



# The Great Work of Montana's Public Schools

Volume VII October 2019

*Inspiring Montana Students to Reach Their Full Potential*

A joint publication of the following education advocacy groups

**MASBO**

Montana Association of  
School Business Officials

**MFPE**

Montana Federation  
of Public Employees

**MQEC**

Montana Quality  
Education Coalition

**MREA**

Montana Rural  
Education Association

**MTSBA**

Montana School Boards  
Association

**SAM**

School Administrators  
of Montana

# A VISION FOR PUBLIC EDUCATION IN MONTANA



## WHO IS THE K-12 VISION GROUP?

The K-12 Vision Group was first formed by key education advocacy groups (MASBO, MFPE, MQEC, MREA, MTSBA and SAM) in 2011 with a charge of developing a comprehensive vision for the future success of public education in Montana and establishing a clear road map to achieve that vision.

Comprised of teachers, elected trustees, superintendents, principals and school business officials nominated by their peers from across the state of Montana, the K-12 Vision Group has developed and annually updated an inspiring vision, aligned with the guarantees afforded Montana citizens under our Constitution, that holds great promise for the future of Montana.

The members contributing to the work of the K-12 Vision Group over the last several years have come from a wide variety of school districts, large and small, east and west, urban and rural, and includes districts from the State's seven reservations. The trustees who have served come from all walks of life, including farmers and ranchers, successful business people, retirees and early career professionals. Each member has come to share a focus on ensuring effective advocacy for each child in every public school.

The work of the K-12 Vision Group creates a clear path to a successful future and remains critical to fulfilling the vision of our Montana Constitutional Framers for a system of free quality public schools that fully develops the educational potential of each person.

## Introduction

The Montana Public Education Center (MT-PEC) is a coalition of public education advocates focused on fulfilling the guarantee of Article X of the Montana Constitution, "to develop the full educational potential of each person."

To better communicate this mission, the partners of MT-PEC administer an annual public opinion poll (through Zogby Analytics\*) to better understand Montana voter's perspectives on K-12 public education issues. Since its inception in 2011 the results from this poll remain consistent: Montanans support our public schools.

The work of MT-PEC is informed by the Strategic Plan produced by the K-12 Vision Group, the results of the Zogby poll, and the input of stakeholders, teachers, school staff, administrators, and trustees.

The MT-PEC coalition consists of MASBO, MFPE, MQEC, MREA, MTSBA and SAM. Visit [MT-PEC.org](http://MT-PEC.org) to see the publications and initiatives undertaken by the coalition. Visit [MT-PEC.org](http://MT-PEC.org) to see the publications and initiatives undertaken by the coalition.

*\* Zogby Analytics is a highly respected, international polling and research company using industry-standard methodologies with a margin of error of +/-4.5%*

**K-12 VISION  
GROUP CORE  
PURPOSE**

A system of public education which will develop the full educational potential of each person.  
*Article X, Section 1, Montana Constitution, 1972*

**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.

Montana's K-12 public schools work collaboratively with each other, with state policymakers, and with their communities to successfully develop the full potential of each person, through a system that is flexible, adequately and rationally funded, and community-owned.

**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.

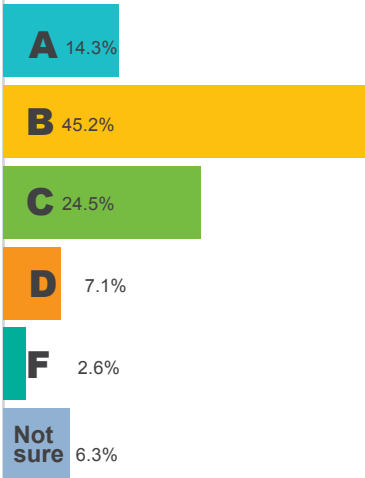
**Montana's public school districts are student centered, focused, adaptable, innovative, engaging, safe and secure, and driven to:**

- 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 further learning;
- Engage families, the community, and each other to develop the full potential of each child;
- Empower and engage each student to actively participate in their education and set high expectations for themselves;
- Design and use effective data systems to support and improve each student's success; and
- Increase academic excellence through equitable availability of the full spectrum of educational resources and opportunities.

