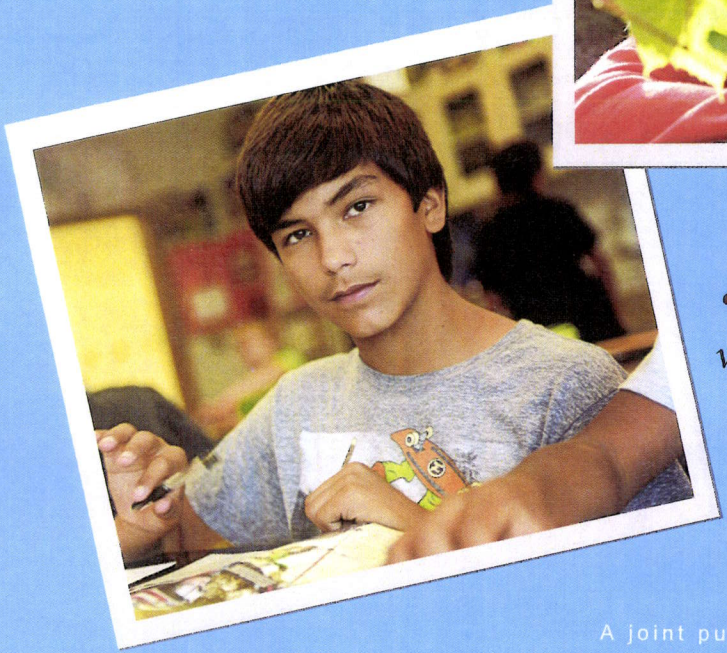

MT PEC

Montana Public Education Center

The Great Work of Montana's Public Schools

Volume III October 2015

"It is the goal of the people to establish a system of education which will develop the full educational potential of each person. Equality of educational opportunity is guaranteed to each person of the state."

Article X, Section 1, Montana Constitution

A joint publication of the following education advocacy groups

MASBO	MEA-MFT	MQEC	MREA	MTSBA	SAM
Montana Association of School Business Officials	Public Schools, Public Service	Montana Quality Education Coalition	Montana Rural Education Association	Montana School Boards Association	School Administrators of Montana

School Funding Interim Commission
January 12, 2016
Exhibit 30

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This information has been presented
for the use of parents, state policymakers,
our members and the public at large.

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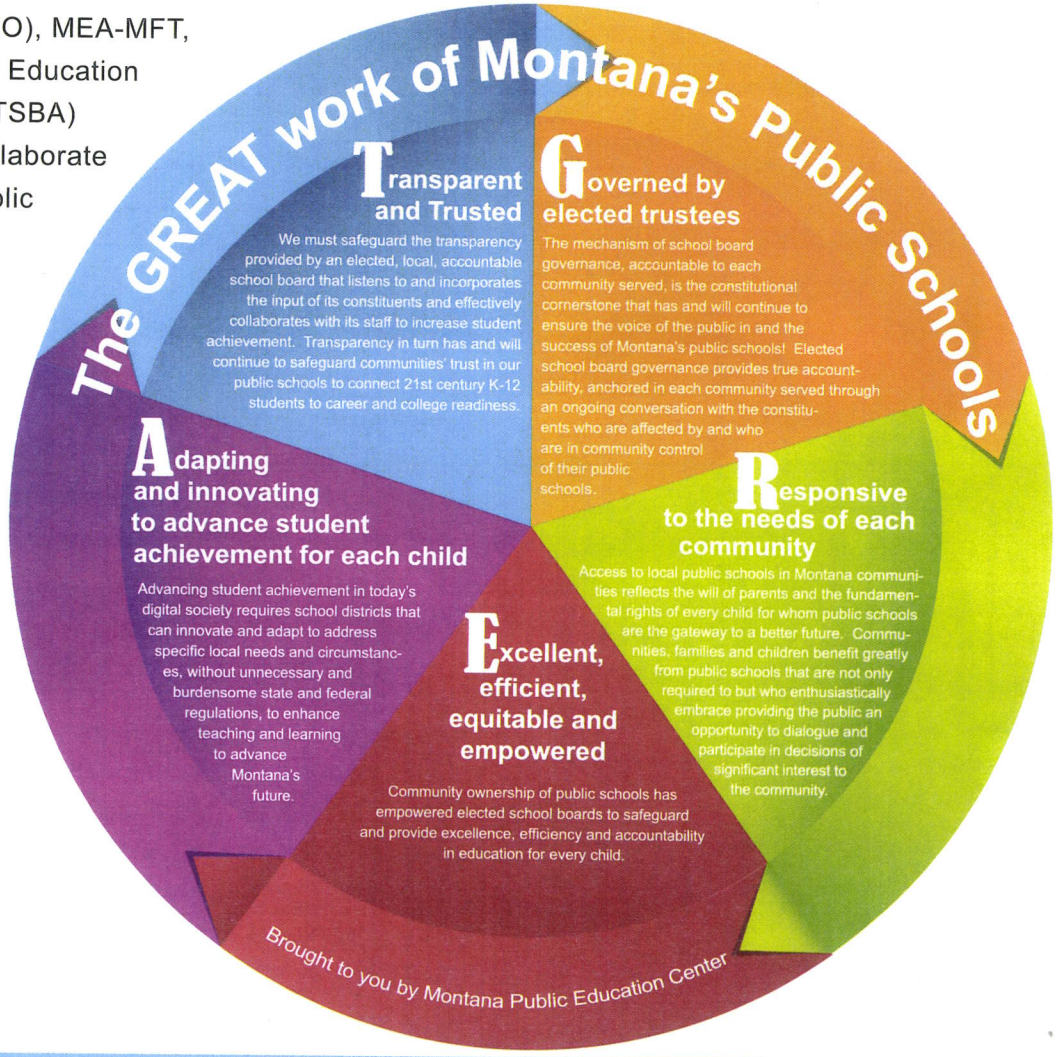
Introduction and Executive Summary

The Montana Association of School Business Officials (MASBO), MEA-MFT, Montana Quality Education Coalition (MQEC), Montana Rural Education Association (MREA), Montana School Boards Association (MTSBA) and School Administrators of Montana (SAM) are proud to collaborate in spreading the word about the Great Work of Montana's Public Schools.

