

POPLAR SCHOOL DISTRICT

INSTRUCTION

2000 SERIES

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2100

School Year Calendar and Day

School Calendar

Subject to § 20-1-301 and 20-1-308, MCA, and any applicable collective bargaining agreement covering the employment of affected employees, the trustees of a school district shall set the number of hours in a school term, the length of the school day and the number of school days in a school week. When proposing to adopt changes to a previously adopted school term, school week or school day, the trustees shall:

- Negotiate the changes with the recognized collective bargaining unit representing the employees affected by the changes;
- Solicit input from the employees affected by the changes but not represented by a collective bargaining agreement; and
- Solicit input from the people who live within the boundaries of the school district.

Commemorative Holidays

The District shall conduct appropriate exercises during the school day on the commemorative days noted in Montana law.

Saturday School

Pupil instruction may be held on a Saturday at the discretion of a school district for the purpose of providing additional pupil instruction, provided that:

- Saturday school is not a pupil-instruction day and does not count toward the minimum aggregate hours of pupil instruction; and
- Student attendance is voluntary.

School Holidays

The schools in the District shall be closed on the following holidays: New Year's Day; Good Friday; Memorial Day; Independence Day; Labor Day; Thanksgiving Day; Friday after Thanksgiving; Christmas Day; and State and national election days when the school building is used as a polling place and the conduct of school would interfere with the election process at the polling place. When these holidays fall on Saturday or Sunday, the preceding Friday or the succeeding Monday shall not be a school holiday. The Board may establish other holidays.

Legal References:	§ 20-1-301, MCA	School fiscal year
	§ 20-1-302, MCA	School day and week
	§ 20-1-303, MCA	Conduct of School on Saturday or Sunday prohibited - exceptions
	§ 20-1-306, MCA	Commemorative exercises on certain days
	ARM 10.55.701	Board of Trustees

Policy History:

Adopted on:

Revised on: July 11, 2016

Poplar School District

Grade Organization

The District has instructional levels for grades kindergarten through twelve. The grouping and housing of instructional levels in school facilities shall be according to plans developed by the Superintendent/designee and approved by the Board.

A student will be assigned to an instructional group or a classroom that will best serve the needs of that individual while still considering the rights and needs of other students. Factors to be considered in classroom assignments are: class size, peer relations, student/teacher relations, instructional style of individual teachers and any other variables that will affect the performance of the student.

The criteria for grouping should be based upon the learning goals and objectives being addressed and the student's ability to achieve those purposes.

Legal Reference

§ 20-6-501, MCA

Definitions of various schools

Policy History:

Adopted on:

Revised on: July 11, 2016

Poplar School District

INSTRUCTION

2120

Curriculum Development and Assessment

The Superintendent shall recommend a comprehensive curriculum that is designed to accomplish the learning objectives and goals for excellence contained in the District's educational philosophy, mission statement, objectives and goals. The Board must approve all changes to the curriculum, including the adoption of new textbooks and new courses.

A written sequential curriculum shall be developed that aligns each program area with the appropriate content standards, grade-level learning progressions and the District's educational goals. A curriculum review cycle and time lines for curriculum development and evaluations shall be established by the Superintendent/designee.

In all program areas and at all levels, the District shall assess student progress toward achieving content standards and content-specific grade-level learning progressions including:

- Content and data;
- Accomplishment of appropriate skills;
- Development of critical thinking and reasoning; and
- Attitude.

The District will use assessment results to improve the educational program and use effective and appropriate tools for assessing such progress. This may include, but is not limited to:

- Standardized tests;
- Criterion-referenced tests;
- Teacher-made tests;
- Ongoing classroom evaluation;
- Actual communication assessments such as writing, speaking and listening assessments;
- Samples of student work and/or narrative reports passed from grade to grade;
- Samples of students' creative and/or performance work; and
- Surveys of carry-over skills to other program areas and outside of school.

The District may receive and/or provide distance, online and technology delivered learning programs, as provided in Montana law. -These learning programs and/or courses shall meet the learner expectations adopted in the District and shall be aligned with state content standards and content-specific grade-level learning progressions. The Superintendent/designee is directed to develop procedures regarding the District's distance, online and technology delivered learning.

The building principal shall be responsible for the supervision and implementation of the adopted curricula. The teaching staff has a significant responsibility in the development of curricula and the primary responsibility for the implementation of curricula.

Cross Reference: Administrative Procedures

Legal Reference: § 20-7-902, MCA School district programs to identify and serve the gifted and talented child

§ 20-7-602, MCA
10.55.603, ARM
10.55.701, ARM

Textbook selection and adoption
Curriculum Development and
Assessment
Board of Trustees

Policy History:

Adopted on:

Revised on: July 11, 2016

Student and Family Privacy Rights

Surveys - General

All surveys requesting personal information from students, as well as any other instrument used to collect personal information from students, must advance or relate to the District's educational objectives as identified in Board Policy. This applies to all surveys, regardless of whether the student answering the questions can be identified and regardless of who created the survey.

Surveys Created by a Third Party

Before the District administers or distributes a survey created by a third party to a student, the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) may inspect the survey upon request and within an appropriate time frame.