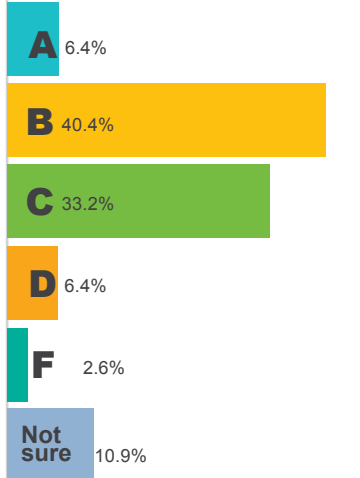
**As a result of the support of policymakers and the leadership of Montana's public school districts, Montana's public school students:**

- Appreciate the 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, engage and succeed as productive members of society.

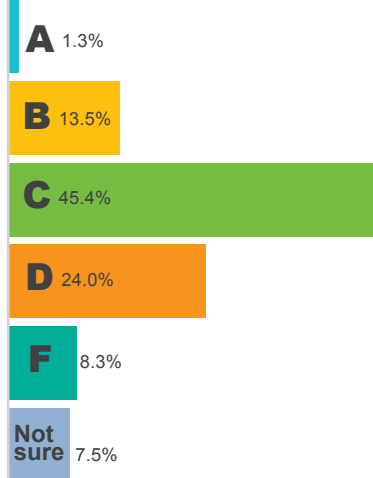
What grade, A through F, would you give public schools in **your community**?



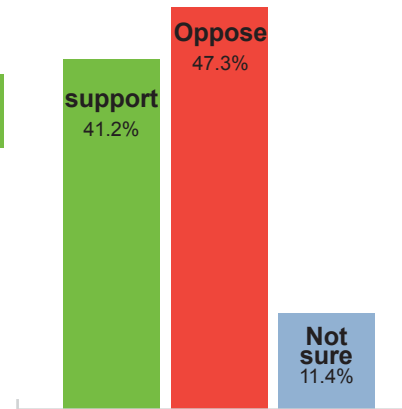
What grade, A through F, would you give public schools in the **state of Montana overall**?



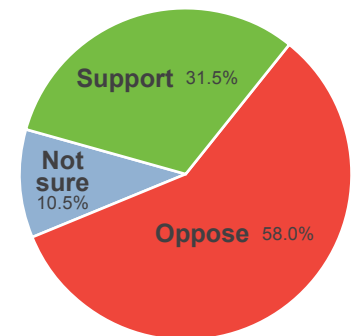
What grade, A through F, would you give public schools in the **nation**?



Do you support or oppose tax benefits (e.g., vouchers, tax credits) for religious education?



Would you support or oppose tax benefits (e.g., vouchers, tax credits) for religious education if you knew that some tax benefits would be used to pay for education expenses other than Christianity (e.g., Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism)?



# K-12 VISION GROUP - FIVE YEAR GOALS - UPDATED AUGUST 2019

## Student Success: Statement of Intended Success, 2023

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 exit the public education system career and college ready, having experienced a rigorous curriculum and explored career pathways relevant to the interests of each child and greatest likelihood of personal and professional success;
- A continued increase in students graduating with postsecondary credits through expanded high quality opportunities for dual enrollment and earlier career pathway knowledge;
- Continued improvement and greater focus in narrowing achievement gaps through targeted intervention and other strategies;
- Flexible use of mediums to assess and evaluate student learning and growth;
- Fostering growth mindsets, passion for learning, and interpersonal and soft skills including perseverance and social and emotional intelligence; and
- Wide availability of a well-rounded education, including items such as early childhood education, all day kindergarten, gifted and talented education, 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.