Through careful stewardship, engagement of communities and inspiration provided through the Montana Constitution, Montana's Public Schools have evolved over the last 150 years into community owned centers of excellence, life-readiness and opportunity. Along the way, our public schools have earned a well-deserved reputation as places where tradition is treasured and communities are connected, futures are readied and potentials are realized, children are cherished and kindness is kindled, students are stimulated and inspired, and where excellence is encouraged.

We invite you to join us in the important and inspiring work of ensuring individualized excellence for each child educated in Montana's Public Schools.

Learn more at mt-pec.org.



Montana's Public Schools are **governed** by elected school trustees

"...Most of our ongoing conversations with our constituents have regarded classroom space... we are becoming very overcrowded in our elementary and our middle school... So classroom space has been a premium for us... Also we're very conscious of what the public wants from curriculum, so we're constantly adapting curriculum to provide for those public needs and hopefully fulfilling jobs in the Flathead."

— Mary Ruby, Kalispell Public Schools Trustee

Local school boards are made up of over 1,400 Montanans that come from all walks of life - including accountants, bankers, farmers, ranchers, retirees, aunts, uncles, mothers, fathers, friends and neighbors.

What binds this diverse group of volunteer leaders together is their desire to serve their community and help prepare children for a lifetime of success and happiness.

Elected trustees in Montana volunteer nearly 750,000 hours each year in pursuit of increased student achievement, taking on complex and sometimes controversial challenges with no compensation whatsoever. Elected trustees contribute the equivalent of 360 FTE positions provided free of charge each year, providing taxpayers over $14 million in savings each year compared to what those positions would cost if filled by employees.

Elected trustees oversee the employment of over 25,000 public employees who educate, support, transport, supervise, feed and protect the safety of over 147,000 children, in virtually every community in the state, every day of the week throughout the school year. School boards govern for excellence and efficiency in equal measures and the results of their efforts speak for themselves. Montana's Public Schools provide performance that compares favorably by any measure, nationally or even internationally and elected trustees deliver these results for below average costs when compared to other states in our Nation. Elected trustees ensure preservation and fulfillment of important constitutional guarantees afforded Montana's citizens.

"Our locally elected board of trustees sets a vision for our school district... that means that all kids are engaged in learning today for life tomorrow. They provide the wind beneath our wings... they set the direction for the school district. We move forward with their guidance and support and their knowledge of our community... and most of all with their spirit for the children... they are volunteers, they are elected to serve and they get no "compensation"... their only compensation is to see children succeed... so they push us forward all the time to make sure that happens."

— Tammy Lacey Superintendent Great Falls Public Schools

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Montana's Public Schools are **responsive** to the needs of each community

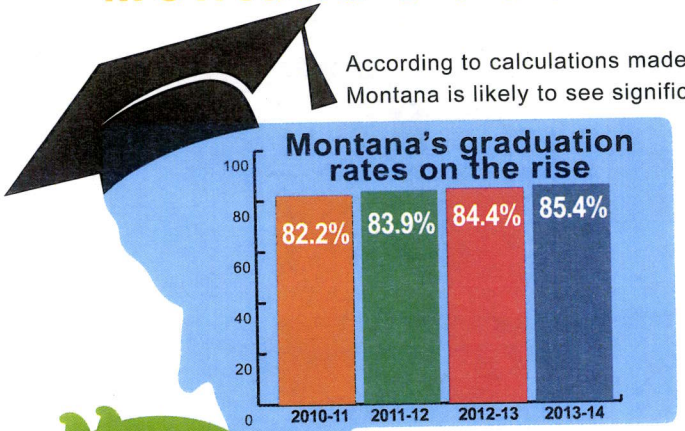
Our constitutional founders got it right when they designed the governance of Montana's public schools. Our school districts are generally supervised by the Board of Public Education and funded by the Legislature, but they are also community owned through elected school boards, which are vested with "supervision and control" of all publicly-funded K-12 education in Montana.

Additional safeguards employed to ensure each community's voice in how its schools are governed and run include the constitutional rights of the public's right to know, influence, and participate in the operations and activities of its public schools. These constitutional guarantees afforded Montana citizens cannot be replicated in the private sector and provide an assurance that each community has a voice and a seat at the table when it comes to public education.

"Our high school board has spent the last five years *really* focusing on being **responsive** to our community's needs... that our school board needs to be effective, our meetings need to be effective, and that we get away from the idea that average was OK... we've worked the last three years with strategic planning to put programs in place, give teachers the resources they need in the classroom, to put us in the top 20 percent of schools *in the nation* by every academic measure."

— Sabrina Steketee, Jefferson High School Trustee

Montana's Public Schools are designed for excellence



According to calculations made by the *Alliance for Excellent Education,* Montana is likely to see significant economic gains as a result of increases in its high school graduation rate over the period of 2009 to 2014, which resulted in 520 additional high school graduates. The Alliance estimates Montana will see a $5.9 million annual boost to the state's economy going forward and an increase of $12.3 million in spending on homes and a $700,000 increase in automobile sales. Collectively, the additional graduates will likely earn an additional **$95 million** over the course of their lifetimes, compared to if they had not graduated from high school. Additional earning equals additional tax revenues and less reliance on public assistance programs. This benefits all citizens.

$5.9 million annual boost to **Montana's economy**

$12.3 million home sales

$700,000 automobile sales

Assessment/Test Scores

Test Scores	2012		2013		2014	
	MT	Natl	MT	Natl	MT	Natl
SAT*						
VERBAL	536	496	538	491	555	497
MATH	536	514	541	503	552	513
WRITING	511	488	513	480	530	487

** Scholastic Aptitude Test-- High Score 800. In 2014, 17 percent of Montana graduating seniors took the SAT. Nationally, 43 percent of graduating seniors took the SAT.*

Montana's public school students were found to be the **4th best** in the world in science **6th best** in the world in math *

Montana's average 8th grade science score is 163, ranked 1st in the nation

Montana's average 8th grade reading score is 272, ranked 6th in the nation

Montana Public Schools had the second best (lowest) white/Hispanic achievement gap in the nation

*Recent NAEP-TIMSS linking study

"Education is what makes a difference in our society. I believe in the game changer, the door opener, the opportunity maker...The enterprise that we call public education..."

