as grants, donations, and partnerships with local foundations, to support school programs and initiatives.*
2. *Enhance communication with stakeholders regarding budgeting processes, financial needs, and the overall fiscal health of the district to promote transparency and community involvement.*

APPENDIX "A"

MEGATRENDS ANALYSIS

5-10 Year Planning Horizon

Creating the Assumptions – On an ongoing basis, the Malta Public Schools Board and Staff Leadership Team made many assumptions about the future. While many different assumptions are made, what follows are those assumptions that are likely to have the greatest influence on the development of Malta Public Schools's strategic plan.

Assumptions:

1. **Housing Stability:** The ongoing lack of affordable housing in the area will continue to challenge teacher recruitment, although community support for educators needing housing may help mitigate this issue.
2. **Student Enrollment Trends:** Fluctuations in student enrollment are likely to persist, influenced by local demographics and community initiatives aimed at attracting families back to Malta.
3. **Changing Demographics:** As fewer agricultural families remain in the area, a demographic shift towards younger families returning to Malta may impact community resources and educational needs.
4. **Workforce Mobility:** The trend of a more mobile workforce will likely create challenges and opportunities for local employment, requiring schools to adapt to the evolving needs of transient populations.
5. **Economic Landscape:** Agriculture will remain the primary economic driver within the community, but increasing competition for agricultural lands by external entities may destabilize local markets.

6. **Financial Pressures:** With high interest rates and housing costs, families may face financial challenges, impacting the affordability of living in the community and potentially influencing enrollment patterns.
7. **Social Values Preservation:** The appeal of small-town life with strong family values may continue to attract new employees, emphasizing the importance of individualized instruction to retain students amidst competition from alternative educational options.
8. **AI and Technology Integration:** The impact of AI and technology on education will grow, presenting both challenges and opportunities for enhancing student learning experiences.

Mega Issues facing the Malta Public Schools

Mega issues are issues of strategic importance, which represent choices the school district will need to make in defining the ultimate direction of its long-range plan. These issues represent potential impediments to achievement of the Envisioned Future, and form a basis for dialogue about the choices facing the school district. These questions can serve as an ongoing "menu" of strategic issues that, using a knowledge-based approach in gathering insights relative to Malta Public Schools' strategic position and directional choices for each of the issues, can be used by the Board to create regular opportunities for strategic dialogue about the future issues facing the school district.

Mega-Issue Questions:

1. **Housing Shortage and Affordability:** The lack of affordable housing coupled with high housing costs is creating barriers for both potential residents and educators, necessitating innovative solutions to attract and retain staff.
2. **Fluctuating Enrollment:** The ongoing ebb and flow of student enrollment presents challenges to resource allocation, requiring strategic initiatives to stabilize and boost enrollment numbers.
3. **Aging Population and Workforce:** The aging workforce poses challenges for local employment and economic sustainability, necessitating strategies to attract younger workers and retain talent in the community.
4. **Competition for Agricultural Resources:** Increasing external competition for agricultural lands may threaten local economies and farming viability, requiring collaboration among stakeholders to address this concern.
5. **Community Demographic Changes:** The migration of younger families back to Malta indicates shifting community dynamics that may alter the needs and resources of local schools and services.
6. **Technological Advancements:** The dual-edged nature of advancements in AI and technology presents both opportunities for enhancing educational offerings and challenges in adapting to new methodologies.
7. **Impact of Transient Populations:** The transient nature of certain economic influxes, such as those driven by pipelines, can disrupt community stability

and educational consistency, creating unique challenges for the school system.

- 8. Preservation of Community Values:** Balancing the appeal of small-town values with the desire for modernization and technological integration is essential to maintain community cohesion and attract new families.

