



5 Ps Policy Exercise

The purpose of this exercise is to support our reflections on how the current Montana policy landscape impacts system shifts at all levels of systems across the state.

Definitions of our Continuum

Prohibit

Not allowed under the law

Permit

Allowed, but often comes with requirements. The requirements may create administrative burdens that require effort that makes it difficult for some districts to achieve this policy.

Promote

The State (legislatively and/or through the OPI) has incentivized and has made it simple for districts to take advantage of by working to minimize the burdens of implementation.

Promise

The state assures the policy intent can be carried out with minimal burdens, if you choose to do so. In some cases, if a district matches specific predetermined criteria, this promise may convert to a prescription.

Prescribe

Mandated.

Directions: As you evaluate the policies, consider & discuss the following:

- What do you notice about policies in the same categories?
 - What do you think it would be like to implement these policies locally?
 - What changes or new policy approaches does this inspire?
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Round 1: Early Learning

| Policy | Policy Type |
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| A child may not be evaluated for the purposes of interventions unless requested by the child's parent or guardian. | |
| Districts are required to provide a minimum of three PIR days annually, each consisting of six hours of contact time. | |
| Districts can plan up to seven Pupil Instruction Related days each year to prepare educators to work with students. | |
| Districts must choose literacy screeners from a List of Approved Literacy Screening Tools provided through the Office of Public Instruction. | |
| The state provides funding for preschool children with disabilities by allowing them to be included in the ANB calculations so that they are receiving supports. | |
| The local board of trustees shall adopt and ensure use of an evaluation methodology to identify, enroll, and admit children to early literacy targeted interventions. | |
| The revised ARM 10.55.604 Variances to Standards rule allows a local board of trustees to apply for a variance to a standard or a section of standards, excluding standards stating statutory criteria, standards pertaining to educator licensure and endorsement, and content standards. | |
| To ensure a learner-centered system and establish a plan for continuous education improvement, the school district shall develop, implement, monitor, and evaluate an integrated strategic action plan and make the plan publicly available. | |
| With the permission of the local board of trustees, a student may be given credit for a course satisfactorily completed in a period of time shorter or longer than normally required and, provided that the course meets the district's curriculum and assessment requirements. | |

Round 2: Preparation for Longlife Learning/Graduate Pathways Policies

| Policy | Policy Type |
|---|-------------|
| Advanced Opportunities grants districts can apply for to receive additional funding for competency based learning. | |
| Districts can align their instruction and assessment approaches to their workforce development priorities. | |
| Districts can build local comprehensive assessment systems that include formative, summative and alternative measures like portfolios or internships. | |
| Districts can plan up to seven Pupil Instruction Related days each year to prepare educators to work with students. | |
| Districts must conduct 3 hours of professional learning per year, with 6 contact hours required each day. These 3 days must address instructional improvement and professional development to ensure that professional learning is intentional and aligned with district and state goals for quality education. | |
| Future-ready payment (part of STARS; starts FY27) that provides additional funding for districts that provides additional funding for districts that meet specific goals for student achievement, like providing industry recognized credentials. | |
| MT sets graduation requirements at the state level. | |
| One-Two-Free dual credit enrollment program that offers all students two free dual credit courses. | |
| STARS Act that provides funding for districts that meet specific teacher salary requirements. | |

Round 3: Structural Systems Policies

| Policy | Policy Type |
|---|-------------|
| "Non-isolated" school districts below a size threshold receive less state funding & pay more in local property taxes to disincentivize their continued operation 20-9-302, MCA. | |
| Countywide multidistrict agreement statute – incentivizes districts to combine admin, athletics costs (disincentive to true consolidation) – get \$ with a multi district agreement New for FY 2026 - linked to the bill. | |
| Interlocal agreements between two or more public agencies to jointly perform a government activity or provide a public service, as authorized by Montana Code Annotated 7-11-104. These agreements can help reduce duplication, increase efficiency, and achieve economies of scale, and they must be authorized and approved by the governing body of each participating agency. | |
| A child may be enrolled in and attend a school in a Montana school district that is outside of the child's district of residence or a public school in a district of another state or province that is adjacent to the county of the child's residence, subject to discretionary approval by the trustees of the resident district and the district of choice at the request of the child's parent or guardian. | |
| Montana Digital Academy is provided to all districts in the state. | |
| An interlocal cooperative agreement that allows one or more public agencies to contract with any one or more other public agencies to perform any administrative service, activity, or undertaking that any of the public agencies entering into the contract is authorized by law to perform. | |

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| Participation in special education cooperatives is voluntary for most school districts (those districts receiving less than \$7500 in IDEA funds must join the cooperative) and is at the discretion of the local school board. The cooperative structure allows the school districts to pool the limited resources to employ special education staff that provide services to children on an itinerant basis. | |
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Note any reflections to be shared whole group:

Round 1:

Round 2:

Round 3: