



## Education Interim Committee

### 66th Montana Legislature

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TO: Education Interim Committee  
FROM: Pad McCracken, Staff; Laura Sankey Keip, Staff Attorney; and Caitlin Jensen, Executive Director, Zero to Five Montana  
RE: School district partnership examples  
DATE: June 11, 2020

One of the questions that has come up in the exploration of a mixed delivery pre-k model is: what kind of partnerships have existed or could exist between school districts and Head Start (HS) programs, community-based pre-k providers, or other education providers? There are likely other examples out there, but here are a few.

#### Collaborations Under STARS

- Lockwood Schools operated a STARS classroom and has a Head Start located in their building.
- Lolo School District and Lolo Preschool (a community-based provider) were joint recipients of STARS funding and established a formal collaboration agreement to best support children.
- Troy Public Schools worked with their local Head Start to coordinate enrollment.

#### Collaborations Under Montana Preschool Development Grant (MPDG)

- Libby School District and the local Head Start both have classrooms in the same shared location. This partnership coordinated services, such as enrollment, trainings, assessments etc.
- Bozeman School District and the local Head Start program shared enrolled students, as well as a leadership team.
- Butte Public Schools and Butte Head Start had separate grants, but they worked to coordinate, including enrollment processes, so two community grants didn't disrupt and cause division.

## Shodair Day Treatment Program in Helena

The 2018-2019 EDIC heard about this [program](#) during a visit to Shodair Children's Hospital. Helena School District contracts with Shodair to provide educational services for students with IEPs to provide a therapeutic learning/day treatment program on the Shodair campus and taught by licensed special education teachers who are Shodair employees. The idea is that students continue their education while receiving therapeutic services with the goal of being successful upon returning to their traditional classrooms. While these students are not included in ANB counts, Helena School District under [20-5-324](#) uses its tuition levy to raise revenue for this program and receives state reimbursement from OPI for a portion of the per-ANB entitlement.

## Explore School in Helena

ExplorationWorks Science Center offers a program called Explore School to provide science lessons to homeschool students ages 6-13. The homeschool students enroll as a 1/4 FTE in the Helena school district and are included in the district's ANB calculations for funding purposes; this is allowable under [20-9-311\(11\)\(g\)](#) as the students are enrolled in an "educational program provided at district expense using offsite delivery methods while attending a nonsectarian offsite instructional setting with the approval of the trustees of the district."

The Explore School is run by a licensed teacher and an administrator, both of whom are employees of the school district (the administrator position for the district is a 1/4 FTE and is treated on par with other para-educators; the other 3/4 FTE for that position is through ExplorationWorks directly). The program is subject to the Board of Public Education's science standards and the curriculum is provided by the school district. Explore School is not accredited separately; instead, Explore School is treated as a program within the Helena Public Schools for accreditation purposes.

Regarding the financial relationship, the school district has a lease agreement with ExplorationWorks to rent the facility, including classroom and lunchroom space, one day a week during the school year for the program. Homeschool families who reside within the boundaries of the school district are not charged tuition or fees to participate in Explore School, and families who reside outside of the district boundaries are subject to the regular out-of-district tuition provisions.

## Applicability to Prekindergarten Discussion

While these programs display the potential under current law for districts to partner at trustees' discretion with 3rd parties for the provision of education, [ARM 10.20.106](#) contains restrictions that would appear to prevent a district from including children in ANB calculations who are similarly provided education through 3rd party early childhood education providers. It seems that except for these restrictions, a district could partner with a private provider, include children educated at this provider in the district's ANB counts, and in essence create a mixed delivery model.

Education Interim Committee  
June 18-19, 2020  
School District Partnership Examples  
Exhibit 33