

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

2023-2026

Introduction

I am delighted to share the fantastic news that on September 13, 2023, the Board of Trustees endorsed Billings Public Schools' four strategic priorities. These priorities are not merely a set of objectives; they represent a collective vision forged from the valuable insights of our students, dedicated staff, engaged community members, and other stakeholders. At the heart of our organization's mission lies a profound commitment to our students; they are the focal point of our ethical compass.

Our vision is that together we will “cultivate a culture of excellence every day, as we become the best district in the State of Montana.” We have defined excellence as having a growth mindset, a sincere desire, and an unwavering determination to challenge the status quo. We aim to elevate our performance from good to great, and I am confident that we can achieve this together. I look forward to joining you as we elevate our students so they can achieve their greatest potential.

Sincerely,

Erwin Garcia Superintendent

Mission

Billings Public Schools Community strives to inspire, educate, and empower students to be responsible and innovative global citizens who achieve their full potential.

Vision

Cultivate a culture of excellence every day, as we become the best district in the State of Montana.

Cultivate Talent

Goals:

1. Support and empower teachers to increase the quality of first instruction and interventions
2. Recruit and retain high-quality employees to increase student outcomes
3. Develop collective efficacy in every position through personalized, professional learning and leadership development opportunities
4. Cultivate avenues for reciprocal communication and cooperation, empowering our staff to not only express themselves but also make a constructive impact that upholds the cherished tradition of excellence at SD2

Address the Needs of Diverse Learners

Goals:

1. Deliver an immersive curriculum firmly grounded in a robust academic framework, facilitating genuine, real-world learning experiences that ignite inspiration in every student
2. Increase the overall quality of Professional Learning Communities to positively impact teaching and learning
3. Develop a Graduate Profile with community and staff input
4. Enhance the capabilities of our parents and families by providing them with resources and support to actively engage in their children's educational journey



Foster a Safe and Positive Environment

Goals:

1. Address the pressing building facilities challenges in the district to enhance safety and promote the overall well-being of our students and staff
2. Ensure the ongoing safety and discipline within our schools, creating learning environments that actively cultivate the integrity and character development of our students
3. Foster a collaborative culture among diverse stakeholders to strengthen partnerships, enhancing both safety and communication
4. Increase parent & family involvement by creating a Family Friendly School Program

Increase College, Career, and Military Opportunities

Goals:

1. Increase college, career and military opportunities for students
2. Increase Dual Credit, Advanced Placement and Associate Degree opportunities for students
3. Expand course offerings and certifications through the Career Center and CTE programs at each high school
4. Provide alternative graduation pathways for students in need through an Opportunity Academy

Expected Outcomes

Cultivate Talent

Foster a Safe and Positive Environment

Increase College, Career, and Military Opportunities

Address the Needs of Diverse Learners

Expected Outcomes:

1. Starting in the year 2023-2024 and on a year-to-year basis, the percentage of students performing at the proficient and advanced levels in Reading and Mathematics will increase at least 3% from Fall-to-Spring as indicated by Fast Bridge and NWEA in Kindergarten through 8th grade
2. Starting in the year 2023-2024 and on a year-to-year basis, the percentage of students meeting the NWEA growth projection in Reading and Mathematics will increase at least by 5% from Fall-to-Spring as indicated by NWEA in 3rd through 8th grade
3. Starting in the year 2023-2024 and on a year-to-year basis, the percentage of 11th-grade students meeting the College and Career Readiness benchmark in Reading, English, Mathematics, Science, and Writing will increase at least by 3% as indicated by ACT
4. Starting in the year 2023-2024 and on a year-to-year basis, the graduation rate will increase by at least 1% and a total of 5% by the end of the year 2027-2028
5. Starting in the year 2023-2024 and on a year-to-year basis, the percentage of students obtaining Career Certifications will increase by at least 5%
6. Starting in the year 2023-2024 and on a year-to-year basis, the percentage of enrollments in Dual Credit, Pre-AP, and AP Courses will increase at least 2%

A photograph of a classroom scene. A female teacher with long brown hair, wearing a maroon top, is sitting on the floor and reading a colorful children's book to a group of young children. The children are sitting on the floor, facing the teacher. The classroom is decorated with various educational materials, including a number line on the wall, a calendar, and a shelf with books. A large, stylized orange fox is mounted on the wall in the background. The text "Vision of Excellence" is overlaid in a blue box across the middle of the image.