This section applies to every survey created by a person or entity other than a District official, staff member or student, regardless of whether the student answering the questions can be identified, and regardless of the subject matter of the questions.

Surveys Requesting Personal Information

School officials and staff members shall neither request nor disclose the identity of any student who completes ANY survey containing one (1) or more of the following items:

- Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student's parent/guardian;
- Mental or psychological problems of the student or the student's family;
- Behavior or attitudes about sex;
- Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating or demeaning behavior;
- Critical appraisals of other individuals with whom students have close family relationships;
- Legally recognized privileged or analogous relationships, such as those with lawyers, physicians and ministers;
- Religious practices, affiliations or beliefs of the student or the students' parent/guardian; or
- Income (other than that required by law to determine eligibility for participation in a program or for receiving financial assistance under such program).

The student's parent(s)/guardian(s) may inspect the survey within an appropriate time frame and/or refuse to allow their child to participate in any survey requesting personal information. The school shall not penalize any student whose parent(s)/ guardian(s) exercise this option.

Instructional Material

A student's parent(s)/guardian(s) may, within an appropriate time frame, inspect any instructional material used as part of their child's educational curriculum. The term "instructional material," for purposes of this policy, means instructional content that is provided to a student, regardless of its format, printed or representational materials, audio-visual materials and materials in electronic or digital formats (such as materials accessible through the internet). The term does not include academic tests or academic assessments.

Collection of Personal Information from Students for Marketing Prohibited

The term personal information for purposes of this section only, means individually identifiable information including:

- A student's or parent's first and last name;
- A home or other physical address (including street name and the name of the city or town);
- Telephone number; or
- A Social Security identification number.

The District will not collect, disclose or use student personal information for the purpose of marketing or selling that information or otherwise providing that information to others for that purpose.

The District, however, is not prohibited from collecting, disclosing, or using personal information collected from students for the exclusive purpose of developing, evaluating or providing educational products or services for or to students or educational institutions such as the following:

- College or other post-secondary education recruitment or military recruitment;
- Book clubs, magazines and programs providing access to low-cost literary products;
- Curriculum and instructional materials used by elementary schools and secondary schools;
- Tests and assessments to provide cognitive, evaluative, diagnostic, clinical, aptitude or achievement information about students (or to generate other statistically useful data for the purpose of securing such tests and assessments) and the subsequent analysis and public release of the aggregate data from such tests and assessments;
- The sale by students of products or services to raise funds for school-related or education-related activities; or
- Student recognition programs.

Notification of Rights and Procedures

The Superintendent/designee shall notify student's parents/guardians of this policy as well as its availability from the administration office upon request; how to opt their child out of participation in activities as provided in this policy; how to request access to any survey or other material described in this policy; the approximate dates during the school year when a survey requesting personal information, as described above, is scheduled or expected to be scheduled;

This notification shall be given parents/guardians at least annually at the beginning of the school year and within a reasonable period after any substantive change in this policy.

The rights provided to parents/guardians in this policy transfer to the student, when the student turns 18 years of age or is an emancipated minor.

Cross Reference:	3410	Student Health
	2311	Instructional Materials

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3200 Student Rights and responsibilities
Administrative Procedures

Legal Reference: 20 U.S.C. § 1232h Protection of Pupil Rights

Policy History:

Adopted on:

Revised on: July 11, 2016

Poplar School District

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Guidance and Counseling

The District recognizes that guidance and counseling is an important part of the total program of instruction and should be provided in accordance with state laws and regulations, District policies and procedures and available staff and program support.

The general goal of this program is to help students achieve the greatest personal value from their educational opportunities. Such a program should:

- Provide staff with meaningful information that can be utilized to improve the educational services offered to individual students;
- Provide students opportunities to develop future career and educational plans;
- Refer students with special needs to appropriate specialists and agencies;
- Aid students in identifying options and making choices about their educational program;
- Assist teachers and administrators in meeting academic, social and emotional needs of students;
- Provide for a follow-up of students who continue their education after eighth grade and/or move into the world of work;
- Solicit feedback from students, staff and parents for purposes of program improvement; and
- Assist students in developing a sense of belonging and self-respect.

All staff shall encourage students to explore and develop their individual interests without regard to gender, race, marital status, national origin or handicapping conditions.

Legal Reference

10.55.710, ARM
10.55.802, ARM
§ 49-3-203, MCA

Assignment of Guidance Staff
Opportunity of Educational Equity
Educational, Counseling and Training
Programs

Policy History:

Adopted on:

Revised on: July 11, 2016

Poplar School District

INSTRUCTION

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Family Engagement

The Poplar School District Board of Trustees believes that engaging parents/families in the education process is essential to improved academic success for students. The Board recognizes that a student's education is a responsibility shared by the district, parents, families and other members of the community during the entire time a student attends school. The Board believes that the district must create an environment that is conducive to learning and that strong, comprehensive parent/family involvement is an important component. Parent/family involvement in education requires a cooperative effort with roles for the Office of Public Instruction (OPI), the district, parents/families and the community.