— Tammy Lacey, Superintendent, Great Falls Public Schools

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Montana's Public Schools are **efficient**

Montana's Public Schools

Per Pupil Expenditures

Ranked **29th**

Montana's costs are: **$850** below national average

Annual Savings of $123 million to Montana taxpayers each year compared to national averages

Montana's Public Schools

Per Graduate Expenditures*

Ranked **38th**

Montana's costs are: **$2,204** below national average

Graduation represents the universal benchmark for success of K-12 public education and Montana's public schools produce graduates at a cost lower than all but a handful of states in the nation.

*Derived from a combination of graduation rates and per pupil expenditures

Montana's Public Schools

Per Capita Expenditures

Ranked **41st**

Montana's costs are: **$292** below national average

School Revenues

Ranked **29th** per $1,000 in personal income in the nation

Montana public school administrator staffing is effective and efficient:

- **1,051** students ➤ per superintendent
- **327** students ➤ per principal
- **249** students ➤ per administrator *(Superintendents and Principals)*
- **20.4** employees ➤ per administrator

Compare to other Montana industries*:

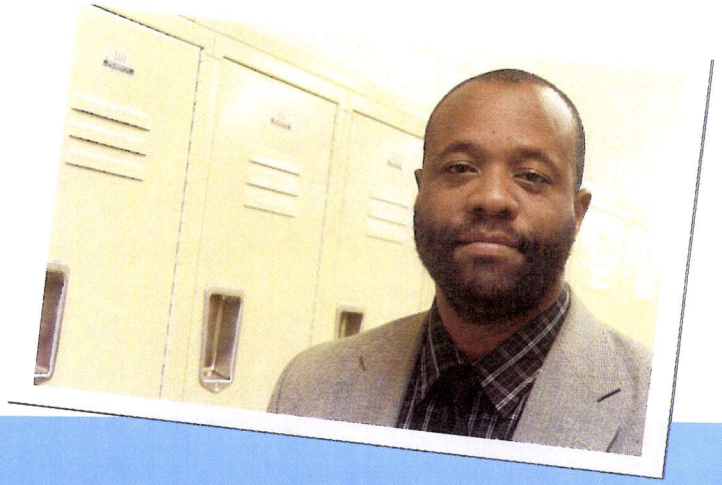
- **11.7** employees ➤ per healthcare administrator
- **6.5** employees ➤ per construction manager
- **5.6** employees ➤ per manufacturing manager

* U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics/Educational Research Service

Licensed K-12 Staff (Full-Time Equivalent)	2014-15
Teachers-Classroom, Title I, Special Ed.	10,364
Superintendents and Assistant Superintendents	158
Principals and Assistant Principals	505
Other Administrative Staff	91
Education Specialists (Library, Guidance Counselors)	939
Licensed Professional (Noneducator)	390
Total Licensed Staff FTE	12,447
Paraprofessionals	2,445
Total Licensed and Paraprofessional Staff	14,892

Student/Teacher Ratio	2010-11	2011 -12	2012 -13
Montana average	13.8	14	14
National average	15.7	16	16

Data from Common Core of Data, U.S. Department of Education



"I became an educator for the simple opportunity that it allows me the focus to be able to touch the future ... it's my way of being able to know I can make a positive impact in those individuals lives as they make their choices for their education."

— Andrew Holmlund, Superintendent, Ronan Public Schools

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Montana's Public Schools **adapt** and innovate to ensure student success

"... we have to teach much more than just the academics, ... I've been fostering growth mindsets, perseverance, and developing grit..."

— Anne Keith, 2010 Montana Teacher of the Year

- Four day school weeks in many communities throughout the state that have embraced the concept in collaboration with parents and others in the community
- Distance learning options through the Montana Digital Academy that fully integrate technology and learning and which provide an expansive breadth of curriculum in all participating public schools while retaining community ownership and local control
- Proficiency-based learning opportunities free from seat time restrictions where high level learning is the constant and time is the variable
- Advanced Placement
- Dual High School/College Credit
- Vocational, computer and business classes in addition to college prep classes
- Part time enrollment options for home school students
- Credit recovery options for students who have fallen behind

"...before school ever starts, I go on home visits with all of my students. I have a chance to meet them and their families on their home turf. We just have a connection and relationship from the beginning of school... That's a pretty innovative program and I'm very happy to be a part of that... I try new and different things each year."

— Jane Shawn, First Grade Teacher

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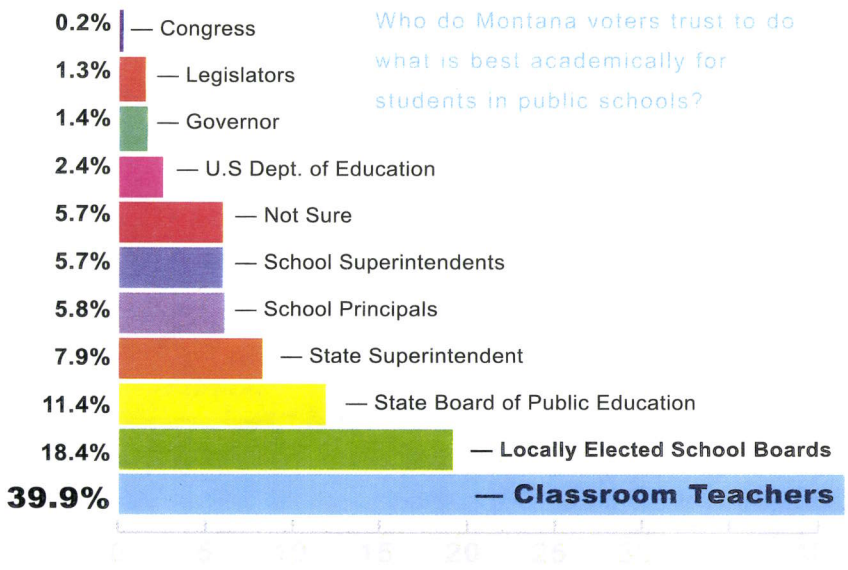
Montana's Public Schools earn **trust** through **transparency**

Montana voters trust local educators the most when it comes to doing what is right academically for children in our public schools. That trust should come as no surprise as it has been hard earned and preserved through the transparency of Montana's Public Schools. Public meetings, public comments, and the right for public participation on each voted item, help make Montana's public schools transparent, but our public schools do much more than that!