Vision of Excellence

Billings Public Schools

November 2023

The background features a dark blue grid pattern. A large, bright yellow organic shape is positioned in the top right corner. In the bottom left corner, there are two overlapping organic shapes, one in a medium blue and the other in a lighter blue. The text 'Our Vision' is centered in the middle of the image.

Our Vision



TONE AND TENOR

At Billings Public Schools, our voice carries the resonant tone and tenor of a trusted and beloved coach - a mentor who walks alongside you, offering wisdom, perspective and encouragement. In our tone, tenor and messaging, we never dictate or prescribe; we ask thought-provoking questions that illuminate the path forward, empowering our leaders, teachers and students to be active participants in their own education and growth.

Observant and Attentive

Much like a seasoned coach who watches their team's performance with keen eyes, we are deeply observant and attentive to the intricate dynamics within the Billings Public School educational community. We listen intently, observe closely and learn ceaselessly from every interaction and experience. Our observations, backed by measurable data, guide the development of our actionable strategies for improvement, each day and in all things.

Transparency, Accountability and Expectations

In the tradition of trusted coaches, we firmly uphold accountability as a foundational principle. Our culture is rooted in transparency and a shared sense of responsibility, where each individual holds themselves accountable for striving toward excellence, though not the unattainable notion of perfection.

Learners at Heart

A coach is not solely a teacher but a perpetual learner, forever embracing fresh ideas and innovations that enhance the educational experience.



Our Voice

Our voice strikes a delicate balance — friendly yet authoritative, approachable and understanding, yet focused and action-oriented. At the same time, we believe that fostering a welcoming and collaborative environment is paramount, where every individual feels valued, empowered to be curious and inspired to think deeply.

We are Action-Oriented and Results-Driven

Our focus is not only talking about our goals and dreams for the future, but taking actions toward achieving them. We are the catalysts of positive change and our language is characterized by “we are” rather than “we will.” In fact, we are forging a tangible path of change, propelling progress and making a meaningful difference in the lives of one another, our students and the Billings community.

We are relentless in our pursuit of excellence. Today, Billings Public Schools is poised on the cusp of an educational future of promise, equity, equality and opportunity. We work together and learn from one another, to not only provide high-quality rigorous education but also to see each of our students become confident, knowledgeable people driven to do better.



Our Essence

EMPOWERING MINDS, INSPIRING FUTURES

The Billings Public School District Brand Essence communicates the core identity of who you are. It encapsulates the unique character, values and the emotional connection you seek to establish with your teachers, trustees, administrators, students and the Billings community.

Empowering Minds

Our brand essence begins with the belief in the potential of every individual. We are dedicated to empowering young minds to explore, question and discover. We instill the knowledge, skills and confidence that unlock the doors to new opportunities yet to have been seen in our school district.

Inspiring Futures

We go beyond imparting knowledge; we are in the business of shaping futures. Our commitment is to inspire, guide and prepare the next generation. We know that success looks different for everyone. In some cases we are educating leaders, big thinkers and change-makers. In other situations, we are uplifting and supporting students facing challenges. At Billings Public Schools, we don't merely teach; we inspire. We don't just educate; we guide. Above all, we recognize that education is not confined to the classroom — learning is a lifelong journey that shapes the trajectory of lives and communities.



Our Promise

ELEVATING EDUCATION, ENRICHING LIVES

The Billings Public School District promise embodies the unwavering commitment we extend to our students, teachers and community. This promise articulates the distinct and valuable educational experience they can consistently anticipate when engaging with our district.

Elevating Education

At Billings Public Schools, we are devoted to elevating the standard of education. We are providing innovative, comprehensive and inspiring learning experiences that prepare students for a rapidly changing world. We aim to equip them with the knowledge, critical thinking skills and adaptability necessary to excel in any endeavor they choose.

