

PART I - ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

12MT2

The signatures on the first page of this application certify that each of the statements below concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (OCR) requirements is true and correct.

1. The school has some configuration that includes one or more of grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even K-12 schools, must apply as an entire school.)
2. The school has made adequate yearly progress each year for the past two years and has not been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous" within the last two years.
3. To meet final eligibility, the school must meet the state's Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) requirement in the 2011-2012 school year. AYP must be certified by the state and all appeals resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
4. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have foreign language as a part of its curriculum and a significant number of students in grades 7 and higher must take foreign language courses.
5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2006.
6. The nominated school has not received the Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010 or 2011.
7. The nominated school or district is not refusing OCR access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
8. OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
9. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clause.
10. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

12MT2

All data are the most recent year available.

DISTRICT

1. Number of schools in the district 1 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 (per district designation): 1 Middle/Junior high schools
0 High schools
0 K-12 schools
2 Total schools in district
2. District per-pupil expenditure: 6698

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

3. Category that best describes the area where the school is located: Rural
4. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 3
5. Number of students as of October 1, 2011 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total			# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0		6	0	0	0
K	23	23	46		7	0	0	0
1	16	21	37		8	0	0	0
2	25	27	52		9	0	0	0
3	24	16	40		10	0	0	0
4	24	34	58		11	0	0	0
5	19	30	49		12	0	0	0
Total in Applying School:								282

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school: 4 % American Indian or Alaska Native
1 % Asian
0 % Black or African American
0 % Hispanic or Latino
0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
95 % White
0 % Two or more races
100 % Total

Only the seven standard categories should be used in reporting the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.

7. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2010-2011 school year: 3%

This rate is calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

(1)	Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2010 until the end of the school year.	5
(2)	Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2010 until the end of the school year.	3
(3)	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)].	8
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2010	277
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4).	0.03
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100.	3

8. Percent of English Language Learners in the school: 0%

Total number of ELL students in the school: 0

Number of non-English languages represented: 0

Specify non-English languages:

9. Percent of students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 15%

Total number of students who qualify: 45

If this method does not produce an accurate estimate of the percentage of students from low-income families, or the school does not participate in the free and reduced-priced school meals program, supply an accurate estimate and explain how the school calculated this estimate.

10. Percent of students receiving special education services: 1%

Total number of students served: 15

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional categories.

<u>0</u> Autism	<u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>4</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>6</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>1</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>2</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>0</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>2</u> Mental Retardation	<u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness
<u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities	<u>0</u> Developmentally Delayed

11. Indicate number of full-time and part-time staff members in each of the categories below:

	Number of Staff	
	<u>Full-Time</u>	<u>Part-Time</u>
Administrator(s)	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>
Classroom teachers	<u>14</u>	<u>2</u>
Resource teachers/specialists (e.g., reading specialist, media specialist, art/music, PE teachers, etc.)	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>
Paraprofessionals	<u>4</u>	<u>0</u>
Support staff (e.g., school secretaries, custodians, cafeteria aides, etc.)	<u>5</u>	<u>0</u>
Total number	<u>28</u>	<u>5</u>

12. Average school student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the Full Time Equivalent of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1: 19:1

13. Show daily student attendance rates. Only high schools need to supply yearly graduation rates.

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Daily student attendance	97%	99%	97%	98%	96%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

14. **For schools ending in grade 12 (high schools):**

Show what the students who graduated in Spring 2011 are doing as of Fall 2011.

Graduating class size:	<u>0</u>
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	<u>0%</u>
Enrolled in a community college	<u>0%</u>
Enrolled in vocational training	<u>0%</u>
Found employment	<u>0%</u>
Military service	<u>0%</u>
Other	<u>0%</u>
Total	<u>0%</u>

15. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award:

No

Yes

If yes, what was the year of the award?

From the time students literally rode their horses to the one-room school still located and utilized on site, we have enjoyed the support of a community that values education and shares our expectations for individual success. The Montana City School is widely recognized for the positive learning environment and quality education provided to its students. Since its inception in 1916, the Montana City School has responded first to the needs of the students to ensure a positive learning environment, and to maintain and ensure the school provides every student with a quality education.

A major milestone for Montana City School occurred from 1990 through 1994 when the school district's enrollment expanded from 180 students to over 300. Multiple construction projects were necessary to acquire the physical space necessary to educate our students. Even with these enrollment fluctuations, the school continued to provide a small school atmosphere by maintaining a safe, positive, enthusiastic environment for student learning. This was accomplished through collaborative partnerships with parents, students, staff and community. Montana City School students continue to reflect the values of an informed, educationally supportive community. They consistently score well and exceed the state average as well as the national average.

