



Education Advocates Meeting

July 19, 2022

ARM Chapter 55 Update

Summary:

In September 2020, the Montana Board of Public Education agreed to open the rules for recommend changes to ARM 10, Chapter 55: Accreditation Standards. Starting in September 2020 to December 2021, the OPI researched the needs of our schools and how to better serve our students through updates to our accreditation standards. An [advisory task force](#) to the Superintendent began reviewing rules for crucial changes beginning January 11, 2022, and concluded their recommendations May 19, 2022. Proposed changes to the accreditation standards require that the State Superintendent establish an independent negotiated rulemaking committee (“Committee”) under [§ 20-7-101](#), MCA. Thus, State Superintendent Arntzen selected 21 members to serve on that Committee in accordance with [§ 20-7-101\(2\)](#), MCA. The Committee began on February 24, 2022 and finished on July 15, 2022. Detailed information about the members of the Committee, agendas, meeting minutes, and recordings can be found on the OPI website [here](#).

Next Step:

August 15, 2022, Special Board of Education Meeting presentation of the Economic Impact Statement and proposed rule changes.

Economic Impact Statement:

As required by [§ 20-7-101\(1\)](#), MCA, the Montana Superintendent of Public Instruction, is preparing an economic impact statement in consultation with the NRC under the provisions of [§ 2-4-405](#), MCA.

The first economic impact survey was released on June 20, 2022, and closed on July 5, 2022, with 652 responses. The second economic impact statement was released on July 1, 2022, and closed on July 8, 2022, with 121 survey responses. The third survey opened on July 15, 2022, and will close on Thursday, July 21st.

[Link](#) to the third survey.

The Summary of Survey Responses will show the results of the survey responses by stakeholders and their perspective on school district operations and budgets, including personnel expenses, available resources, and professional development costs.



The NRC agreed through the consensus process for proposed changes to accreditation rules that were identified to be on the economic impact survey. The thirteen rules are below.

- 1) 10.55.601 - Replacing the Continuous School Improvement Plan (CSIP) and consolidating all plans into an Integrated Action Plan.
- 2) 10.55.603 - Expanding multiple measures in the district assessment plans.
- 3) 10.55.712 - Providing flexibility for local school districts to determine the resources needed when elementary classrooms are overloaded.
- 4) 10.55.704 - Highlighting statutory requirements for district superintendents and removing ratios for assignments.
- 5) 10.55.705 – Clarifying principal role and assignment of administrators and principals by removing ratios except the number of enrolled students of 125 or more that would require principal FTE.
- 6) 10.55.709- Aligning the requirements for staffing of library media specialists aligned to the content and program delivery services and removing the staffing ratio.
- 7) 10.55.714 - Updating the Professional Development rule.
- 8) 10.55.723 - Enhancing the existing Mentorship and induction plans required by local boards.
- 9) 10.55.801 - Including a survey tool to measure stakeholders' perceptions of school climate.
- 10) 10.55.803 - Adding the need to assess and supply the learning technology for each student within the Learner Access rule.
- 11) 10.55.806 - Adding English Language Learners to the Special Education and Gifted and Talented subgroups, per federal requirements for districts to provide educational services for English learners.
- 12) 10.55.904 and 10.55.905 - Including Civics/Government and Economics or Financial Literacy within the established high school offerings and graduation requirements.
- 13) 10.55.908 - Adding state to the federal accessibility standards for facilities.

Overview of NRC negotiations on Chapter 55 rules:

Of current individual rules: 58

Of new proposed rules: 5

- 10.55.608 Charter School Application
- 10.55.722: Family and Community Engagement
- 10.55.723: Mentorship and Induction
- 10.55.724: Evaluation
- 10.55.806: English Language Learners

Of rules with no recommended changes: 14

- 10.55.713: Teacher Class size Middle and High School
- 10.55.715: Para-professional Qualifications and Supervision
- 10.55.719: Student Protection Procedures
- 10.55.720: Suicide Prevention and Response



- 10.55.805: Special Education
- 10.55.909: Student Records
- 10.55.910: Student Discipline Records
- 10.55.911: High School Transcripts
- 10.55.1201: Arts Program Delivery Standards
- 10.55.1401: Math Program Delivery Standards
- 10.55.1501: Science Program Delivery Standards
- 10.55.1601: Social Studies Program Delivery Standards
- 10.55.2201: Computer Science Program Delivery Standards
- 10.55.2301: Technology Integration Program Standards