Parent/Family Involvement Goals and Plan

The Board of Trustees recognizes the importance of eliminating barriers that impede parent/family involvement, thereby facilitating an environment that encourages collaboration with parents, families and other members of the community. Therefore, the district will develop and implement a plan to facilitate parent/family involvement that shall include the following goals:

- Encourage families to actively participate in the life of the school and feel welcomed, valued, and connected to each other, to school staff and to what students are learning and doing in class;
- Encourage families and school staff to engage in regular, two-way meaningful communication about student learning;
- Encourage families and school staff to continuously collaborate to support student learning and healthy development both at home and at school and have regular opportunities to strengthen their knowledge and skills to do so effectively;
- Empower parents to be advocates for their own and other children, to ensure that students are treated equitably and have access to learning opportunities that will support their success;
- Encourage families and school staff to be partners in decisions that affect children and families and together inform, influence and create policies, practices and programs; and
- Encourage families and school staff to collaborate with members of the community to connect students, families and staff to expand learning opportunities, community services and civic participation.

The District's plan for meeting these goals is to:

- Provide activities that will educate parents regarding the intellectual and developmental needs of their children at all age levels. This will include promoting cooperation between the district and other agencies or school/community groups (such as parent-teacher groups, Head Start, etc.) to furnish learning opportunities and disseminate information regarding parenting skills and child/adolescent development.
- Implement strategies to involve parents/families in the educational process, including:
 - Keeping parents/families informed of opportunities for involvement and encouraging participation in various programs;
 - Providing access to educational resources for parents/families to use together with their children; and

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- Keeping parents/families informed of the objectives of district educational programs as well as of their child's participation and progress within these programs.
- Enable families to participate in the education of their children through a variety of roles. For example, parents/family members should be given opportunities to provide input into district policies and volunteer time within the classrooms and school programs;
- Provide professional development opportunities for teachers and staff to enhance their understanding of effective parent/family involvement strategies;
- Perform regular evaluations of parent/family involvement at each school and at the district level;
- Provide access, upon request, to any instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum; and
- If practical, provide information in a language understandable to parents.

Legal Reference: 10.55.701(m), ARM Board of Trustees

Policy History:

Adopted on:

Revised on: July 11, 2016

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Federal Funding and Title I

The Board may participate in federal programs that, in the judgment of the administrative staff, shall be beneficial to the total school program. All projects written to secure federal funds shall be on the recommendation of the Superintendent/designee and approval of the Board. The Board shall comply with all federal and state certification requirements for alcohol and drug abuse education and prevention programs.

The Superintendent/designee shall pursue funding under Title I, *Improving the Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged*, of the Elementary and *Secondary Education Act*, to supplement instructional services and activities in order to improve the educational opportunities of educationally disadvantaged or deprived children.

All District schools, regardless of whether they receive Title I funds, shall provide services that, taken as a whole, are substantially comparable. Teachers, administrators and other staff shall be assigned to schools in a manner that ensures equivalency among the District's schools. Curriculum materials and instructional supplies shall be provided in a manner that ensures equivalency among the District's schools

In keeping with the requirements of ESSIA¹ and EDGAR², the Board assures:

- A salary schedule which applies to all instructional personnel;
- Equivalence among schools in teachers, administrators and auxiliary personnel;
- Equivalence among schools in the provision of curriculum materials and instructional supplies; and
- Parental consultation in project planning, implementation and evaluation.

Parental Involvement

The District maintains programs, activities and procedures for the involvement of parents of students receiving services or enrolled in programs under Title I. These programs, activities and procedures are described in the *District – School Parental Involvement Compact*, which is hereby incorporated by reference.

The Superintendent/designee shall develop District – School Parental Involvement Compact according to Title I requirements. The Compact shall contain the District's expectations for parental involvement, specific strategies for effective parent involvement activities to improve student academic achievement and school performance, other provisions as required by federal law. The Superintendent/designee shall ensure that the Compact is distributed to parents of students receiving services or enrolled in programs under Title I.

¹ Elementary and Secondary School Improvement Amendments

² Education Department General Administrative Regulations

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Cross Reference: Administrative Procedures

Legal Reference: Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, 20 U.S.C. §
6301-6514, as implemented by 34 C.F.R. part 200 of the No Child Left
Behind Act of 2001
Agostini v. Felton, 521 U.S.103 (1997)

Policy History:

Adopted on:

Revised on: July 11, 2016

Special Education

The District will provide a free appropriate public education and necessary related services to all children with disabilities residing within the District, as required under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), provisions of Montana law and the Americans with Disabilities Act.

For students eligible for services under IDEA, the District will follow procedures for identification, evaluation, placement and delivery of service to children with disabilities, as provided in the current *Montana State Plan under Part B of IDEA*.

The District may maintain membership in one or more cooperative associations that may assist in fulfilling the District's obligations to its disabled students.

Legal Reference: Americans with Disabilities Act, 42 U.S.C. § 12101, et seq.
 Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 20 U.S.C § 1400, et
 seq.
 § 20-7-Part Four, MCA Special Education for
 Exceptional Children

Policy History:
Adopted on:
Revised on: July 11, 2016

Poplar School District

INSTRUCTION

2162

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

It is the intent of the District to ensure that students who are disabled within the definition of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 are identified, evaluated, and provided with appropriate educational services. For those students who need or are believed to need special instruction and/or related services under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the District shall establish and implement a system of procedural safeguards. The safeguards shall cover students' identification, evaluation and educational placement. This system shall include notice, an opportunity for the student's parent or legal guardian to examine relevant records, an impartial hearing with opportunity for participation by the student's parent or legal guardian and a review procedure.