What makes Montana City School worthy of Blue Ribbon status is its focus on each individual child and ensuring that they are making progress in areas beyond academic assessments. Although our students consistently score well, and exceed the state as well as national averages, the focus continues to be spread across multiple areas as defined below:

1. Cognitive: The ability to use one's intellect for adapting to and changing the environment.
2. Physical: The ability to use one's body in a coordinated and meaningful way and the knowledge to maintain and facilitate healthy physical development.
3. Emotional: Provide an atmosphere conducive to the student's development of personal interests, attitudes, values and appreciation.
4. Social: The ability to use one's cognitive, physical and emotional being to interact with others in a meaningful and productive way.
5. Vocational: To fully educate a student, the school must develop the basic abilities to participate in society.

Beyond the educational goals found in District policy is the vision/mission of Montana City School. At Montana City School, we attain the highest standard of educational excellence by operating "above the line" in everything we do. The Montana City School advantage combines safety, support and belonging to leverage the potential of each individual student- "Educational Excellence- Above the Line by Design."

In order to work toward the school vision, the school focuses on the principles of effective school research by Larry Lezotte. Our school develops and implements a curriculum that is rigorous, intentional, and aligned to standards. Our school utilizes multiple evaluation and assessment strategies to continuously monitor and modify instruction to meet student needs and support proficient student work. The school's instructional program actively engages all students by using effective, varied, and research-based practices to improve student academic performance. The school culture is an effective professional learning community which supports a climate conducive to performance excellence. The school works with families and community groups to remove barriers to learning in an effort to meet the intellectual, social, career, and developmental needs of students. The school provides research-based, results-driven

professional development opportunities for staff and implements performance evaluation procedures to improve teaching and learning. Instructional decisions focus on support for teaching and learning, organizational direction, high performance expectations, creating a learning climate, and developing a culture of leaders among leaders. The organization of the school maximizes use of time, all available space and other resources to maximize teaching and learning, and supports high student and staff performance. The school develops, implements, and evaluates a comprehensive school improvement plan that communicates a clear purpose, direction, and action plan focused on teaching and learning.

The school's greatest accomplishment has been the creation of our vision/mission. It was through this process that parents, students, teachers, classified staff and administration were able to define and set the course for what they wanted our school to become. It is amazing to watch our staff and community as they continually look for opportunities to create a better learning environment for our students guided by our school's vision/mission.

Our focus is on the "whole child" and a belief shared by our staff that it is the adult who must find a way for students to be successful. Whether our students are struggling or they need additional challenges, our professionals ask "What can we do differently?" This approach makes a remarkable difference in the way we serve our students.

1. Assessment Results:

A. At the Montana City School, our goal is for each student to reach their individual potential in academic, behavioral, and social/emotional development. Performance levels for standardized assessments at the Montana City School are guided by our school vision of “Educational Excellence-Above the Line By Design.” Students and staff work together to set goals for specific subject areas on standardized tests. Student goals are based on the student and staff knowledge of each student’s past individual scores through disaggregation of the data, fidelity to the core, and multiple measures of formative and summative assessment.

All students at the Montana City School are encouraged and supported to achieve at their highest individual level of proficiency. Students scoring at the Advanced (A) and Proficient (P) levels are considered to be at an acceptable level based on school standards. Students scoring in the Advanced and Proficient performance levels are continually monitored through multiple measures to ensure continual individual growth and skill development. Students scoring in the Nearing Proficiency (NP) and/or Novice (N) are considered to be performing below the school standard. Students scoring Nearing Proficient and/or Novice will receive: more explicit direct instruction, more modeling, more practice with..., more feedback, and/or more time to develop the lacking skill as determined through multiple performance measures. Students scoring in the Nearing Proficient and/or Novice performance levels are continually monitored through multiple measures to ensure continual individual growth and skill development. Below are the Montana City School performance standards in relation to performance levels on a standardized test:

94% and above = Advanced

84% to 93% = Proficient

75% to 83% = Nearing Proficient

74% and below = Novice

B. The performance trends found in our data tables from the standardized assessments mirror the performance trends found by our core curriculum assessments and our NWEA Measurement of Academic Progress. The percentage of our students scoring at the advanced level in reading has increased from 55% in 2006-2007 to 69% in 2010-2011. The percentage of students scoring proficient and advanced in reading has increased from 88% in 2006-2007 to 95% in 2010-2011. This increase is due to the movement of students from the novice and nearing proficiency ranges. The percentage of our students scoring at the advanced level in math has increased from 22% in 2006-2007 to 48% in 2010-2011. The percentage of students scoring proficient and advanced in math has increased from 70% in 2006-2007 to 87% in 2010-2011. This increase is also due to the movement of students from the novice and nearing proficiency ranges.