Of rules the NRC established consensus: (48 full consensus)

- 10.55.601: Accreditation Procedures
- 10.55.602: Definitions
- 10.55.603: Curriculum and Assessment
- 10.55.604: Variances to Standards
- 10.55.605: Categories of Accreditation
- 10.55.606: Accreditation Process
- 10.55.607: Internships
- 10.55.608: Charter School Application
- 10.55.701: Board of Trustees
- 10.55.702: Licensure and duties of Superintendents
- 10.55.703: Licensure and duties of Principals
- 10.55.704: Administrative Personnel: Assignment of District Superintendents
- 10.55.705: Administrative Personnel: Assignment of School Administrators/Principals
- 10.55.706: Teacher Involvement
- 10.55.707: Teacher and Specialist Licensure
- 10.55.708: Teaching Assignments
- 10.55.709: Library Media Services, K-12
- 10.55.711: Class size and Teacher Load
- 10.55.712: Class size: Elementary
- 10.55.714: Professional Development
- 10.55.716: Substitute Teachers
- 10.55.717: Assignment of Persons Providing Instruction to Braille Students
- 10.55.718: Assignment of Persons Providing Sign Language Interpreting
- 10.55.721: Hazard and emergency plans
- 10.55.722: Family and community engagement
- 10.55.723: Mentorship and induction



- 10.55.724: Evaluation
- 10.55.801: School climate
- 10.55.802: Opportunity and Educational Equity
- 10.55.803: Learner Access
- 10.55.804: Gifted and Talented
- 10.55.806: English Learners
- 10.55.901: Basic Elementary Education Program
- 10.55.902: Basic Education Program: Middle Grade
- 10.55.904: High School Program Offerings
- 10.55.905: High School Graduation Requirements
- 10.55.906: High School Credit
- 10.55.907: Distance, online, and tech delivered learning
- 10.55.908: School Facility
- 10.55.1001: Program Standards
- 10.55.1003: Program foundation standards
- 10.55.1101: ELA and Literacy Program Delivery Standards
- 10.55.1301: Health and Physical Education Delivery Standards
- 10.55.1302: Health enhancement participation
- 10.55.1701: CTE Program Delivery Standards
- 10.55.1801: Library and Media Information Program Delivery Standards
- 10.55.1901: School Counselor Program Delivery Standards
- 10.55.2101: World Language Delivery Standards

Unresolved rule that the NRC did not reach consensus: 1

- 10.55.710: Assignment of School Counseling Staff

The committee agreed on the following language, but consensus was not reached based on the exclusion of ratios.

(1) ~~A minimum equivalent of one full-time counselor for each 400 elementary (K-8) students shall be provided. The counselor/student ratio shall be prorated.~~

Each school must have a school counseling program for K-12 students aligned to delivery standards in ARM 10.55.1901 and national counselor and student standards. The school system will assess the need for student supports that result in the knowledge, skills, and dispositions students need to:

- (a) address mental health, safety, and well-being;
- (b) achieve academic success and college and career readiness; and
- (c) develop the mindsets and behaviors as identified in the national school counseling standards.

(2) ~~A minimum equivalent of one full-time counselor for each 400 high school students (including grades~~



~~7 and 8 if high school funding is received) shall be provided. The counselor/student ratio shall be prorated.~~

Based on the needs of the district in concert with national and state standards the superintendent must recommend to the local board of trustees the assignment of counseling staff based on the capacity of individual counselors to provide school counseling programming and services by:

- (a) employing licensed school counselor(s) or Class 6 specialist(s); or
- (b) contracting licensed school counselor(s) or Class 6 specialist(s); or
- (c) utilizing a consortium, multidistrict agreement, or interlocal cooperative to secure these services; or
- (d) utilizing any other cooperative method that is authorized to secure these services.

~~(3) Districts with fewer than 126 students may employ or contract with a licensed, endorsed school counselor or Class 6 specialist or utilize a consortium, multidistrict agreement, or interlocal cooperative to secure these services.~~

Based on the student need and school population(s) the district superintendent must recommend to the local board of trustees, the assignment of additional degreed, licensed, or credentialed staff (for example school counselors, school psychologists, career advisors, licensed clinical social workers, licensed professional counselors, behaviorists, other mental health professionals, and/or other resources) that supports the staffing levels based on evidence-based research and national counseling standards.