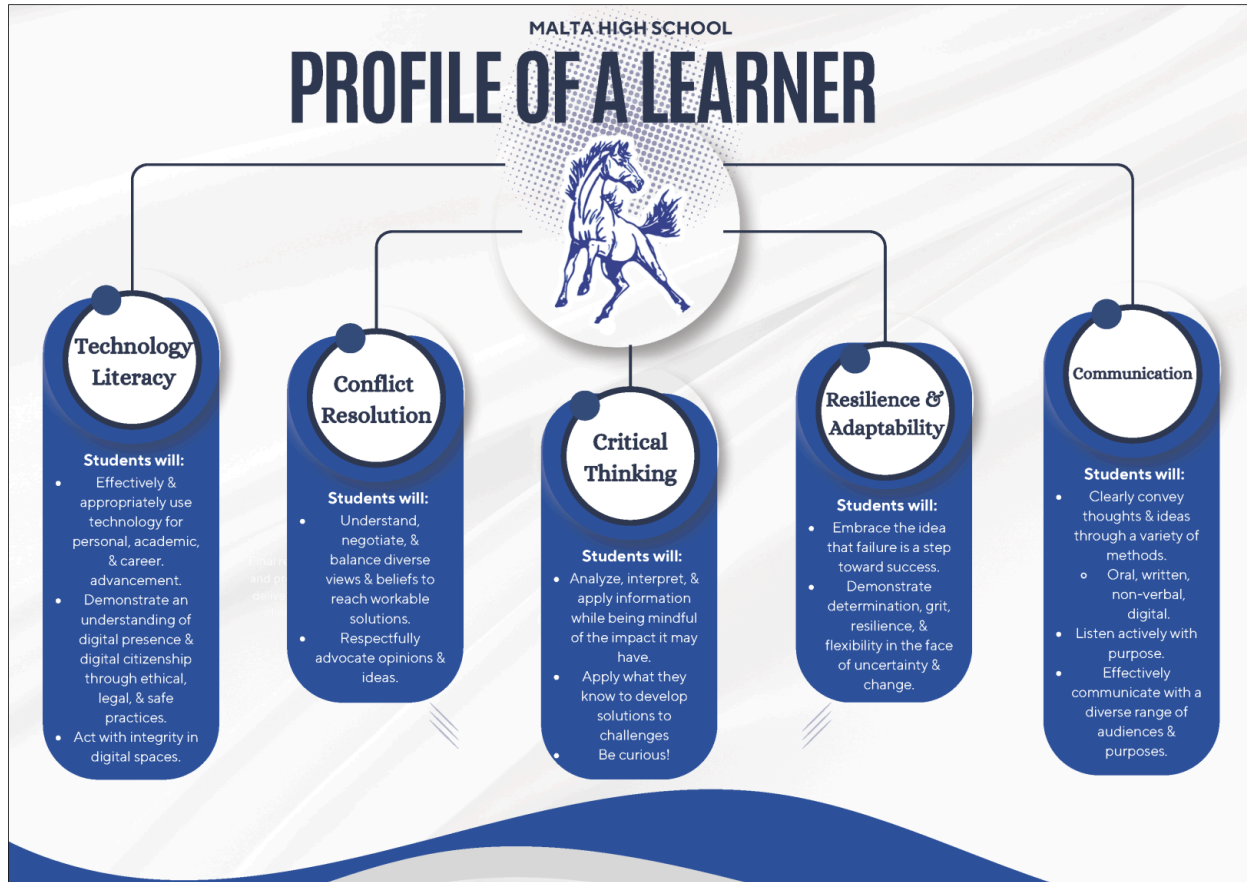
Knowledge-Based Decision-Making Questions

The Board should 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:

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

Appendix “B”

The District’s Graduation Profile



Appendix “C”

The District’s Out-of-District Attendance Policy

Board Policy Manual
Malta Public Schools
Printed: 09/15/2025 11:42 AM

Policy 3141: Nonresident Student Enrollment

Status: ADOPTED

Original Adopted Date: 08/02/2005 | Last Revised Date: 02/12/2025 | Last Reviewed Date: 09/10/2025

Nonresident Student Enrollment

For the purposes of this policy, except as provided in Section 20-9-707, MCA, a student’s district of residence must be determined on the basis of the provisions of Section 1-1-215, MCA.