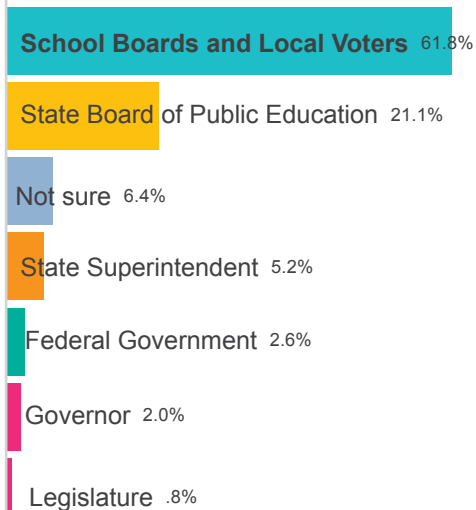
## Teaching and Learning: Statement of Intended Success, 2023

Supported by the widely held 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 focus on students and maximize student success while empowering teachers and administrators to continually avail themselves of the latest research, innovative uses of technology and other evolving teaching and learning strategies to better provide personalized instruction for each child. Montana public schools prioritize systems of support for educators' personal well-being and mental health to ensure they experience professional fulfillment and are able to best support student success. Using these resources, educators facilitate the development of the full potential of each child. Montana's higher education system fully prepares exceptional teachers to meet the needs of schools and students while Montana public school districts attract and retain quality educators.

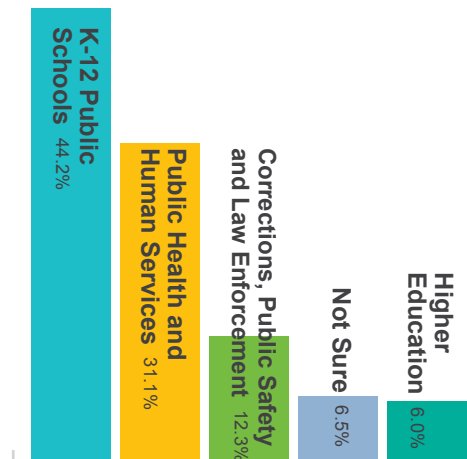
## Governance, Leadership and Accountability: Statement of Intended Success, 2023

Locally elected school boards, administrative leaders, teachers, staff, and local communities 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 honor the guarantees of the Montana Constitution. As a result, this chain of advocacy causes Montana schools to be nationally recognized for excellence.

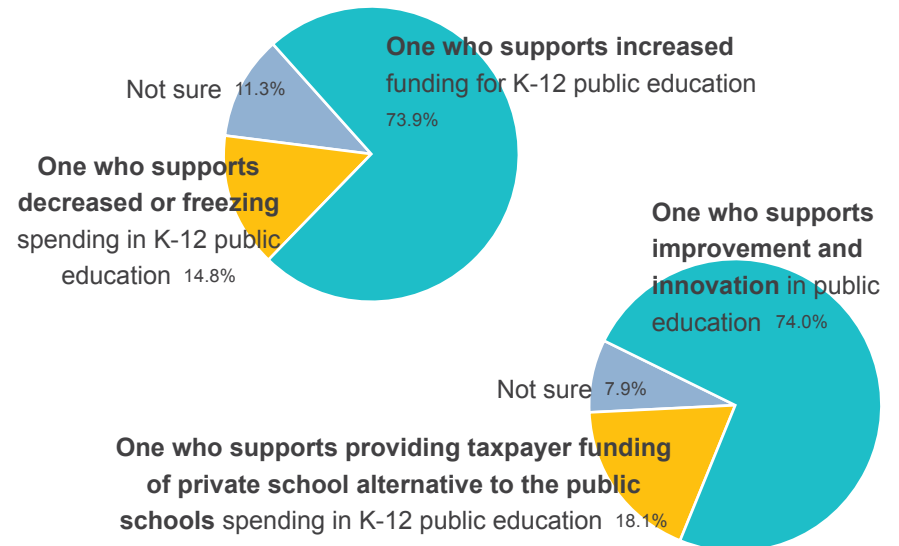
Which of the following do you think should have the most authority to determine how public schools are operated?