Conceptual Changes within the Superintendent's Recommendations

ARM 55, Subchapter 6, General Provisions

- Remodeling the Continuous School Improvement Plan to an Integrated Action Plan. The **Integrated Action Plan** integrates and aligns all plans (including the local board of trustees' strategic plan) that a district and schools are required to complete and provides an opportunity for a district to strategically utilize local, state, and federal resources in a cohesive, unified manner that leads to continuous improvement and positively impacts student learning outcomes.
- The Integrated Action Plan contains a **graduate profile**, which is a collective vision that articulates the community's aspirations for all students.
- Shifting from an input system to an **outcome-based model** because inputs provide helpful criteria and indicate critical success factors in instructional design and managing programs—but they don't tell us what works and is effective based on outcomes.
- Emphasizing a **proficiency-based** learner model within the curriculum and assessment section.
- Encouraging **multiple measures** determined at the local level to assess student learning progression, growth, and proficiency.
- Redefining categories of accreditation from 5 to 3 categories: **Accreditation with distinction**, accreditation, and accreditation with probation. Raising the bar for accreditation to include a rating for exceeding expectations.



- Separated **charter school application** from variance to standards rule to make a new rule and updated the language to focus on student performance outcomes.
- Transferring internships to Chapter 57: Licensure, where it better fits with educator certificate requirements.
- Modernizing and aligning all definitions to align with recommended rule changes.

ARM 55, Subchapter 7, Leadership

- Elevating meaningful **family and community engagement** as a partnership between school communities and families based on best practices and principles that keep the focus on the learner and core beliefs about engagement.
- Recommending a new rule for **mentorship and induction**, while updating the model based on research models and best practices.
- Expanding the **role of the principal** to include personalized and proficiency-based learning, and strategic planning with community and family involvement to maximize student learning.
- Empowering local school districts to determine **leadership staffing** (principals and superintendents) per school and instructional program. Through **local control** districts can strategically assign leadership staff to programs while ensuring the needs of students are met.
- Adjusting the determination of staffing for licensed and endorsed library media and counseling program services to **local district discretion**. Districts are best suited to allocate staff appropriately to meet the needs of students through program services.
- Removing duplicate language that is embedded throughout the chapter and streamlining the local board of trustees' policies and procedures to require school districts to comply with all local, state, and federal laws and regulations, while prioritizing policies for **safety, student learning, and community engagement**.
- Prioritizing instructional responsibilities of teachers and providing flexibility for local school districts to determine the resources needed when elementary classrooms are overloaded.
- Aligning professional development to the comprehensive district strategies that improve learner outcomes is vital to each student developing their full educational potential.
- Updating and aligning specialized programs (braille and sign language instruction) to Chapter 57 certification requirements.

ARM 55, Subchapter 8, Educational Opportunity

- Added an assessment component to **school climate**, to ensure that schools make improvements where necessary because there is a correlation between school climate and student outcomes.
- Updating **learner access** language to focus on what learners need that ensures learner safety, growth, wellbeing, and learning outcomes.
- Adding the need to appropriately assess and supply technology for each student



- Added a new rule for **English Language Learners** that aligns to existing federal requirements.

ARM 55, Subchapter 9, Academic Requirements

- Enhancing High School program offerings and graduation requirements to include **Civics/Government** and **Economic or Financial Literacy**. Both recommended changes would be within the existing required 20 credits not additional to. Flexibility has been built in to allow local school districts to determine if they would provide Economic or Financial Literacy within Social Studies, Mathematics, or CTE courses.
- Highlighting a **proficiency-based model** and existing flexibility for high school graduation units to be earned with an **equivalent course** that meets the district's curriculum and assessment requirements.
- Expanding grade-level learning progressions to **grade-band** based on proficiency-based learning models.
- Including the constitutional mandate for **IEFA** within basic education programs requirements for Elementary, Middle, and High School.
- Adding state to federal accessibility standards for facilities.

ARM 55, Subchapter 10, Program Area Standards:

- Updating Program Area standards to current content standards. Ex. Communicating Arts Program to English Language Arts and Literacy, removing Vocational from Career and Vocational Technical Education, and retitling Health Enhancement to Health and Physical Education.
- Aligning the counseling program delivery standards to current national program standards.