Enriching Lives

Our promise extends beyond the classroom. We are dedicated to enriching the lives of our students and fostering a sense of accountability, empathy and global citizenship. Our brand reflects our supportive, inclusive and vibrant educational community that embraces diversity, encourages personal growth and ignites a lifelong passion for learning.



CONTENT PILLARS



Content Pillars



**SAFETY, SECURITY AND
MENTAL HEALTH**

SHAPING FUTURES WITH CARE

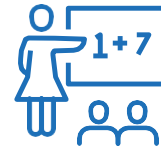
At Billings Public Schools, we stand firmly at the intersection of education and community, recognizing that our shared commitment to nurturing our students' minds and spirits extends far beyond our classrooms' walls. We are creating an educational ecosystem where parents are not just observers but active participants. Our network of robust community partnerships, built on open communication, transparency and active collaboration grows daily.

We are prioritizing safety and mental health support on every campus, working to ensure every one of our schools has advanced monitoring technology, meets national security standards, has dedicated school nurses on campus and employs only licensed psychologists and councilors to conduct mental health screenings. Addressing these needs is the cornerstone; students can only truly focus on their learning when they feel safe and supported.

***Together, we are providing
every child with the tools
to reason effectively and
learn purposefully.***



Content Pillars



TEACHER EMPOWERMENT
AND SUPPORT/PARENT AND
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

LIVING OUR MISSION

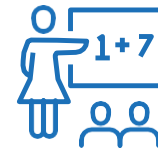
At Billings Public Schools, our mission is a living, breathing commitment. We are leading by example, fostering equity, instilling a sense of innate accountability and building a culture of transparency. We don't just dream about the future; we make it happen. Our mission is a call to action, a commitment to turning vision into reality. We believe that tangible change and momentum for our district come from proactive planning, innovation and a relentless pursuit of excellence.

The Billings Public School District Mission

Billings Public Schools community strives to
INSPIRE, EDUCATE and EMPOWER students to be
responsible and innovative global citizens who
achieve their full potential.



Content Pillars



TEACHER EMPOWERMENT AND SUPPORT/PARENT AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

(Continued)

How Can Unity Be Forged?

Educators, administrators and trustees embrace collaboration walks and they come together in Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), sharing triumphs, innovative concepts and coaching one another. Weekly community meetings are our norm, facilitating open dialogues and transparency. Moreover, Parent Surveys serve as invaluable tools, gathering insights to develop actionable plans that cater to specific needs.

Unity can only be forged within a framework and culture where every voice matters, where diverse perceptions and goals are actively understood and self-reflection and questioning of biases are encouraged.

We're Not Merely Envisioning This; We're Actively Cultivating It.

At Billings Public Schools, these initiatives represent our ongoing commitment to transparency, unity and meaningful action.



Content Pillars



COLLEGE AND CAREER
READINESS OPPORTUNITIES

INSPIRING GLOBAL CITIZENS

At Billings Public Schools, we celebrate our shared national identity while embracing a global perspective.

A fundamental aspect of our mission is nurturing “responsible, innovative global citizens.” But what does this truly mean?

Global citizens understand that their actions have the very real power to shape the destinies of communities and impact ecosystems worldwide. They grasp the profound interdependence binding us together. For our students, being global citizens means recognizing their interconnectedness with the world, where even the smallest decisions can send far-reaching ripples beyond our borders.



Content Pillars



COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS OPPORTUNITIES

(Continued)

**Now, consider the real value of understanding the world
and embracing global citizenship.**

As we explore the globe, we deepen our gratitude for our own nation's privileges and opportunities. Global citizenship doesn't replace local or national identity — it expands it. It's about acknowledging that well-being in one corner of the world affects others globally. As part of fostering global citizenship, we're reintroducing ROTC programs to our schools, providing opportunities to nurture patriotism and explore military careers.

Our students' journey to global citizenship is guided by curiosity — a curiosity that drives us to learn, appreciate and respect diverse traditions, languages and histories. This curiosity serves as the bridge to the global community, leading to deeper levels of thinking, being and lifelong learning.



Content Pillars



COLLEGE AND CAREER
READINESS OPPORTUNITIES

NURTURING CRITICAL THINKERS AND REFLECTIVE MINDS

We view classrooms as concepts, recognizing that learning extends far beyond their walls and into our daily lives.