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



Please tell us which type of elected official you most support?



**Culture, Climate and Social Values: Statement of Intended Success, 2023**

The independent spirit, unique values and strong work ethic 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, the preservation of our American Indian culture and personalized learning environments, all students, regardless of personal circumstance or ability, feel supported and fully prepared for a successful future. Each child in Montana's public schools feels safe, supported and loved with a high degree of social and emotional intelligence and personal mental wellness. Montanans recognize their public schools as the key to the state's future success.

**Community Engagement: Statement of Intended Success, 2023**

Montana's communities understand the importance of taking pride and ownership in their local public schools, setting high standards, being an integral part of the solution and sharing in the successes of our students and local public schools. Both the community and schools place emphasis on ongoing collaboration, resource sharing and communication. Increased recognition of the great work of Montana's public schools has resulted in community engagement and support to ensure the success of each child. Montana's public schools and communities have collaborated to energize and effectively individualize public education to increase success for each child in Montana.

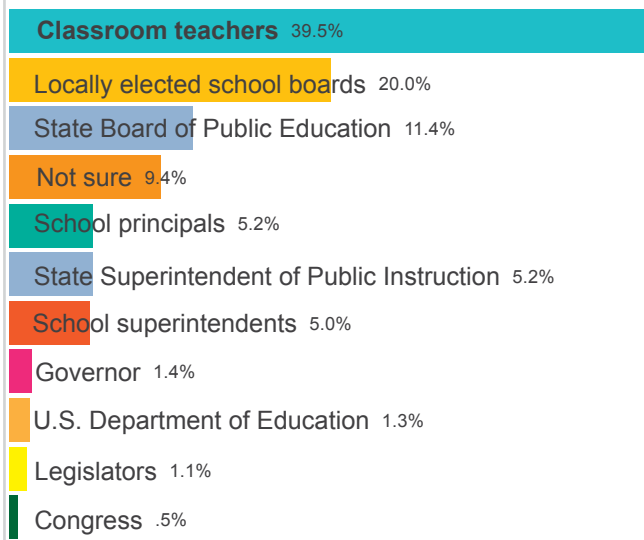
The K-12 Vision Group validates and supports the intersecting legislative priorities of the advocacy organizations partnering in the Montana Public Education Center addressing the following critical issues:

- Support initiatives and proposals that advance the interests of public schools and students as described in our vision and goals;
- Provide adequate and equitable resources and support to meet the needs of special education students;
- Preserve and ensure previously established funding and support to schools, including but not limited to, GTB phase-in, inflation application to K-12 base aid, and NRD payment;
- Pursue the implementation of formula-based early childhood education;
- Expand opportunities to meet the needs of students from low-income backgrounds;
- Support recruitment and retention of excellent educators & staff;
- Ensure the health and safety of students in every Montana school;
- Properly support high quality school conditions and infrastructure;
- Fulfill the constitutional promise of a quality education to ensure opportunity for every child in Montana; and
- Oppose any proposal that supports private nonreligious or parochial schools through direct or indirect means that would infringe on the constitutional rights described in Article X of the Montana Constitution.

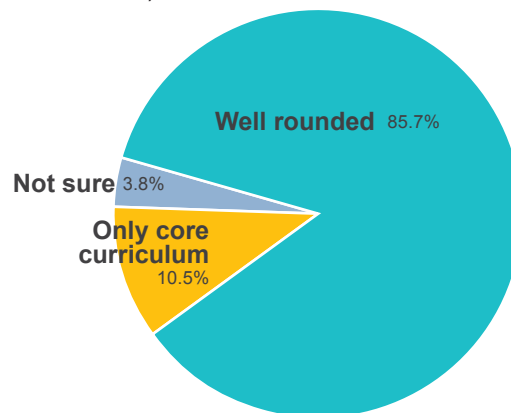
The K-12 Vision Group also recognizes and embraces key advocacy initiatives that are necessary to achieve its goals and envisioned future and supports advocacy for the components of a wellrounded education needed to achieve the Peoples' goal to develop the full potential of each person. Examples of initiatives necessarily implicated by our five year goals for student success include:

- Codification of sustainable, formula-based early childhood education;
- Expansion of support for gifted and talented education, including a focus on increasing availability of advanced placement and dual credit courses throughout the state; and
- Increasing awareness of the importance of courses that are outside the assessment content areas but that are necessary to fully develop the educational potential of each person, including music, art, physical education, technology, career and vocational technical education.

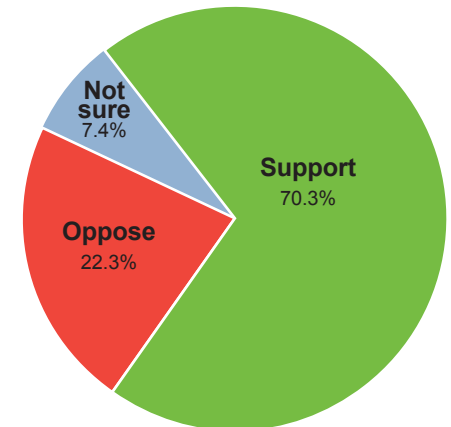
Who among the following public employees and officials do you trust the most when it comes to deciding what is best academically for students in Montana's public schools?



In your opinion, should public schools provide a well-rounded education to all children, including items such as all-day kindergarten, gifted and talented, music, art, physical education, technology, and advanced placement courses or should public schools provide only core curriculum (math, English, science, social studies)?



Do you support or oppose state-funded public pre-school?



MTSBA  
863 Great Northern Blvd  
Suite 301  
Helena, MT 59601

**ASBO**  
DENISE WILLIAMS  
Executive Director  
Montana Association  
of School Business Officials  
dwilliams@masbo.com  
(406) 461-3659

**MFPE**  
ERIC FEAYER  
President  
MFPE  
efeayer@mfpe.org  
(406) 442-4250

**SAM**  
KIRK MILLER  
Executive Director  
School Administrators  
of Montana  
samkm@sammt.org  
(406) 442-2510

**MQEC**  
DIANNE BURKE  
Executive Director  
Montana Quality  
Education Association  
dburke@mqec.org  
(406) 449-4594

**MTSBA**  
LANCE MELTON  
Executive Director  
Montana School Boards  
Association  
lmelton@mtsba.org  
(406) 442-2180

**MREA**  
DENNIS PARMAN  
Executive Director  
Montana Rural Education  
Association  
dparman@mrea-mt.org  
(406) 443-2626

We are united by our shared interests in the best interests of students.

Montana Public Education Center

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

## The Great Work of Montana's Public Schools

Volume VII October 2019

Montana's public schools are **governed** by elected school trustees and are **responsive** to the needs of each community. Montana's public schools are **excellent, efficient** and **adapt** and **innovate** to ensure student success. Montana's public schools are **trusted** as a result of **transparency**.

### The Montana Constitution Guarantees:

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;  
*Article X, Section 1*

Quality and equality of educational opportunity for each person;  
*Article X, Section 1*

The preservation of the distinct and unique cultural heritage of American Indians;  
*Article X, Section 1*

Prohibits direct or indirect aid to parochial education;  
*Article X, Section 6*

Prohibits discrimination on account of sex, race, creed, religion, political beliefs, or national origin in Montana's public schools;  
*Article X, Section 7*

Each community's ownership of its publicly funded schools, with the support and engagement of school staff and the community exercised through supervision and control by elected trustees;  
*Article X, Section 8*

General supervision of Montana's public schools by an appointed Board of Public Education  
*Article X, Section 9*

The proper and exclusive use of state land revenues for Montana's public schools.  
*Article X, Section 2, 3, 4 and 5*