Our schools are governed and operated in a manner that not only upholds Montana constitutional guarantees of openness and public participation but which also actively engages communities in fully developing the potential of each student. Montana's Public Schools are committed to working hand in hand with and in their communities in creating a bright future for Montana's children.



"Even as a young school district... we've already had the modern issues that school districts face that can be quite difficult ... **transparency and trust** has remained with the school and with the community, as a result of Montana open meeting laws... the most powerful statement we can make to our constituents is that, if they care enough, they can be a part of every meeting and therefore every decision that happens in the district..."

— Loren Bough, Big Sky Public Schools Trustee

A **Vision** for the **Success** of Montana's Students

— MONTANA'S K-12 VISION GROUP CORE PURPOSE —

"It is the goal of the people to establish a system of education which will develop the full educational potential of each person."

Article X, Section 1, Montana Constitution, 1972

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A **Vision** for the **Success** of Montana's Students

— MONTANA'S K-12 VISION GROUP CORE VALUES —

Montana's public school districts share the authority and responsibility with the Legislature, Governor, Board of Public Education and State Superintendent to provide a system of public education that affords children, their families and Montana's citizens each of the guarantees of Article X of the Montana Constitution.

Ensuring the preservation of a basic system of free quality public elementary and secondary schools throughout Montana that is capable of developing the full educational potential of each person served	Ensuring quality and equality of educational opportunity for each child	Ensuring the preservation of the distinct and unique cultural heritage of American Indians	Ensuring against direct or indirect aid to parochial education
Ensuring against discrimination on account of sex, race, creed, religion, political beliefs, or national origin in Montana's Public Schools	Ensuring each community's ownership of its schools, exercised through supervision and control by elected trustees	Ensuring general supervision of Montana's Public Schools by an appointed Board of Public Education	Ensuring the proper and exclusive use of state land revenues for Montana's Public Schools

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MONTANA'S K-12 VISION GROUP STATEWIDE REPRESENTATION

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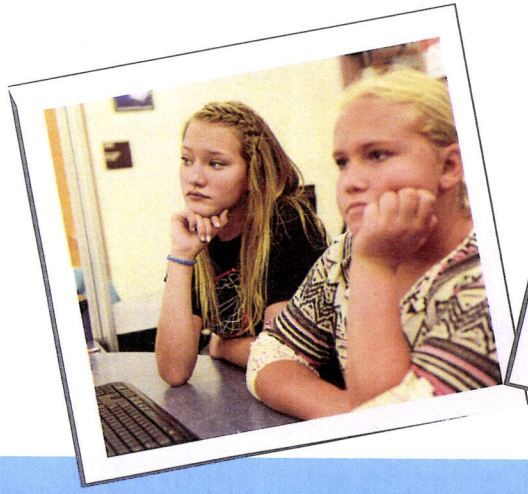
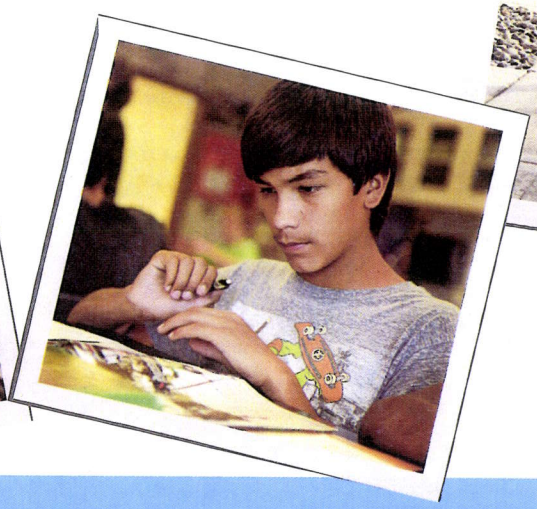
A **Vision** for the **Success** of Montana's Students

WHERE ARE WE GOING? OUR ENVISIONED FUTURE FOR THE YEAR 2025

Montana's Public Schools work collaboratively with each other, with state policymakers, and with their communities to successfully develop the full potential of each child.





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A **Vision** for the **Success** of Montana's Students

WHERE ARE WE GOING? OUR ENVISIONED FUTURE FOR THE YEAR 2025

Vivid Descriptions of our Envisioned Future:

Policymakers at all levels:

- Consistently recognize, honor and support the goal of the people to establish a system of education which will develop the full educational potential of each person and use that goal to drive policymaking decisions;
- Consistently support each community's ownership of its public schools and each district's ability to develop the full potential of each child through supervision and control by locally elected school boards;
- Adequately and rationally provide the resources needed by Montana's Public Schools; and
- Support the budgetary and other flexibilities needed by Montana's Public Schools to be responsive to community and student needs.

Montana's public school districts are student-centered, focused, adaptable, innovative, engaging, safe and secure, and driven to:

- Ensure that public school students' knowledge and skills match contemporary needs;
- Use innovation and technology to link each student to the world in which he/she will learn and succeed;
- Operate in well-designed, modern and updated facilities that enhance learning;
- Engage families, the community, and each other to develop the full potential of each child;
- Empower and engage students to actively participate in their education and set high expectations for themselves;
- Design and use effective data systems to support and enhance each student's success; and
- Increase academic excellence through equitable availability of the full spectrum of educational resources and opportunities.

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A **Vision** for the **Success** of Montana's Students

WHERE ARE WE GOING? OUR ENVISIONED FUTURE FOR THE YEAR 2025

Vivid Descriptions of our Envisioned Future:

As a result of the support of policymakers and the leadership of Montana's public school districts, Montana's public school students:

- Appreciate the intrinsic value of their education and are inspired to ensure the success of public education as stewards of the future;
- Succeed despite the circumstances of life that could otherwise interfere in achievement of their full potential; and
- Use the knowledge and skills they develop in Montana's Public Schools to think critically and engage and succeed as productive members of society.