The significant gains in reading can be attributed to the work of our vision teams in embracing the professional learning community’s practices. This was particularly important in changing the system from individual classroom teachers getting their 20 students prepared for next year’s classroom teacher to a collaborative approach where a team of elementary teachers work with and support the entire grade level. It was through the collaboration process that teachers found answers to the questions “What is it we want our students to learn? And what are “we” going to do if they didn’t learn it?” Furthermore, asking and finding answers to these questions changed the entire system by redirecting the frustrations of individual teachers to a powerful system of support where all professional educators work together to give the students the support they need. Once the collaboration piece was in place, the teachers worked hard to find a common core curriculum with appropriate resources to assist them in meeting the students’ academic needs. The adopted curriculum- by design- embraced the differentiated instruction approaches our teachers needed to incorporate flexible grouping of students, a walk to read approach and provided the necessary framework for teachers to teach the skills the students needed with fidelity. Another

significant approach which our teachers utilize is getting together as a team of reading teachers in the summer months to develop curriculum maps and pacing guides.

Vision teams' work and commitment to the Professional Learning Communities concept has also resulted in significant gains in math over the last five years. More specifically, however, was the focus in math to adopt a comprehensive core curriculum. This was accomplished in 2008 and our professional educators committed to teaching the core with fidelity. By analyzing the results from our state assessment and nationally-normed NWEA Measure of Academic Progress, the teachers were able to identify a significant deficit in our students' understanding of mathematical vocabulary. Once this was discovered, a great deal of time, energy and effort was given to ensure the appropriate math skills and vocabulary were being learned at each grade level.

Our school does not have a lot of diversity with regard to socio-economically disadvantage students or various ethnic groups and therefore doesn't have the statistical numbers necessary to establish significant gaps with these groups. However, the practices in place will identify any student, including those that are disaggregated into different sub groups, and provide them with the support they need to be successful in both reading and math.

2. Using Assessment Results:

Our school utilizes multiple assessment tools to acquire the necessary data to analyze performances and enhance instructional approaches. Although there are several tools individual teachers utilize as professionals, the main tools are K-5 NWEA MAP- for reading and math. This assessment was acquired by our district because it provided national norms as well as a scale that would show progress, or lack of progress, for all our elementary students and most importantly a component that broke down the data to identify very specific skills the students needed more work on or had mastered. This assessment is given three times per year: early fall, winter and spring. In the fall, the data is used by teachers to compare end of year results and/or acquire a baseline to plan instruction for each student. As part of the professional learning community process, the students are organized into groups based on their performance. The students below proficient are those that are given more support as individuals or through the flexible grouping models. In the winter and spring, the same process is followed to ensure students are progressing. Parents are also informed in the fall, winter and spring of the results. This is accomplished at the fall and spring parent teacher conference to explain the first and third report; they also receive the results from the winter assessments. The report given to parents includes a national performance level and district performance level as a visual graph to show individual progress and compare how their child compares to grade level peers. MAP assessments track the progress of the child each year they have taken the assessment. This data is used to intervene and provide more support for students not progressing adequately.

In the primary grades, K-2 students are given a DIBELS (Dynamic Indicator of Basic Early Literacy Skills) assessment. This assessment is used to identify reading readiness skills the child hasn't acquired. If students need support in developing their readiness skills, the parents are notified and a meeting is held to determine the best course of action to provide support. This is typically done through a pull out program in addition to our core reading program where progress monitoring is conducted to ensure the student is progressing. This is much more intensive than the MAP assessment. The frequency of the remediation interventions and progress monitoring allows us to give the child support early in their school career thus providing the foundational skills they need to be successful readers. The DIBELS assessment is also given to those students in third through fifth grade who still need the additional focus/remediation. Parents are apprised of their individual child's assessment progress by the certified teacher delivering the remedial instruction.

The State of Montana's Criterion Referenced Test is administered to our 3rd through 5th grade students. In the spring of each year, results are available at the end of the school year. These results are analyzed by staff to determine the need for systemic changes, classroom placements for the upcoming school year and in recent years to celebrate the progress our students are demonstrating on this state assessment. We also

use this as part of our school planning and goal setting. Each report demonstrating individual data is sent home to parents. In recent years, the school data is shared with the community as part of a “Report to Taxpayers” mailing.

The most important assessment data that our school analyzes is from the formative assessments the professional educators administer on a daily basis. Many of these come from the common core curriculum. These assessments allow the professional educator immediate feedback to drive the instructional approaches necessary for students to learn. One of the instructional approaches has been the implementation of the “Five Mores”. In order for students to learn the skills they need: 1. More explicit, direct instruction; 2. More modeling; 3. More practice with...; 4. More feedback and 5. More time. Montana City Elementary school has always been very good at this assess/teach cycle. However, with the implementation of the professional learning community, this approach isn’t isolated to each individual teacher; instead it is a process discussed by grade level teams. The day-to-day or week-to-week assessments are discussed at weekly meetings among grade level teachers. This opens the door for analysis by a team of professionals, which in turn, allows for team collaboration for improvement of the instructional delivery methods.