Cross Reference: 2162P Section 504

Legal Reference: Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504, 29 U.S.C. § 794
34 C.F.R. 104.36 Procedural safeguards

Policy History:

Adopted on:

Revised on: July 11, 2016

Poplar School District

INSTRUCTION

2166

Gifted Program

To the extent possible within the resources available, all gifted and talented students shall have the opportunity to participate in appropriate educational programs. The term “gifted and talented” means children of outstanding abilities who are capable of high performance and require differentiated educational programs beyond those normally offered in public schools in order to fully achieve their potential contribution to society and self.

The Superintendent/designee shall establish procedures consistent with state guidelines for nominating, assessing and selecting children of demonstrated achievement, or potential ability in terms of general intellectual ability and academic aptitude.

Legal References: § 20-7-901 through 904, MCA Gifted and talented children
 10.55.804, ARM Gifted and talented

Policy History:

Adopted on:

Revised on: July 11, 2016

Poplar School District

INSTRUCTION

2168

Distance Learning

For purposes of this policy, “distance learning” is defined as instruction in which students and teachers are separated by time and/or location with synchronous or asynchronous content, instruction and communication between student and teacher (e.g., correspondence courses, online learning, videoconferencing, streaming video).

The District may receive and/or provide distance learning programs, provided the following requirements are met:

- The distance learning programs and/or courses shall meet the learner expectations adopted by the district and be aligned with state content and performance standards;
- The district shall provide a report to the Superintendent of Public Instruction documenting how it is meeting the needs of students under the accreditation standards who are taking a majority of courses during each grading period via distance programs;
- The district will provide qualified instructors and/or facilitators as described in ARM 10.55.907(3)(a)(b)(c);
- The district will ensure that the distance learning facilitators receive in-service training on technology delivered instruction as described in ARM 10.55.907(3)(d); and
- The district will comply with all other standards as described in ARM 10.55.907(4)(5)(a-e).

The District will permit a student to enroll in an approved distance learning course, in order that such student may include a greater variety of learning experiences within the student’s educational program.

Credit for distance learning courses may be granted, provided the following requirements are met:

- Prior permission has been granted by the principal;
- The program fits the education plan submitted by the regularly enrolled student; and
- Credit is granted for schools and institutions approved by the District after evaluation for a particular course offering.

The District will not be obligated to pay for a student’s distance learning courses.

Legal Reference:	ARM 10.55.602 ARM 10.55.705	Definitions Administrative personnel; Assignment of School Administrators/Principals
	ARM 10.55.907	Distance, Online, and Technology Delivered Learning

Policy History:

Adopted on:

Revised on: July 11, 2016

Poplar School District

INSTRUCTION

2171

Effective Writing Program / Significant Writing Program

The Board of Trustees has determined that a writing program is beneficial for the education of all students. The writing program is guided by the *Montana Common Core Standards in English Language Arts* and specifically in the *College and Career Readiness Standards for Writing*. Additionally, writing will be taught in all subjects as defined by the *Writing Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science and Technical Subjects*.

Components of the effective writing program include (but are not limited to):

- Explicit writing instruction is part of the course content as a significant, recurring activity;
- Students use writing as a tool for learning and understanding course content;
- Students develop information literacy by finding, evaluating and using information effectively;
- Students formulate and express opinions and ideas in writing;
- Students learn to write in forms and for purposes and audiences typical of disciplines and professions;
- Students receive constructive responses to their writing, with feedback explicitly directed at improving the quality of their writing; and
- Students revise formal documents as part of the process of writing;

Due to financial constraints the District’s writing program does not meet the maximum load requirements of a significant writing program as defined in the Administrative Rules of Montana, cited below.

Legal References:

10.55.701(2) (p) ARM
10.55.713 (4) ARM

Board of Trustees
Teacher Load and Class Size

Policy History:

Adopted on:

Revised on: July 11, 2016

Poplar School District

INSTRUCTION

2250

Community and Adult Education

The District makes its resources available to adults and other non-students within the limits of budget, staff and facilities, provided there is no interference with or impairment of the regular school program. Community school, adult education and other offerings may be developed in cooperation with community representatives, subject to approval and authorization by the Board.

Legal Reference: § 20-7-703, MCA Trustees' policies for adult education

Policy History:

Adopted on:

Revised on: July 11, 2016

Poplar School District

INSTRUCTION

2309

Selection and Use of Library Materials

The District maintains libraries primarily for use by District students. The Librarian is responsible for selecting materials for inclusion in the libraries, subject to the approval of the Board of Trustees. Prior to presenting materials for inclusion in the library, the Librarian may consider the existing collection, the curricular needs of the students and the recommendations of the American Association of School Librarians in determining what materials are appropriate for the libraries.

Library materials may be checked out by students or staff during the instructional day. Students and staff who check out library materials are responsible for the care and timely return of such materials. Building principals may assess fines for damaged or unreturned books.