A **Vision for the Success of Montana's** Students

HOW DO WE PLAN TO GET THERE? OUR 5-YEAR GOALS

Student Success: Intended Success for the year 2020

Continued growth in student success in Montana's Public Schools is evident through multiple measures, including but not limited to:

- 100% of Montana's students earning a high school diploma or equivalent;
- A continued increase in students graduating with post-secondary credits;
- Continued improvement in narrowing achievement gaps through targeted intervention and other strategies;
- Increased achievement on standardized tests;
- Enhanced and expanded opportunities for dual enrollment; and
- Wide availability of a well-rounded education, including items such as all day kindergarten, gifted and talented, music, art, physical education, technology, career and vocational technical education and advanced placement courses.

As a result of these achievements, students in Montana's Public Schools complete their K-12 education ready for a lifetime of post-secondary success as productive and engaged citizens, pursuing the full spectrum of college and career options.

Teaching and Learning: Intended Success for the year 2020

Through a widely held, intrinsic trust in educators and strong local control, Montana's Public School educators and students thrive. Montana's Public Schools have the resources they need to succeed, allowing teachers and administrators to consistently avail themselves of the latest research and the innovative use of technology and other evolving teaching and learning strategies to provide personalized instruction for each child. As a result, Montana's Public Schools are a magnet for the recruitment and retention of quality educators.

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A **Vision** for the Success of Montana's Students

HOW DO WE PLAN TO GET THERE? OUR 5-YEAR GOALS

Governance, Leadership And Accountability: Intended Success for the year 2020
Locally elected school boards, administrative leaders, teachers and other staff collaboratively focus on the interests of each child educated in our public schools. This collaboration and focus is also reflected in the relationships among the statewide public education advocacy groups representing teachers, trustees, administrators, and school business officials. The Legislature, Governor, Board of Public Education, and State Superintendent all actively support and collaborate to continually improve and enhance a system that develops the full educational potential of each student in Montana's Public Schools. As a result, Montana schools are nationally recognized for excellence.

Culture, Climate And Social Values: Intended Success for the year 2020
The independent spirit and unique values of Montanans are well recognized and reflected in each of Montana's Public Schools. Through our collective dedication to maximizing our resources for excellence, our commitments to quality public education in each community, and the preservation of personalized learning environments, all students, regardless of personal circumstance or ability, feel supported and fully prepared for a successful future. Montanans recognize their public schools as the key to the state's future success.

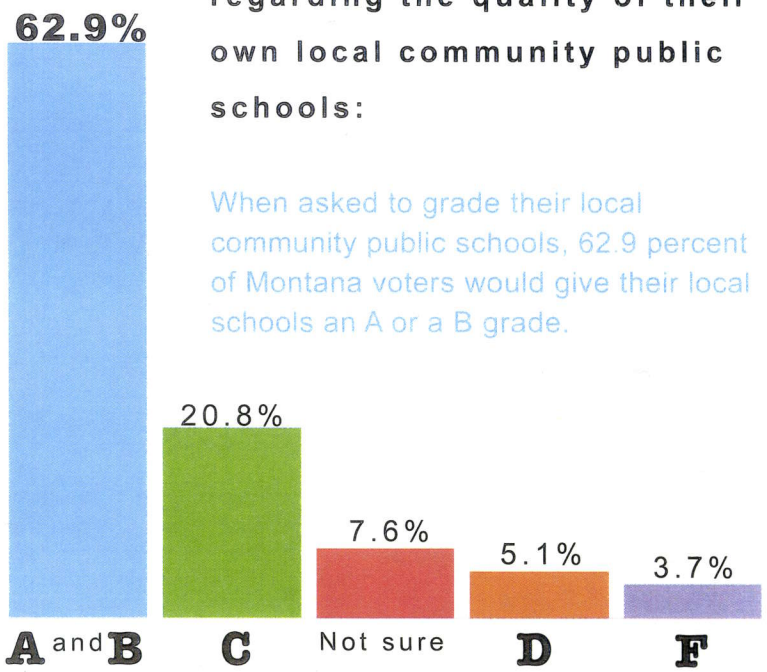
Community Engagement: Intended Success for the year 2020
Increased recognition of the great work of Montana's Public Schools has caused Montana's communities to engage and support success for each child served. As a result, Montana's Public Schools and their communities have collaborated to energize and effectively individualize public education to increase student success in Montana's Public Schools.

MT-PEC/Zogby Poll Reflects Strong Support for Montana Public Schools Among Montana Voters

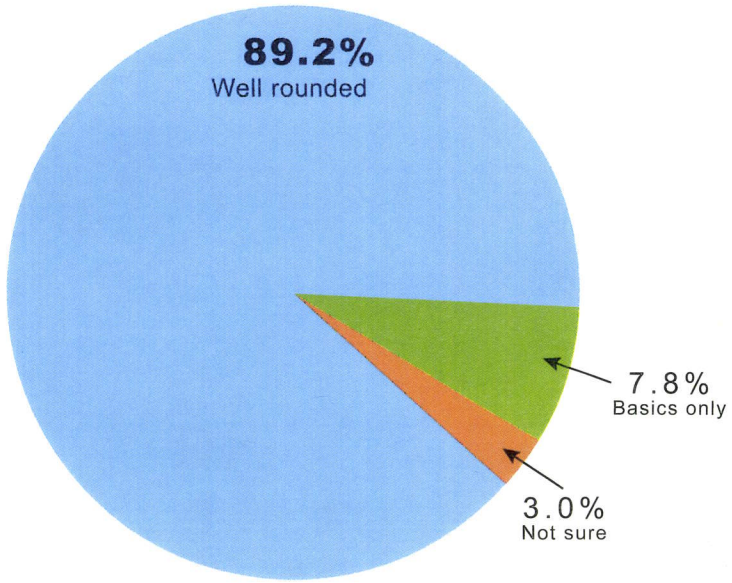
In October 2015, the Montana Public Education Center released results of a recent poll of Montana voters' opinions on K-12 public education issues. The poll was conducted by respected international polling and research company Zogby Analytics, using industry-standard methodologies with a margin of error of +/-4.5%. The poll results reveal a strong sentiment of support among Montana voters for K-12 public education on a wide range of issues.

Montana voters' opinions regarding the quality of their own local community public schools:

When asked to grade their local community public schools, 62.9 percent of Montana voters would give their local schools an A or a B grade.