Negotiated Rule Making Committee Members:

Adrea Lawrence - University of Montana, Dean of College of Education

Chris Olszewski - Billings Public Schools, Curriculum Director

Christina Weekin - Alberton Public Schools, Teacher

Corey Barron - Lodge Grass Schools, Principal, Tribal Representative

Craig Mueller - Havre Public Schools, District Superintendent

Curtis Smeby - Havre Public Schools, Trustee

Julie Murgel - Office of Public Instruction, Chief Operating Officer

Kelly Dey - Sidney Public Schools, Trustee

Kitty Logan - Swan Valley School, Trustee

Krystal Zentner - Bridger MT, Parent

Lisa Petersen - Westby K-12 Schools, Teacher

Michele Paine - Flathead High School, Principal

Patti Drake - Whitehall School District, District Clerk/Business Manager

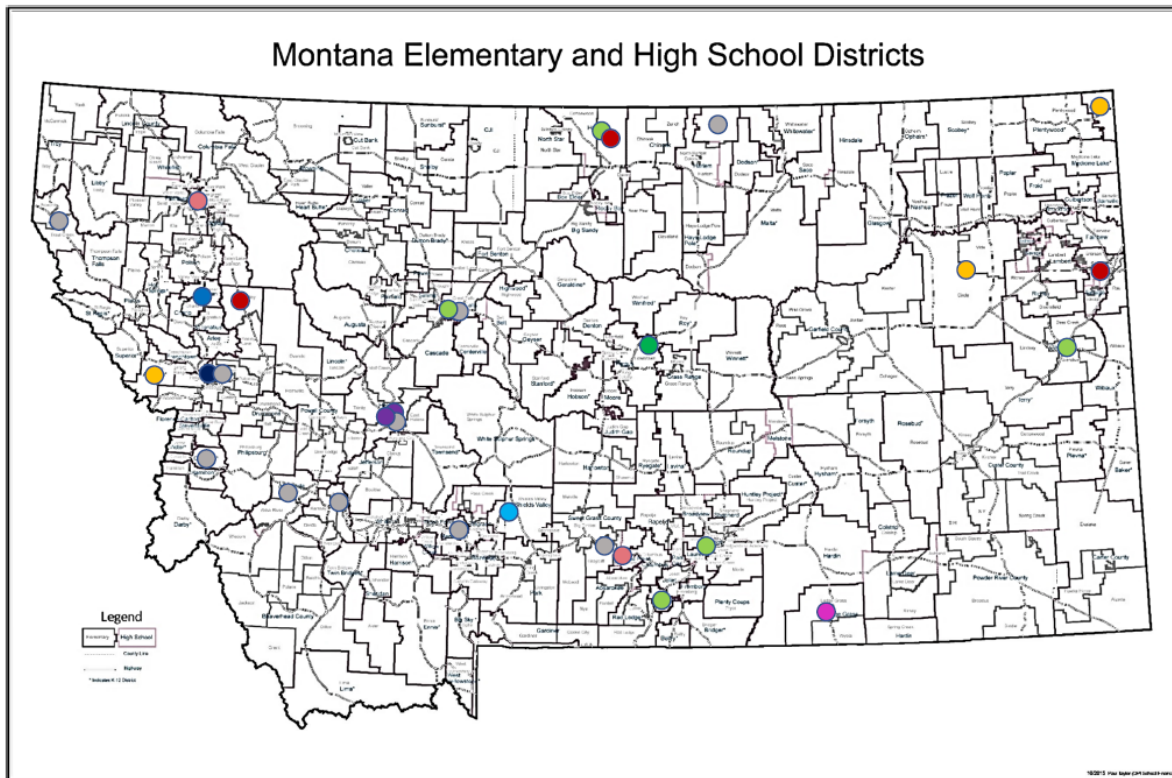
Renee Schoening - MT School Counselor Association, Executive Director



- Rhonda Long - Fergus County, County Superintendent
- Ruth Uecker - Great Falls Public Schools, Assistant Superintendent K-6
- Sharyl Allen - Office of Public Instruction, Deputy Superintendent
- Stephen Schreiberis - Glendive Public Schools, District Superintendent
- Sue Corrigan - Montana School Board Association, Kalispell Municipal Director
- Susan Lake - Montana Taxpayer
- Tara Hubing - Circle Schools K-12, Teacher

McCall Flynn - Board of Public Education, Executive Director - Ex-Officio Member

Geographic Representation of Committee Members



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| ● School District Trustees | ● School District Administrative Staff | ● EPP Representative |
| ● K-12 School Administrators | ● County Superintendents | ● Tribal Representative |
| ● K-12 Teachers and Counselors | ● Parents | ● OPI Representative |
| ● School Clerks/Business Officials | ● Taxpayer | ● Association |
| | | ● School Quality Task Force |