3. Sharing Lessons Learned:

Most recently, a group of teachers were invited to present at the Montana Office of Public Instruction state assessment conference. This allowed our administrators, librarians, Title I teacher and other professionals to share an overview of successful strategies in place at Montana City Elementary. Although the title of the presentation fell under assessment, the actual sharing of strategies began with Montana City’s vision “Educational Excellence -Above the Line by Design” and what this means for the adults in the school, as well as what the vision means to the students served. It was evident through this presentation that regardless of research based strategies used, the entire school must be focused on the philosophy that students do the best they can and if the student isn’t being successful, it is up to the adults to change what they are doing to support the students. More importantly, the adults can’t do this as individuals. The adults must work in a professional learning community as a unified team, with each person feeding off the other’s strengths. This message is practiced and shared by teachers, administrators, school board members and classified staff whenever there is an opportunity.

The superintendent of the elementary school serves as president of the Montana Association of School Superintendents southwest region. He has the opportunity once a month to share strategies with other superintendents. Montana School Boards Association is also used to answer questions of the district, as well as share successful strategies we are incorporating.

The administrators are active members and participants in the National Association of Elementary and Middle School Principals. Their participation in annual conventions provides opportunities for them to connect with other administrators and share our successful strategies, as well as acquire new tactics from other schools.

Teachers from Montana City School have been contracted through the Montana Office of Public Instruction to deliver presentations on differentiated instruction and the support process in early intervention strategies. Teachers are also utilized during district professional development opportunities to share best practices in teaching reading with middle school teaching staff.

The school has presented to the Montana Board of Public Education to share successful innovative approaches to education.

4. Engaging Families and Communities:

The overall strategy the school has found most successful in working with families and the community has been through our district’s vision of “Educational Excellence- Above the Line by Design”.

Community members and parents were a part of developing the vision which has set the stage for ongoing collaboration with them and employees of the district. Montana City Elementary school's environment is about individuals feeling safe, supported and having a sense of belonging. By design, we offer a number of activities to include the parents/community so they feel our school is a safe place where they belong as we work together to educate their children.

PTA is utilized for communication, raising funds for school projects and class projects. Volunteers are not only welcomed in the school, but are given specifically assigned roles at each grade level to enhance the delivery of our programs.

When a child is doing well, they receive "Above the Line" notes home. Parents are routinely invited to board meetings; their input is sought regularly regarding expectations for students. The Holiday Store, Muffins for Moms social, Donuts with Dads social, Open House and other activities are held to encourage parents to come to the school and increase their comfort with staff and other parents.

Parents are also invited to the school to learn about programs and provide input to teachers and administrators.

Parent Teacher Conferences are held twice per school year. Because we expect 100% of our parents to participate, arrangements are made by teachers to hold the meetings at a different time for those parents that can't attend the scheduled time.

The professional staff also arranges special meetings for parents with students being served through remediation programs and for students being served in the gifted and talented program.

Besides the frequent communication between teacher and parents, the district web page, school board meetings and weekly newsletter are also used to communicate with parents and community.

In addition to school-wide activities, the most important strategy when working with students needing additional support is the practice of involving parents at the onset partners with school staff in identifying possible solutions. Once the parents understand the goals and objectives the school is working on for their child, they can offer appropriate support at home. This has proven to be extremely effective for both academic, social emotional and behavioral situations.

1. Curriculum:

Building administrators oversee the development of written sequential curricula for each program area to ensure our local standards are met. Prescribed curricula include learner goals and district program area goals and are constructed to include knowledge, concepts, skills and abilities appropriate for each grade level. Grade level teachers collaborate to complete curriculum mapping and pacing guides to ensure proper delivery and make adjustments as necessary to meet students' needs. Curriculum is developed through a cooperative effort of certified personnel in the program area, trustees, administrators, other teachers, specialists, parents, community members and students when appropriate. The curriculum development and review cycle includes selecting materials and resources, technology, supplies, books and equipment necessary for development and implementation of the curriculum.

Our Communication Arts curriculum addresses the learning standards through a commitment to literature, reading, writing, speaking, listening and media standards. The teachers are committed to "The Big Five" (phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension) skills to ensure standards are met. Our local, state and national assessments are used to identify individual students and or areas in the system where a focus on time, energy and effort is needed. Once a student, or group of students, is identified as needing more instruction, the team of professionals collaborates during a SOS (System of Support) meeting to determine who will provide additional support and what type of additional interventions are necessary to help all children learn the essential reading skills. If a child is not acquiring the skills, the professional educators determine something different to ensure students are meeting the standards.