Any individual may challenge the selection of materials for use in the libraries. The Superintendent/designee shall appoint a committee of teachers, librarians and administrators as independent investigators pursuant to the Learning Materials Review to determine if the challenged material is properly located in the library.

Cross Reference: 2314 Learning Materials Review
 1700 Uniform Grievance Protocol
 2311 Instructional Materials

Legal Reference: § 20-7-203, MCA Trustees’ policies for school library
 § 20-7-204, MCA School library book selection

Policy History:

Adopted on:

Revised on: July 11, 2016

Poplar School District

INSTRUCTION

2311

Instructional Materials

The Board is legally responsible to approve and to provide the necessary instructional materials used in the District. Instructional materials are any material used in classroom instruction, library or any materials to which a teacher might refer a student as part of the course of instruction. Textbooks and instructional materials should provide quality learning experiences for students and:

- Enrich and support the curriculum;
- Stimulate growth in knowledge, literary appreciation, aesthetic value and ethical standards;
- Provide background information to enable students to make intelligent judgments;
- Present opposing sides of controversial issues;
- Be representative of the many religious, ethnic and cultural groups and their contributions to our American heritage; and
- Depict in an accurate and unbiased way the cultural diversity and pluralistic nature of American society.

Basic instructional course material in the fundamental skill areas of language arts, mathematics, science and social studies should be reviewed at intervals not exceeding five (5) years. All instructional materials must be sequential, and must be compatible with previous and future offerings.

Instructional materials may be made available for loan to students when the best interest of the District and student will be served by such a decision. Students will not be charged for normal wear. They will be charged replacement cost, however, as well as for excessive wear, unreasonable damage or lost materials. The professional staff will maintain records necessary for the proper accounting of all instructional materials.

Cross Reference: 2314 Learning Materials Review

Legal Reference: § 20-4-402, MCA Duties of District Superintendent
or County High School Principal
§ 20-7-601, MCA Free Textbook Provision
§ 20-7-602, MCA Textbook Selection and Adoption

Policy History:

Adopted on:

Revised on: July 11, 2016

Poplar School District

INSTRUCTION

2312

Copyright

The District recognizes that federal law makes it illegal to duplicate copyrighted materials without authorization of the holder of the copyright, except for certain exempt purposes. Severe penalties may be imposed for unauthorized copying or using of audio, visual or printed materials and computer software, unless the copying or using conforms to the “fair use” doctrine.

Under the “fair use” doctrine, unauthorized reproduction of copyrighted materials is permissible for such purposes as criticism, comment, news reporting, teaching, scholarship or research.

While the District encourages its staff to enrich the learning programs by making proper use of supplementary materials, it is the responsibility of District staff to abide by the District’s copying procedures and obey the requirements of the law. Under no circumstances shall it be necessary for District staff to violate copyright requirements in order to perform their duties properly. The District cannot be responsible for any violations of the copyright law by its staff.

Any staff member who is uncertain as to whether reproducing or using copyrighted material complies with the District’s procedures or is permissible under the law should contact the principal(s) or Superintendent/designee. The principal(s) or Superintendent/designee will assist staff in obtaining proper authorization to copy or use protected materials when such authorization is required.

Legal Reference:

17 U.S.C. § 101 to 1010

Federal Copyright Law of 1976

Policy History:

Adopted on:

Revised on: July 11, 2016

Poplar School District

INSTRUCTION

2314

Learning Materials Review

Citizens objecting to specific learning materials used in the District are encouraged to submit a complaint in writing and to discuss the complaint with the building principal prior to pursuing a formal complaint. All formal objections to specific learning materials must follow the process outlined in the Administrative Procedures Manual.

Learning materials, for the purposes of this policy, shall be considered to be any material used in classroom instruction, library materials or any materials to which a teacher might refer a student as part of the course of instruction.

Cross Reference: Administrative Procedures Manual

Legal Reference:

Policy History:

Adopted on:

Revised on: July 11, 2016

Poplar School District

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2320

Field Trips, Excursions and Outdoor Education

The Board recognizes that field trips when used as a device for teaching and learning integral to the curriculum are an educationally sound and important ingredient in the instructional program of the schools. Such trips can supplement and enrich classroom procedures by providing learning experiences in an environment beyond the classroom.

Field trips of a distance exceeding 600 miles (one way) are to be approved by the Superintendent at least 60 days in advance. Students earning the right to travel for competitions with less than 60 days notice will receive special consideration. Travel outside of the State must be approved by the Superintendent and the Board of Trustees at least six months in advance. Building principals may approve all other field trips.

The District shall develop procedures for the operation of a safe and productive field trip. Each field trip must be integrated with the curriculum and coordinated with classroom activities which enhance its usefulness.

No staff member may solicit students during instructional time for any privately arranged field trip or excursion without Board permission.

The presence of a person with a currently valid American Red Cross standard first aid card or current certification from an equivalent first aid course is required during school-sponsored activities, including field trips, athletic and other off-campus events.