Do Montana voters think public education should be well rounded or basic?



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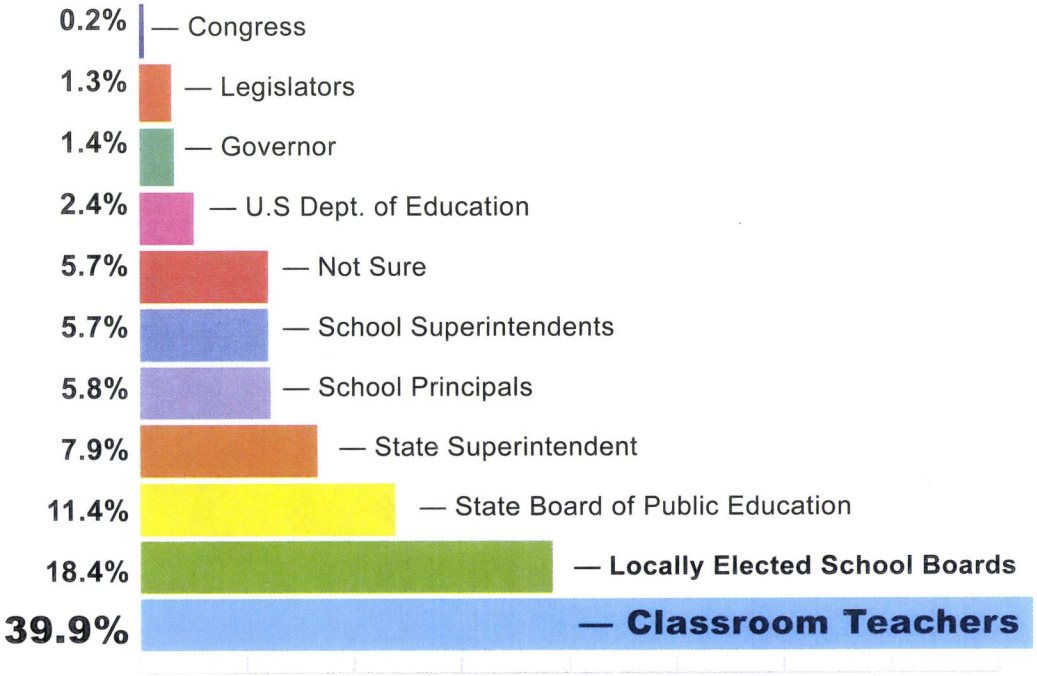
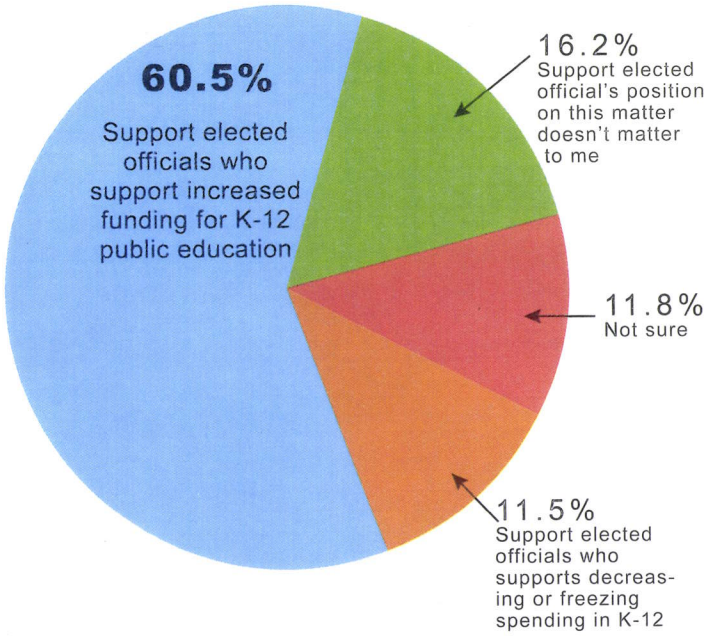
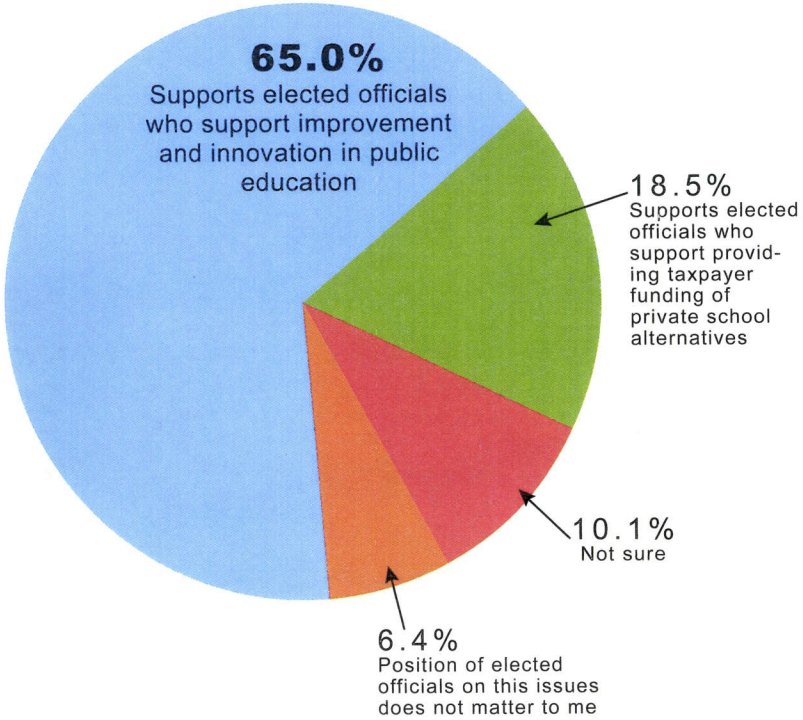
Who do Montana voters trust to do what is best academically for students in public schools?