Our Mathematics curriculum addresses the learning standards through a commitment to our common core with a focus on problem solving, number sense, computation, measurement, geometry, statistics, probability and algebra. The common core classroom assessments, MAP assessments (Measurement of Academic Progress), and our state's Criterion Reference Test are all used to identify the skills in which students need more instruction. Once a student or group of students are identified as needing more individual instruction, the team of professionals collaborates during a SOS (System Of Support) meeting to determine who will provide the additional support and what type of additional interventions are necessary to help students learn the core math skills necessary. One system change we have incorporated follows a flexible grouping model to support increased learning opportunities for all students. Throughout our review cycles, the teachers determined a focus on teaching common vocabulary with fidelity was necessary. Each grade level is committed to teaching the math vocabulary and our data reflects this focus.

Our Science curriculum addresses the learning standards through a commitment to our common core with a focus on inquiry skills. The creation of an outdoor classroom and focus on utilizing our students' natural surroundings has enhanced our core science curriculum. The district provides the financial resources our classroom teachers need to purchase consumable materials and technology necessary to engage students in hands-on experiments to meet the standards.

Social Studies curriculum addresses the learning standards through interdisciplinary, concrete learning activities based on history and geography and infused with spoken language, literature, music, art, movement, and writing. At the primary level, teachers use the children's natural curiosity of the world and a sense of their place in families, neighborhoods, and communities to meet local standards. In the intermediate level, the teachers encourage students to use media resources to learn about their cultural, geographic, economic, political, artistic and historical heritage. This media includes the use of print and non-print material, technology, field trips and guest presenters. The richness of this approach gives the curriculum meaning and relevance to the child through listening, speaking, drawing, reading and writing.

The Physical Education/Health/Nutrition curriculum addresses the learning standards by using the combined resources of the physical education teacher, classroom teacher, nurse, and school counselor. These professions are assigned a set of learning standards from our local curriculum for which they are responsible to ensure each standard in the above curriculum is met. The physical education teachers are responsible for a majority of the standards and integrate a variety of learning objectives into their physical education classes. Our school food service breakfast and lunch programs assist in some of the nutritional components.

Montana City School recognizes knowledge of the Fine Arts has enormous personal value for students of all ages. Visual and performing arts curriculum addresses the learning standards by ensuring students have access to information in other disciplines and avenues for self expression. The Montana City Fine Arts program consists of both a unified curriculum taught by classroom teachers and specialists addressing topics of dance music, theatre, visual and literary arts, and the somewhat eclectic and changing selection of opportunities exhibiting, performing, and viewing fine arts in a variety of school and community venues.

2. Reading/English:

Montana City School's reading instruction is built around the belief that all children deserve and will obtain the reading and communication skills required to ensure they are successful not only for the rest of their academic years, but also into their adult lives. These skills and how students are progressing with these skills are formally reviewed four times yearly by grade level and cross-grade level teams to ensure that students are not only being taught, but are learning reading skills that will spiral and be built upon in the next grade level. Phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency and vocabulary are taught systematically, using a spiraling curriculum and common core instructional material throughout the grade levels to build strong skill foundations and ultimately strong comprehension skills.

Our reading approach does not revolve around one particular "canned program"; instead a focus on student growth and how to maximize that growth drives instructional methods. These methods, discussed at weekly grade level meetings, include utilizing the core reading program to reach all students. Teachers discuss best practices and how student success on past assessment of skills should drive upcoming lessons. Various methods stemming from instructional practices such as think, pair, share from Anita Archer to multi-modal instruction and state changes using Quantum Learning methodologies, as well as many others are discussed, implemented and reviewed for effectiveness. If students are not making satisfactory progress, plans are put in place to rally support for those students. Preteach, reteach, scaffolding, small group instruction, additional reading instruction outside the regular reading time, and home support are considered. A simple question of what does this child need more of (time, instruction, different methodology, practice) is asked and then delivered. A focus on the whole child and their individual strengths and needs are considered when designing best practice for a child's growth plan. Students are asked to evaluate their own reading and ask themselves how are they progressing and what steps might they take to improve their reading skills. Students may need lessons delivered through additional venues such as computer programs, songs, movement or one-on-one instruction. Anything that allows a learner to progress with their reading skills is considered, delivered, assessed, and evaluated. Teachers embrace the need to instill in students a love of reading and the desire to ask and find the answers to the questions they read. In short, assessment of student progress drives instruction for both whole group and individual students.

3. Mathematics:

Montana City School's math instruction is built around the belief students will be ready for the ever changing 21st century with a strong mathematical foundation. These mathematical skills and how students are progressing with these skills are reviewed four times yearly by grade level and cross grade level teams to ensure that students are not only being taught, but are learning mathematical skills that will spiral and be built upon in the next grade level. Problem solving, number sense, computation, measurement, geometry, algebra, statistics and probability, are taught systematically, using a spiraling

curriculum and common core instructional material throughout the grade levels to build strong skill foundations and ultimately strong mathematical skills.