Cross Reference: 8121 District Owned Vehicles
 Administrative Procedures Manual

Legal Reference: 37.111.825, ARM Health Supervision and Maintenance

Policy History:

Adopted on:

Revised on: July 11, 2016

Poplar School District

INSTRUCTION

2330

Controversial Issues and Academic Freedom

The District will offer courses of study which will afford learning experiences appropriate to levels of student understanding. The instructional program respects the right of students to face issues, to have free access to information, to study under teachers in situations free from prejudice, and to form, hold, and express their own opinions without personal prejudice or discrimination.

Teachers will guide discussions and procedures with thoroughness and objectivity to acquaint students with the need to recognize various points of view, importance of fact, value of good judgment, and the virtue of respect for conflicting opinions.

The Board encourages and supports the concept of academic freedom, recognizing it as a necessary condition to aid in maintaining an environment conducive to learning and to the free exchange of ideas and information. In a study or discussion of controversial issues or materials, however, the Board directs teaching staff to take into account the following criteria:

- Subjects of a controversial nature shall be defined as a political, religious and moral;
- Both the building principal and the teacher must agree to allow a speaker or material of a controversial nature in the classroom. If the teacher and building principal are unable to agree, then they shall include the Superintendent/designee in the decision making process;
- If the material or speaker requests presentation at an assembly, the principal shall make the decision and inform the community;
- The person or persons responsible for approving the presentation shall also be responsible for other viewpoints expressed; and
- Opposing viewpoints shall be presented in the same general setting within a month.

Legal References:

§ 20-3-324, MCA
10.55.701, ARM
10.55.603, ARM

Powers and duties
Board of Trustees
Curriculum and Assessment

Policy History:

Adopted on:

Revised on: July 11, 2016

Religion and Religious Activities

In keeping with the United States and Montana Constitutions and judicial decisions, the District may not support any religion or endorse religious activity. At the same time, the District may not prohibit private religious expression by students. This policy provides direction to students and staff members about the application of these principles to student religious activity at school.

Student Prayer and Discussion

Students may pray individually or in groups and may discuss their religious views with other students, as long as they are not disruptive or coercive. The right to engage in voluntary prayer does not include the right to have a captive audience listen, to harass other students or to force them to participate. Students may pray silently in the classroom, except when they are expected to be involved in classroom instruction or activities.

Staff Members

Staff members are representatives of the District and must “navigate the narrow channel between impairing intellectual inquiry and propagating a religious creed.” They may not encourage, discourage, persuade, dissuade, sponsor, participate in or discriminate against a religious activity or an activity because of its religious content. They must remain officially neutral toward religious expression.

Assemblies, Extracurricular and Athletic Events

District officials may not invite or permit members of the clergy, staff members or outsiders to give prayers at school-sponsored assemblies and extracurricular or athletic events. District officials also may not organize or agree to student requests for prayer at assemblies and other school-sponsored events. Furthermore, prayer may not be broadcast over the school public address system, even if the prayer is nonsectarian, non-proselytizing and initiated by students.

Student Religious Expression and Assignments

Students may express their individual religious beliefs in reports, tests, homework and projects. Staff members should judge their work by ordinary academic standards, including substance, relevance, appearance, composition and grammar. Student religious expression should neither be favored nor penalized.

Religion in the Curriculum

Staff members may teach students about religion in history, art, music, literature and other subjects in which religious influence has been and continues to be felt. However, staff members may not teach religion or advocate religious doctrine or practice. The prohibition against teaching religion extends to curricular decisions which promote religion or religious beliefs.

School programs, performances and celebrations must serve an educational purpose. The inclusion of religious music, symbols, art or writings is permitted, if the religious content has an historical or independent educational purpose which contributes to the objectives of the approved curriculum. School programs, performances and celebrations cannot promote, encourage, discourage, persuade, dissuade or discriminate against a religion or religious activity.

Student Religious Clubs

Students may organize clubs to discuss or promote religion, subject to the same constitutionally acceptable restrictions the District imposes on other student-organized clubs.

Distribution of Religious Literature

Students may distribute religious literature to their classmates, subject to the same constitutionally acceptable restrictions the District imposes on distribution of other non-school literature. Outsiders may not distribute religious or other literature to students on school property consistent with and pursuant to the District policy on solicitations.

Release Time for Religious Instruction

The District may provide for a religious instruction release time program under which a pupil may be released upon written request of the parent or guardian, except that no such program shall take place on public school property. Such written request must be renewed annually, and the Board will determine the amount of time that any pupil will be released for religious instructions. Such release shall not adversely affect the pupil's attendance.

Policy History:

Adopted on:

Revised on: July 11, 2016

Poplar School District

INSTRUCTION

2333

Graduation Ceremonies

Participation

A student’s right to participate in a graduation ceremony at Poplar High School is an honor. As such, participation in this ceremony is reserved for those members of the senior class (or junior in the case of early graduation) who have completed all state and local requirements for graduation before the date of the ceremony. Students who complete their requirements after the date of graduation ceremony will receive their diplomas/certificates at that time.

Organization and Content of Graduation Ceremonies

The school administration may invite students to participate in the graduation ceremony according to academic class standing, class officer status or for other reasons at the discretion of school administration. Any student who is requested to participate may choose to decline the invitation.