Montana voters support elected officials who support increased funding for public education over elected officials supporting a decrease or freeze in public education funding:

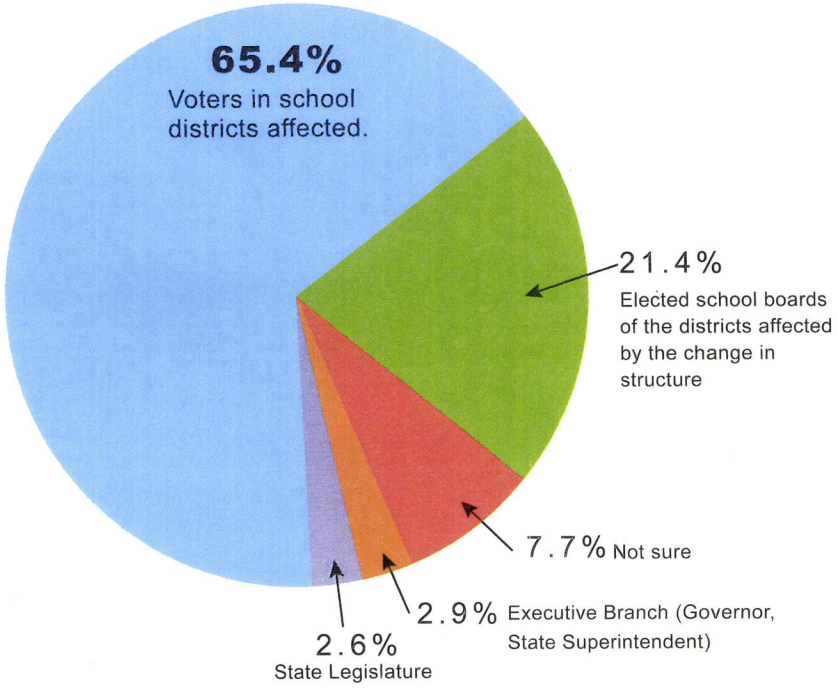


Montana voters support elected officials who support improvement and innovation in public education over elected officials supporting public funding of private school alternatives:



Montana voters' opinions regarding who should decide whether two or more school districts must consolidate:

65.4% responded that it should be the voters in the school districts affected by the change in the structure.



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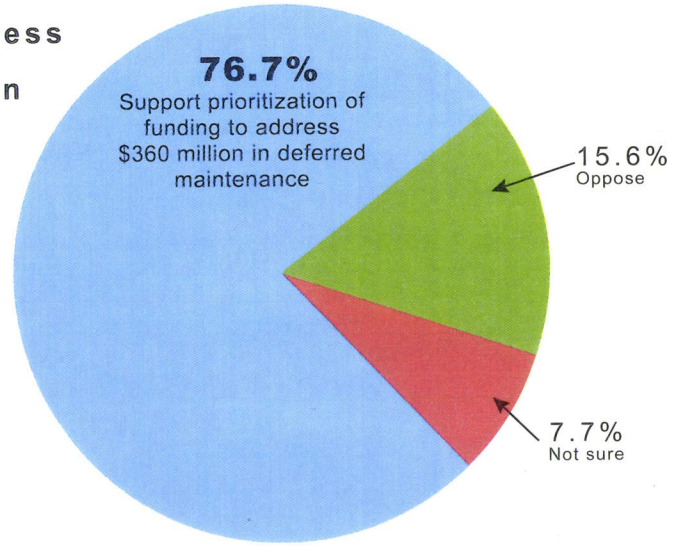
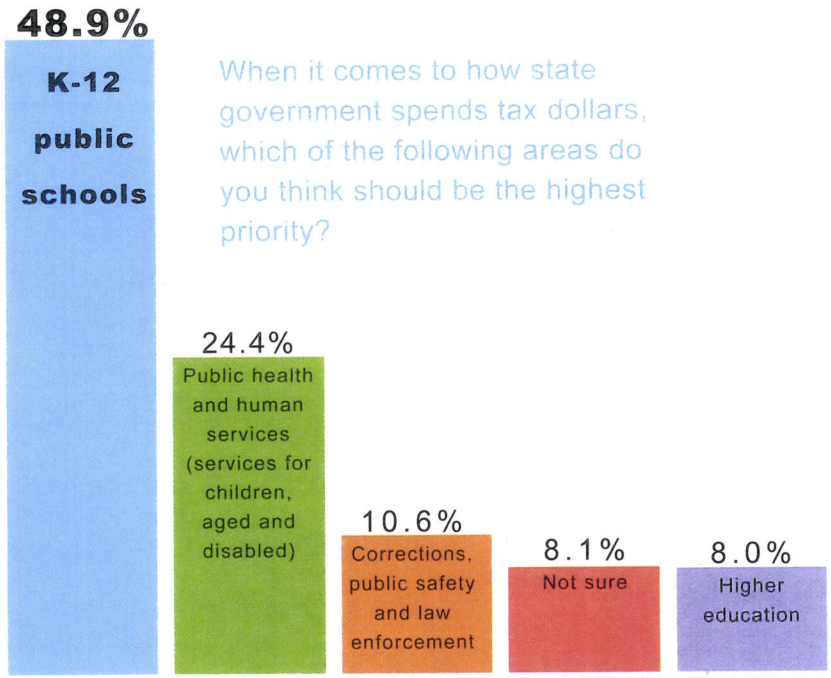
Should the Legislature prioritize funding to address $360 million in deferred maintenance identified in its 2008 school facilities study?