Our math approach focuses on student growth and how to maximize that growth. Assessment of student skill is a cornerstone in developing whole group and individual student plans. With a flexible grouping model, students are placed in fluid groups with peers of the same skill level. Instruction is given and assessed. This flexible group model allows for students to be considered for movement between groups three times yearly after MAP assessments, as well as continuous chapter and unit assessments. This model provides more depth differentiated opportunities in smaller group sizes. With the smaller groups comes the “essential understandings” that a teacher needs to truly understand the students before them. Our belief is not in a math program, but in our ability to know our students, find out what they need, and then deliver that to them. We feel this relationship is vital to a student's success, allowing some students to make more than a year's growth within a school year. Therefore, the first methodology is knowing the student and the second may include various methods such as pretesting for prerequisite skills, pre-teaching, additional math instruction time, and home support. A simple question of what does this child need more of (time, instruction, different methodology, practice) is asked and then delivered. It is our understanding that math is an interdisciplinary skill and can be taught throughout the day. More time spent with math concepts gives students an advantage of using and understanding learned skills. Students are asked to evaluate their own mathematical progress and ask themselves how they are progressing and what steps might they take to improve their math skills. In short, just as with reading, assessment of student progress drives instruction for both whole group and individual students.

4. Additional Curriculum Area:

Students at Montana City School have many opportunities to learn how to make healthy choices and then demonstrate and practice making healthy choices. Our Health Enhancement Curriculum is our school's largest curriculum in that it includes goals and objectives taught through physical education, health, and guidance. Classroom teachers, physical education teachers, our school nurse, and guidance counselor all facilitate in the delivery of this curriculum. Part of our school's motto, “Safety, Support and Belonging” is definitely embraced by this curriculum.

All elementary students receive Physical Education instruction at least twice a week. The focus in the early grades is on developing basic locomotor skills, introducing a variety of physical education equipment (including a climbing wall) and proper use of that equipment, as well as low organization games. As they progress through the grades, continual practice on motor skills is still evident, as is practice with the various pieces of equipment, however, more strategy games as well as fitness goals are implemented. Students learn how to set and meet their personal fitness goals using a program called Fitness Gram and also have opportunities to participate in competitive type games designed to include all students regardless of athletic ability. Students are never intentionally excluded from a game by design which aligns with the “belonging” part of our motto that extends beyond the classroom out to the playground.

Our health curriculum is implemented by classroom teachers, our school nurse, and our guidance counselor. Focus is on making healthy food choices, caring for teeth, how the human body works and how to care for each of the body systems. Our school lunch program also embraces healthy food choices and provides a fresh salad bar each day, as well as healthy entrees.

Our guidance counselor is instrumental in providing instruction and groups on how to make and keep friends and ensure good emotional health. Friendship groups are set up to focus on friendship skills. The guidance counselor also joins classrooms once a month to talk about emotional health, friendship issues, and various family situations that may cause stress and how to deal with that stress. Safety is taught throughout, whether it is safety in a gymnasium setting, universal precautions, washing hands, and avoiding stranger danger.

Students at Montana City Elementary School are encouraged to participate in Jump Rope for Heart and Walk to School Day. Participation in both of these is voluntary and they have both been well attended.

Classroom teachers also play a major role in the PE/Health curriculum and include the essential skills as they teach other content areas or complete themed units of study.

5. Instructional Methods:

Montana City School prides itself in our differentiation practices, keeping in mind that differentiation means differentiating in process, product, content, or time. Data from MAPs, classroom assessments, Criterion Referenced Tests, as well as teacher observations are used to make decisions regarding differentiation for instruction. Teachers meet and discuss what type of differentiation might be most beneficial for individual learners, based on the data.

Sometimes, small group instruction is provided for students who need more direct, more intensive instruction. At other times, students may need more time on a particular skill or skills, so additional resources will be used to ensure that a student receives more instruction and practice on those skills during the school day. In other situations, especially with the gifted population, students may need extended deadlines on projects since the complexity of their project is expected to meet a higher standard.

Many of the teachers at Montana City School apply Quantum Learning strategies which focus on teaching strategies designed around brain-based research. These strategies manage the “state” that a student is in and attend to their dominant learning preference (whether it is auditory, kinesthetic, or visual) enhancing the learning for each student.

Students who have been identified as gifted for either intellectual ability or creative problem solving ability, receive differentiation not only in the classroom based on an ILP (Individualized Learning Plan) developed around their specific needs and talents, but also receive more direct instruction designed to challenge them in a classroom setting with other academically advanced peers and a specialized gifted and talented teacher.

Technology is used in a variety of ways to provide differentiation. Some students with limited physical abilities primarily use technology as a way to produce written work or projects. Other teachers use the school website as a way to provide additional resources, links, and information for students to pursue from a remote setting (i.e. home). Most teachers use their document camera to model for students and provide a visual reference regarding the activity or project. A classroom-style computer lab is in constant use, as are three mobile laptop labs.