Mandatory Nonresident Enrollment for Extenuating Circumstances

The District shall enroll a student who resides outside of the District whenever the extenuating circumstances listed in Section 20-5-321, MCA, exist.

Applying for Nonresident Enrollment with No Extenuating Circumstances

Whenever the extenuating circumstances listed in Section 20-5-321, MCA do not exist and mandatory enrollment of a student who resides outside the District is not required, the District may enroll the nonresident student at the request of the student’s parent or guardian as specified in this policy. The District shall serve children who are residents of the district and nonresident children seeking mandatory enrollment for extenuating circumstances prior to enrolling nonresidents students seeking to apply when extenuating circumstances do not exist.

Every nonresident student who seeks to enroll in the District shall apply for admission for the succeeding school year by June 15th. All applications shall be submitted using the form found at Policy 3141F as developed by the Superintendent of Public Instruction. For planning purposes, late applications may be considered. Nonresident students shall reapply for admission each school year. Admission in one school year does not infer or guarantee admission in subsequent years. Each application shall be assigned a unique number distinct from a student identification number that does not disclose a student’s personally identifiable information consistent with Policy 3600. Within 10 days of the initial application for an attendance, the District shall notify the parent or guardian of the child and district of residence involved in the out-of-district attendance agreement of application the anticipated date for approval or disapproval of the agreement application by the Board of Trustees.

The Board of Trustees authorizes the District Administrator to review the applications for nonresident enrollment consistent with this policy and Section 20-5-320, MCA. Not more than 30 days following the application deadline or the receipt of an application, the District Administrator shall submit to the Board of Trustees a list of students who are recommended

for enrollment and a list of students who are not recommended for enrollment based on the factors established in this policy and the District’s integrated strategic action plan. The Board of Trustees shall make the decision to approve or deny requests for nonresident enrollment during a properly noticed meeting of the Board. Each application requiring

discussion of confidential student information shall be considered during a closed session consistent with Policy 1400 after giving prior notice to the parents that their application will be considered by the Board of Trustees in a closed session of the Board. Any motion on an application must be made in open session and shall be made referring to the distinct application number.

In reviewing and determining whether to approve an application for attendance by a nonresident child, the District Administrator shall recommend for approval and Board of Trustees shall approve the application unless the Board of Trustees find that the impact of approval of the application will negatively impact the quality of education for resident pupils by grade level, by school, or in the District in the aggregate in one or more of the following ways:

1. The approval would result in exceeding limits of:
 - A. building construction standards pursuant to Title 50, chapter 60, MCA;
 - B. capacity and ingress and egress elements, either by individual room or by school building, of any fire code authorized by Title 50, chapter 3;
 - C. maximum student contact hours for a teacher of the class or maximum class sizes under accreditation standards of the board of public education; or

D evacuation elements of the district’s adopted school safety plan.

The Board authorizes the District Administrator to coordinate with the local fire marshal, law enforcement, health department, and first responders when developing standards under this Subsection 1. Findings shall be adopted by the Board in the District’s strategic action plan or plan for continuous improvement specified in Policy 1610.

2. The approval would impede meeting goals, standards, or objectives of quality education adopted by the Board in the District’s strategic action plan or plan for continuous

improvement specified in Policy 1610. The Board finds that expulsion or suspension from this District would impede in meeting goals standards, or objectives of quality education stated in the plan.

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3. The approval would risk jeopardizing the educational quality adopted by the Board in the District's strategic action plan or plan for continuous improvement specified in Policy 1610 because the nonresident child who is applying was:
- A. truant as defined in Section 20-5-106, MCA, in the last school district attended;
 - B. expelled by another school district at any time; or
 - C. suspended in school or out of school in any school district in which the nonresident child was enrolled in any of the 3 school fiscal years preceding the school fiscal year for which attendance is requested. This Subsection C does not apply to a student who is eligible for special education or related services.