The school administrators will review any presentations and specific content, and may advise participants about appropriate language for the audience and occasion. Students selected to participate may choose to deliver an address, poem, reading, song, musical presentation or any other pronouncement of their choosing.

The printed program for a commencement exercise will include the following paragraphs:

Any presentation by participants of commencement exercises is the private expression of an individual participant and does not necessarily reflect any official position of the District, its Board, administration or employees, nor does it necessarily indicate the views of any other graduates.

The Board recognizes that at graduation time and throughout the course of the educational process, there will be instances when religious values, religious practices and religious persons will have some interaction with the public schools and students. The Board, while not endorsing any religion, recognizes the rights of individuals to have the freedom to express their individual political, social or religious views in a fashion appropriate with school policies.

Legal Reference:	Art. II, Sec. 5,	Montana Constitution - Freedom of religion
	Art. X, Sec. 7,	Montana Constitution – Nondiscrimination in education
	§ 20-5-201(3), MCA	Duties and sanctions
	§ 20-1-308, MCA	Religious instruction released time program
	§ 20-7-112, MCA	Sectarian publications prohibited and prayer permitted

Policy History:

Adopted on:

Revised on: July 11, 2016

Poplar School District

INSTRUCTION

2410
Page 1 of 2

High School Graduation

The Board will award a regular high school diploma to every student enrolled in the District who meets graduation requirements established by the District. The official transcript will indicate the specific courses taken and level of achievement. Prior to registering in high school, each student will be provided with a copy of the current graduation requirements. Graduation requirements shall also be included in the student handbook. Generally, any change in graduation requirements promulgated by the Board will become effective for the next class to enter ninth grade. Exceptions to this general rule may be made, when it is determined by the Board that proposed changes in graduation requirements will not have a negative effect on students already in grades nine (9) through twelve (12).

To graduate from Poplar High School, a student must have satisfactorily completed the last quarter prior to graduation as a Poplar High School student. Highly unusual exceptions may be considered by the principal, such as a student exchange program in a recognized school. A student with a disabling condition will satisfy those competency requirements incorporated into the individualized education program (IEP). Satisfactory completion of the objectives incorporated in the IEP will serve as the basis for determining completion of a course.

Credits

Students shall be expected to earn a minimum of twenty two (22) units in order to complete graduation requirements. Specific credit requirements may be found in the Student Handbook.

Waiver of Requirement

Graduation requirements generally will not be waived under any circumstances. However, in rare and unique hardship circumstances, the principal may recommend and the Superintendent approve minor deviation from the graduation requirements.

Alternative Programs

Credit toward graduation requirements may be granted for planned learning experiences from accredited programs, such as summer school, university courses and correspondence courses. Credit for work experience may be offered when the work program is a part of and supervised by the school. All classes attempted at Poplar High School and all acceptable transfer credits shall be recorded on the transcript. All grades earned, including failures and retakes, shall be recorded as such and utilized in the calculation of Grade Point Average and class rank. Credit shall be awarded only once regardless of repetition of the course.

Honor Roll

A student must have a minimum grade-point average of 3.00- 3.40 to be placed on the Honor Roll and a 3.50 to be placed on the High honor roll. Specific information regarding honors at graduation are included in the student handbook.

Class Rank (Grade Point Average)

Class Rank is compiled from semester grades. Courses not eligible for GPA are designated with an asterisk on the report card.

Poplar School District

INSTRUCTION

2410
Page 2 of 2

Early Graduation

The Board authorizes the high school principal to recommend students for early graduation who have completed the minimum requirements for graduation after completion of the seventh (7th) semester. The final decision is made by the Board.

Legal Reference:

10.55.905, ARM
10.55.906, ARM
§ 20-9-313, MCA

Graduation Requirements
High School Credit
Circumstances under which regular
average number belonging may be increased

Policy History:

Adopted on:

Revised on: July 11, 2016

Poplar School District

INSTRUCTION

2413

Assessment for Placement

Grades 9-12

Requests for transfer of credit from any non-accredited, nonpublic school will be denied. Requests for grade placement from any non-accredited, nonpublic school shall be subject to examination and approval before being accepted by the District. This will be done by the school counselor or principal.

Grades 1-8

Requests from parents of students in non-accredited, non-public schools for placement in the District school system will be evaluated by an assessment for placement team. That team will consist of the building principal, one (1) teacher of the grade in which the student is being considered for enrollment and one (1) school counselor.

The assessment for placement team will administer and score the District adopted norm referenced test and/or the end of the year subject matter test. The assessment for placement team will take into account the following in its recommendation for grade placement:

- Documentation that the non-accredited, non-public school has provided a comparable number of hours as the child would have attended in a public or private school;
- That the child followed a similar curriculum as would have been provided in an accredited public or private school;
- That the result of the end of the year test indicates the student has mastered most prerequisite skills; and
- The age appropriate placement for the child.

If a parent or guardian of a child is not in agreement with the placement of the child, he/she may request a meeting with the Superintendent. The final decision rests with the Superintendent.