6. Professional Development:

The professional development opportunities provided to teachers are determined by the learning needs of our students. Once again this ties back to the “support” piece of our school’s vision and ensuring they have the support they need to enhance their professional teaching skills.

On an annual basis, each teacher must spend two days of professional development at the state teacher convention or work on other administrator-approved professional development. This provides them the opportunity to participate in a wide variety of PD activities specific to their individual classroom goals.

Also on an annual basis, two days of professional development are specifically set aside for our school’s local needs. In recent years these days have been spent on the Professional Learning Communities (PLC) process and differentiated instruction. The PLC approach in the core areas of reading and math has led to a focus on early intervention, which has resulted in steady increases by our students as measured with our assessment data. The staff is committed to asking the question “What do we want our students to know?” and more importantly, they are committed to finding solutions as a team when it comes to the next

question “What do we do if they didn’t learn it?”. The professional development in differentiated instruction has allowed our teachers to better meet student needs from remedial to the advanced levels. We are seeing academic progress of our remedial and advanced students because of the commitment by our teachers to enhance their skills by differentiating their lessons and curriculum.

Beyond these opportunities, the school sets aside one hour per month which incorporates the education and professional experience of our local staff. A majority of these opportunities take advantage of the technology tools available and allows time for professionals to learn additional ways to integrate technology into the classroom learning environment. This is typically done with a smorgasbord approach where teachers can choose which technology integration workshop would best fit their needs. Due to the success of this professional development; the school was able to secure funds so every classroom has an interactive whiteboard and Elmo projector. All of our teachers are utilizing these tools to better implement our core reading and math curriculum.

Each teacher has the freedom to attend professional development opportunities during the year and/or during the summer if it specifically addresses an area that will enhance learning opportunities for the students. Peer observations are also encouraged in order for professionals to learn effective practices from their colleagues.

7. School Leadership:

The leadership philosophy at Montana City is based upon our shared vision of “Educational Excellence – Above the Line by Design”. It is our district’s vision that sets the stage for everything within our school. The philosophy is based on a constant analysis of our system and more importantly, a commitment to finding solutions to problems and enhancing our current practices. In short, we understand that “excellence” is not a destination, but a pursuit and in order to pursue excellence, all stakeholders must be committed to making this happen by design not by chance. Our vision is meant to be more than a slogan. It is meant to be a way of life... a culture.. a tangible guide to why, what and how we do things. Within the symbol for our vision is a triangle with each side representing a concept: “safety, support, and belonging”. We understand that if we have a safe environment and an acceptance that everyone belongs (staff, students, parents), then as a team we can support one another in our pursuit of excellence.

The principal’s role within this vision is dependent upon the requests of the staff and the type of support they need. A majority of the principal’s time, energy and effort at Montana City Elementary School is spent under the premise of collaborative supervision. This is evident by the PLC (Professional Learning Community) model followed by the entire professional staff. We have a community of leaders and the principal is just one of many instructional leaders. The principal is available to guide the conversations and ensure the professional educators are problem solvers when it comes to what the students should know, how to determine whether they learned it, and most importantly, what they can do differently if the student(s) isn’t learning.

The school’s leadership believes that the greatest resource within our district is the people committed to serving the students, not the programs they implement. Our leaders embrace the practice of having a team of professionals utilizing their individual talents and working together for the greater good of the entire school.

PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 3 Test: CRT

Edition/Publication Year: 2006

Publisher: MontCAS

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES					
Proficient and Advanced	86	77	78	66	67
Advanced	48	47	28	20	15
Number of students tested	58	47	46	41	48
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	1	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Proficient and Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested	3	5	2	5	2
2. African American Students					
Proficient and Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested				1	1
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Proficient and Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested		1		1	
4. Special Education Students					
Proficient and Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested	5	2	3	4	3
5. English Language Learner Students					
Proficient and Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Proficient and Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					
Montana is extremely rural and covers a very large geographical area. The result in the state is having a large number of small schools and districts. With respect to the statistical significance of sample sizes there is no reporting data for subgroups unless there are 10 students or more for any group.					

12MT2

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 3 Test: CRT

Edition/Publication Year: 2006

Publisher: MontCAS

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES					
Advanced and Proficient	97	95	94	83	88
Advanced	64	57	46	61	50
Number of students tested	58	47	46	41	48
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	1	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Advanced and Proficient					
Advanced					
Number of students tested	3	5	2	5	2
2. African American Students					
Advanced and Proficient					
Advanced					
Number of students tested				1	1
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Advanced and Proficient					
Advanced					
Number of students tested		1		1	
4. Special Education Students					
Advanced and Proficient					
Advanced					
Number of students tested	5	2	3	4	3
5. English Language Learner Students					
Advanced and Proficient					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Advanced and Proficient					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					
<p>Montana is extremely rural and covers a very large geographical area. The result in the state is having a large number of small schools and districts. With respect to the statistical significance of sample sizes there is no reporting data for subgroups unless there are 10 students or more for any group.</p>					