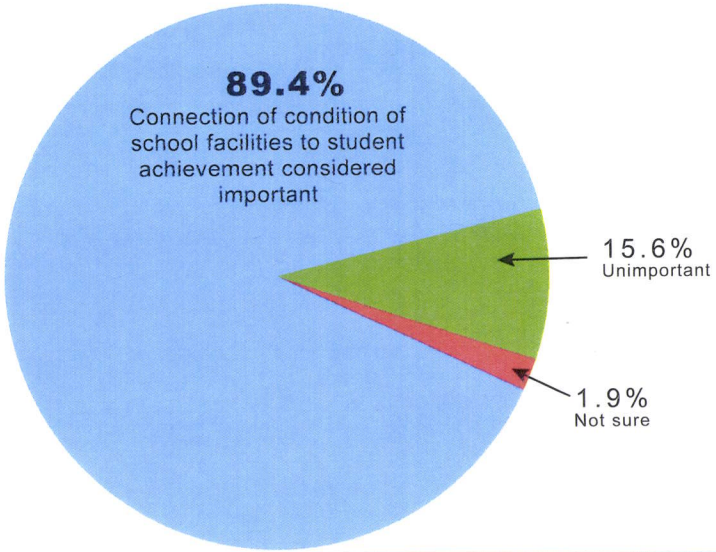


State budget priorities for Montana voters

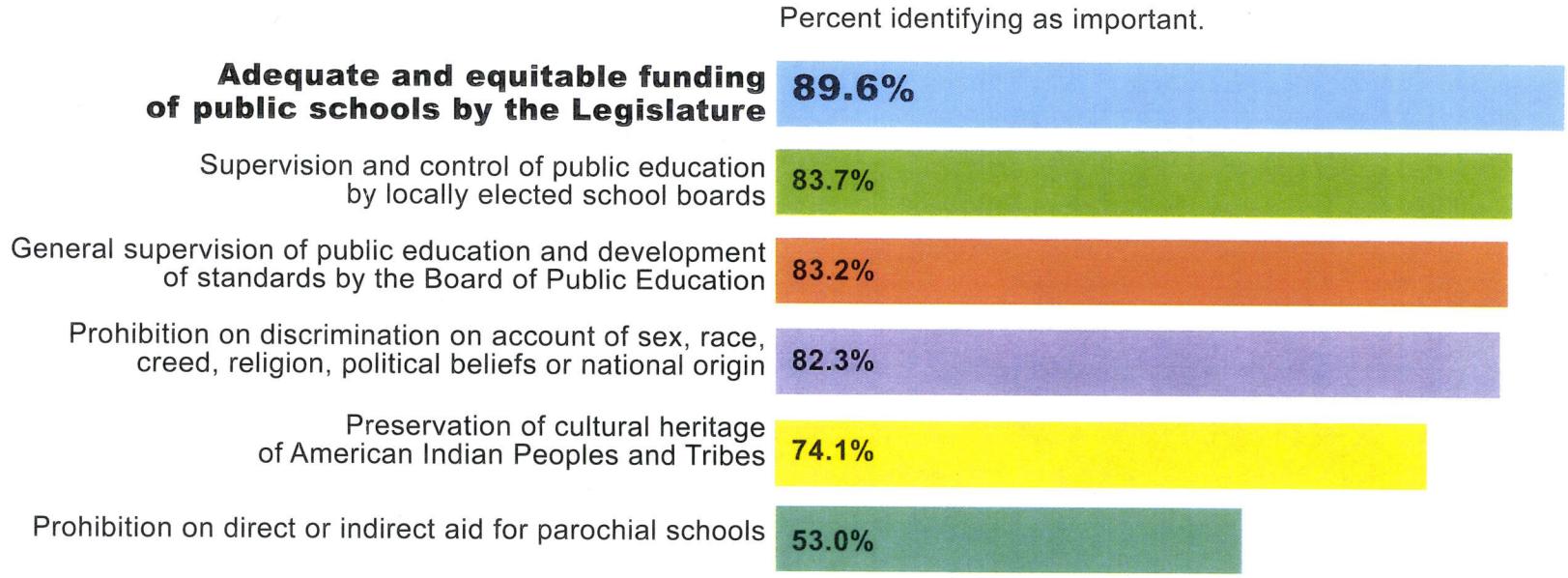
When it comes to how state government spends tax dollars, which of the following areas do you think should be the highest priority?

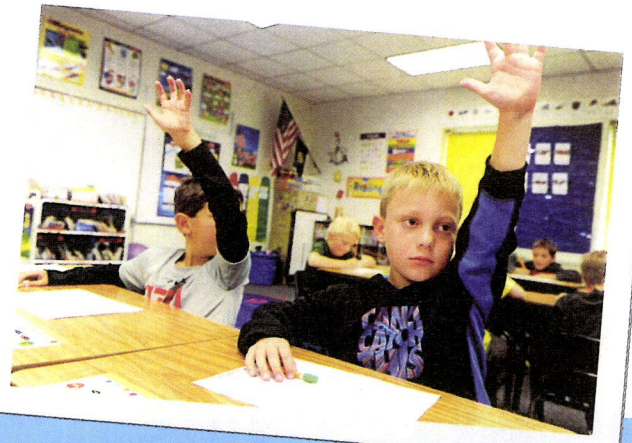


Montana voters' opinions regarding school facilities and student achievement



Montana voters' cherish their constitutional guarantees.





A joint publication of the following education advocacy groups

MASBO | MEA-MFT | MQEC | MREA | MTSBA | SAM

Montana Association of School Business Officials | Public Schools, Public Service | Montana Quality Education Coalition | Montana Rural Education Association | Montana School Boards Association | School Administrators of Montana

MONTANA CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION

OF THE PEOPLE
BY THE PEOPLE
FOR THE PEOPLE

1971 - 1972

The Montana Constitution provides that our publicly funded K-12 schools:

- Will devote themselves to developing the full educational potential of each person
- Will afford citizens a right to attend and participate in decisions of the school board and access public documents
- Will be adequately and equitably funded by the Legislature
- Will be generally supervised by an appointed board of public education
- Will be governed by local trustees, subject to popular election in each community
- Will preserve the distinct and unique cultural heritage of American Indian Peoples and Tribes
- Will provide equality of educational opportunity to each child
- Will be nonsectarian and otherwise free from discrimination on account of sex, race, creed, religion, political beliefs, or national origin
- Will protect the privacy interests of students

The Montana Constitution provides enforceable constitutional guarantees that substantially benefit all Montana citizens.

The founding of Montana's Public Schools pre-dates Montana's statehood by 25 years. The creation of a system of public schools was one of the first actions of the First Montana Territorial Legislative Assembly in 1864.

Since the first public school opened in Virginia City in 1865, Montana's Public Schools have been preparing Montana children for a future of success over the last 150 years, governed by community-elected trustees all along the way.

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SAM — School Administrators of Montana

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All photographs in this publication are of students, teachers, administrators and trustees from Montana's Public Schools.

MT PEC
Montana Public Education Center

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The Great Work of Montana's Public Schools

Volume III October 2015

"It is the goal of the people to establish a system of education which will develop the full educational potential of each person."

Article X, Section 1, Montana Constitution, 1972