Legal Reference: § 20-5-110, MCA School district assessment for placement of a child who enrolls from a non-accredited, non-public school

Policy History:

Adopted on:

Revised on: July 11, 2016

Poplar School District

INSTRUCTION

2420

Grading and Progress Reports

The Board believes that the cooperation of school and home is a vital ingredient in the growth and education of the student and recognizes the responsibility to keep parents/guardians informed of student welfare and progress in school.

The issuance of grades and progress reports on a regular basis serves as the basis for continuous evaluation of the student's performance and determining changes that should be made to effect improvement. These reports shall be designed to provide information that will be helpful to the student, teacher, counselor and parent.

The Board directs the Superintendent/designee to establish a system of reporting student progress and shall require all staff members to comply with such a system as part of their teaching responsibility.

Policy History:

Adopted on:

Revised on: July 11, 2016

Poplar School District

INSTRUCTION

2421

Promotion and Retention

The Board recognizes that students of the same age are at many intellectual and developmental levels and that these differences are a normal part of human development. Because of these differences, the administrators and teaching staff are directed to make every effort to develop curricula and programs that will meet the individual and unique needs of all students and allow them to remain with their age cohorts.

It is the philosophy of the District that students thrive best when placed in or promoted to grade levels with other students of compatible age, physical, social and emotional status. It is the District's philosophy to promote students who demonstrate effort within those compatibilities.

All promotion and retention decisions must be based on academic rationale. Parents/guardians will be included in the decision-making process, but all final placement decisions regarding a student are within the discretion of the administration.

Policy History:

Adopted on:

Revised on: July 11, 2016

Poplar School District

INSTRUCTION

2450

Recognition of American Indian Peoples’ Culture and Heritage in the Curriculum Process

The District recognizes the distinct and unique cultural heritage of Native Americans and is committed in the District’s educational goals to the preservation of such heritage.

In furtherance of the District’s educational goals, the District is committed to working cooperatively with Montana Tribes in close proximity to the District when providing instruction, when implementing educational goals or when adopting rules relating to education of students in the District. The District will periodically review its curriculum to ensure the inclusion of cultural heritage of Native Americans, which will include but not necessarily be limited to considering methods by which to provide books and materials reflecting authentic historical and contemporary portrayals of Native Americans, and taking into account individual and cultural diversity and differences among students.

The District will provide the necessary training to school personnel with the objective of gaining an understanding and awareness of Native American culture, which will assist the District’s staff in its relations with Native American students and parents. Certified staff may be required to satisfy the requirements for instruction in American Indian studies.

Legal References:	§ 20-1-501, MCA	Recognition of American Indian
	10.55.701, ARM	Cultural Heritage – legislative intent
	10.55.603, ARM	Board of Trustees
		Curriculum and Assessment

Policy History:

Adopted on:

Revised on: July 11, 2016

Poplar School District

INSTRUCTION

2500

Limited English Proficient Students

The Superintendent/designee shall develop and maintain services for students having limited English language proficiency that will:

- Appropriately identify students with limited English proficiency;
- Comply with any applicable federal law and/or any requirements for the receipt of federal grant money for limited English proficient students;
- Determine the appropriate instructional environment for limited English proficient students;
- Annually assess the English proficiency of limited English proficient students and monitor their progress in order to determine their readiness for a mainstream classroom environment; and
- Notify parents/guardians of, and provide information about the instructional services, their child's level of English proficiency, the method of instruction to be used, how the services will meet their child's needs, specific exit requirements of the services, how the services will meet their child's IEP, if applicable, and information on parent/guardian rights. Parental involvement will be encouraged and parents/guardians will be regularly apprised of their child's progress.

Legal References:	42 U.S.C. § 2000d Rights Act of	Title IV, Civil 1964
	20 U.S.C. § 1703 (f)	Equal Education Opportunities Act
	20 U.S.C. § 7401 et seq	Bilingual Education Act

Policy History:

Adopted on:

Revised on: July 11, 2016

Poplar School District

INSTRUCTION

2510

Health and Wellness

Good health and wellness are positively correlated to success in school and contribute to the overall well being of each student. The Board recognizes that improving health and wellness is a vital community interest. The Poplar School District aspires to be a model school district that demonstrates a culture of comprehensive health and wellness. Therefore, the District will collaborate with the community in developing and implementing community and school standards for health and wellness in each of the following areas:

- Nutrition (to include guidelines for reimbursable school meals and other food available at school, school dining areas and nutrition education);
- Physical activities and access to fitness opportunities and facilities;
- Mental health;
- Indoor environmental health;
- Access to health care;
- Advertising that supports healthy decisions;
- Employee health and wellness;
- Professional development for teachers about health and wellness;
- Education for students about health and wellness; and
- Student health issues that arise in the school setting.

The Board directs the Superintendent/designee to establish a Health and Wellness Leadership Council. This council shall include community and District leaders and experts on health and wellness, parents and students. After initial subcommittee work to develop standards for the components above, the Health and Wellness Leadership Council will review those standards and assess the District's current status in each area and develop recommendations for implementation. This council will meet at least annually to review progress toward standards in various components of the health and wellness initiative and will be responsible for reporting progress to the Superintendent and the Board.

Legal Reference:

The Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2010

Policy History:

Adopted on:

Revised on: July 11, 2016