12MT2

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 4 Test: CRT

Edition/Publication Year: 2006

Publisher: MontCAS

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES					
Proficient and Advanced	87	75	66	80	79
Advanced	51	40	33	16	20
Number of students tested	47	43	45	45	44
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	1	1	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Proficient and Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested	4	2	4	2	3
2. African American Students					
Proficient and Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested			1	1	1
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Proficient and Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested	1		1		1
4. Special Education Students					
Proficient and Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested	1	4	5	4	4
5. English Language Learner Students					
Proficient and Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Proficient and Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					
<p>Montana is extremely rural and covers a very large geographical area. The result in the state is having a large number of small schools and districts. With respect to the statistical significance of sample sizes there is no reporting data for subgroups unless there are 10 students or more for any group.</p>					

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 4 Test: CRT

Edition/Publication Year: 2006

Publisher: MontCAS

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES					
Proficient and Advanced	96	86	93	89	91
Advanced	70	60	53	41	44
Number of students tested	47	43	45	44	43
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	1	1	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Proficient and Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested	4	2	4	2	3
2. African American Students					
Proficient and Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested			1	1	1
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Proficient and Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested	1		1		1
4. Special Education Students					
Proficient and Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested	1	4	5	3	3
5. English Language Learner Students					
Proficient and Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Proficient and Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					
<p>Montana is extremely rural and covers a very large geographical area. The result in the state is having a large number of small schools and districts. With respect to the statistical significance of sample sizes there is no reporting data for subgroups unless there are 10 students or more for any group.</p>					

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 5 Test: CRT

Edition/Publication Year: 2006

Publisher: MontCAS

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES					
Proficient and Advanced	86	77	74	82	64
Advanced	44	34	37	25	31
Number of students tested	43	44	51	44	49
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Proficient and Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested	2	5	2	2	3
2. African American Students					
Proficient and Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested		1	1	1	
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Proficient and Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested		1		2	2
4. Special Education Students					
Proficient and Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested	6	4	5	4	8
5. English Language Learner Students					
Proficient and Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Proficient and Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					
<p>Montana is extremely rural and covers a very large geographical area. The result in the state is having a large number of small schools and districts. With respect to the statistical significance of sample sizes there is no reporting data for subgroups unless there are 10 students or more for any group.</p>					

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 5 Test: CRT

Edition/Publication Year: 2006

Publisher: MontCAS

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES					
Proficient and Advanced	91	95	87	93	84
Advanced	72	70	67	70	71
Number of students tested	43	44	51	43	48
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Proficient and Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested	2	5	2	2	3
2. African American Students					
Proficient and Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested		1	1	1	
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Proficient and Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested		1		2	2
4. Special Education Students					
Proficient and Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested	6	4	5	3	7
5. English Language Learner Students					
Proficient and Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Proficient and Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					
<p>Montana is extremely rural and covers a very large geographical area. The result in the state is having a large number of small schools and districts. With respect to the statistical significance of sample sizes there is no reporting data for subgroups unless there are 10 students or more for any group.</p>					

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics Grade: Weighted Average

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month					
SCHOOL SCORES					
Advanced and Proficient	86	76	72	76	69
Advanced	47	40	32	20	22
Number of students tested	148	134	142	130	141
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	1	2	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Advanced and Proficient	0	0	0	0	0
Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	9	12	8	9	8
2. African American Students					
Advanced and Proficient	0	0	0	0	0
Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	0	1	2	3	2
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Advanced and Proficient	0	0	0	0	0
Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	1	2	1	3	3
4. Special Education Students					
Advanced and Proficient	0	0	0	0	0
Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	12	10	13	12	15
5. English Language Learner Students					
Advanced and Proficient	0	0	0	0	0
Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	0	0	0	0	0
6.					
Advanced and Proficient	0	0	0	0	0
Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	0	0	0	0	0
NOTES:					

12MT2

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading Grade: Weighted Average

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month					
SCHOOL SCORES					
Advanced and Proficient	94	92	91	88	87
Advanced	68	62	55	57	55
Number of students tested	148	134	142	128	139
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	1	2	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Advanced and Proficient	0	0	0	0	0
Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	9	12	8	9	8
2. African American Students					
Advanced and Proficient	0	0	0	0	0
Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	0	1	2	3	2
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Advanced and Proficient	0	0	0	0	0
Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	1	2	1	3	3
4. Special Education Students					
Advanced and Proficient	0	0	0	0	0
Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	12	10	13	10	13
5. English Language Learner Students					
Advanced and Proficient	0	0	0	0	0
Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	0	0	0	0	0
6.					
Advanced and Proficient	0	0	0	0	0
Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	0	0	0	0	0
NOTES:					

12MT2