Review and consideration of applications and the records of applicants as well as decisions regarding admission shall be consistent with District policies regarding nondiscrimination. In the event the District receives more applications than the District can accommodate, the District shall prioritize applications on the basis of the quality of education for students

who are residents of the district of attendance and the obligations of resident taxpayers. This priority may include applications from children of District employees, applications from previously enrolled students with demonstrated good behavior, and children with siblings who have previously enrolled in the District as nonresident students. This priority is specifically established and shall be implemented on a rational basis to provide a quality education to students enrolled in the District.

Within 10 days of approval or disapproval of an application for non-resident enrollment, District shall provide copies of the approved or disapproved attendance agreement application to the parent or guardian and to the district of residence. In the case of a disapproval, the District shall provide the specific allowable reason for the disapproval consistent with this policy and supporting documentation.

For an approved application and out-of-district attendance agreement application the District shall provide a copy of the completed agreement to the county superintendent of schools of the county of residence, county superintendent of schools of the county of attendance, and the Superintendent of Public Instruction. Whenever a student enrolls in and attends a school outside of the student's district of residence under the provisions of this policy, by July 15 following the year of attendance, the district of attendance shall notify the district of residence of an obligation under Section 20-5-323, MCA.

If an out-of-district attendance agreement application is disapproved or no action is taken, the parent or guardian may appeal the disapproval or lack of action in accordance with Montana law.

Transportation

- a. An attendance agreement established under 20-5-320 or 20-5-321 must set forth the financial obligations, if any, for costs incurred for transportation as provided in § 20-5-323 (6), MCA and Title 20, chapter 10, MCA.
- b. If the attendance agreement is for a child with a disability who has transportation included in the child's individualized education program, transportation or the costs of transportation must be paid by the child's district of residence.
- c. Unless the attendance agreement is for a child with a disability who has transportation included in the child's individualized education program and unless otherwise agreed to in the out-of-district attendance agreement:
 - i. when a child has approval to attend a school outside the child's district of

residence because of a parent's or guardian's request under the provisions of §§ 20-5-320 or 20-5-321(1)(c), MCA, the parent or guardian of the child is responsible for transportation and the child is not an eligible transportee as defined in § 20-10-101, MCA. The district of attendance may discretionarily provide transportation for a child who is not an eligible transportee pursuant to § 20-10-122, MCA.

- ii. when a child attends a school outside the child's district of residence under the provisions of § 20-5-321(1)(a) or (1)(b), MCA, the district of residence is responsible for transportation; and
 - iii. when a child attends a school outside the child's district of residence under the provisions of § 20-5-321(1)(d) or (1)(e), MCA, the district of attendance is responsible for transportation consistent with and subject to the provisions of 20 U.S.C. 6312(c)(5).
- d. The amount, if any, charged for transportation may not exceed the lesser of the average transportation cost for each student in the child's district of residence or 35 cents a mile. The

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average expenditures for the district transportation fund for the preceding school fiscal year must be calculated by dividing the transportation fund expenditures by the October 1 enrollment count for the preceding fiscal year.

Montana Code Annotated

1-1-215	Residence - rules for determining
20-5-314	Reciprocal attendance agreement with adjoining state or province
20-5-320	Non-Resident Enrollment
20-5-320	Attendance with discretionary approval
20-5-321	Attendance with mandatory approval – tuition and transportation
20-5-322	Residency determination – notification – appeal for attendance agreement
20-5-323	Tuition and transportation rates

Administrative Rules of Montana

10.10.301B	Out-of-District Attendance Agreements
10.55.712	Class Size Elementary
10.55.713	Teacher load and class size

Cross References

2158	Parent and Family Engagement and Educational Involvement
2161	Special Education
2161-P(1)	Special Education - Special Education Procedures
2413	Credit Transfer and Assessment for Placement
3110	Entrance, Placement, and Transfer
3125	Education of Homeless Children
3125-NF(1)	Education of Homeless Children - McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Dispute Resolution Form
3150	Part-Time Enrollment

Appendix “D”
Institutionalized Strategies