Imagine fostering an unwavering curiosity that never stops asking “why.” What if every student not only absorbs information but also possesses the ability to question, analyze, synthesize and evaluate it? Equipping our students with this foundational skill grants them a deeper understanding of complex issues, enabling them to approach life with heightened creativity and innovative perspectives.

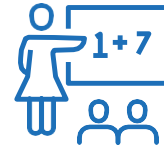
We are providing students with exceptional college and career opportunities.

In collaboration with the higher education institutions in Montana, we pioneer innovative initiatives, such as dual credit programs and the first Early College High School in the state.

Picture a future where our students graduate not only with a diploma but also with an associate’s degree, ready to excel in higher education or their chosen careers. We’re even creating pathways for middle school students to earn high school credits, saving families money and giving students a head start. Our dedication to college and career opportunities is an investment in our students’ futures.



Content Pillars



TEACHER EMPOWERMENT
AND SUPPORT

CULTIVATING EXCELLENCE

Cultivating excellence is a philosophy that underscores the significance of the learning process itself.

At Billings Public Schools, we expect nothing less than excellence. But let's not confuse excellence with perfection. Have you ever considered the difference?

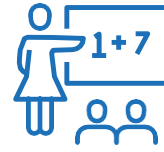
While perfectionism may lead us to fixate solely on the end result, often disregarding the invaluable lessons learned along the way, excellence, as a mindset, firmly believes in lifelong learning and the enduring value it holds.

Excellence inherently promotes inclusivity.

It celebrates the individuality of every teacher, recognizing their unique strengths and endless capacity for growth. Cultivating excellence inspires teachers to embrace challenges, derive wisdom from setbacks and to seek opportunities to enhance their skills and empower their students. At Billings Public Schools, our leaders, teachers, trustees and students alike understand this philosophy and embody it in their teaching and learning journey.



Content Pillars



TEACHER EMPOWERMENT
AND SUPPORT

TOGETHER WE RISE

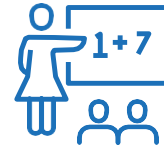
Our aspiration is to be better today than we were yesterday, working hand-in-hand to elevate our entire learning community.

At the heart of our commitment to teacher empowerment and support lies the recognition that our leaders and administrators are the bedrock upon which we build. Their personal passion for self-improvement, growth and lifelong learning sets the tone for our entire educational community. This commitment is far from a top-down hierarchy; it's a shared mission where each level supports the next.

Just as teachers build upon this foundation, they, in turn, provide the scaffolding upon which our students can reach new levels of success. This collaborative effort uplifts everyone involved, representing a collective pursuit of excellence.



Content Pillars



TEACHER EMPOWERMENT AND SUPPORT

(Continued)

Transparency and open communication are paramount in supporting our teachers.

We are creating a culture where teachers feel comfortable and encouraged to voice their concerns, share ideas and collaborate freely. This open dialogue ensures that our teachers have the resources and support they need to excel in their vital role.

Our belief in the nature of leadership transcends authority; it's about empowering others to become leaders, learners and teachers in their own right. This ethos of empowerment flows through our educational community where each teacher is not just an educator but a catalyst for growth, innovation and excellence.



Content Pillars



MEETING THE DIVERSE
NEEDS OF STUDENTS

EQUITY, ACCOUNTABILITY AND RESPONSIBILITY

We embrace diversity as a source of strength, empowering every student to reach their full potential.

Billings Public Schools recognizes that every student is unique, facing distinct challenges on their educational journey. Our unwavering commitment drives us to remove barriers hindering their growth and success. We provide a wealth of resources, support systems and innovative opportunities to ensure each student thrives.

For example, our specialized programs cater to diverse learning styles, including advanced placement courses for high achievers and tailored support for those who may need it.

Accountability lies at the core of our educational philosophy.

We hold ourselves, our dedicated teachers and our students accountable for their actions and commitment to learning and growth. Accountability, for us, isn't punitive; it's the essence of excellence. It creates a sense of responsibility and ownership within every member of our educational community.



**Teacher
Empowerment
and Support**



**School Safety
and Effective
Communication**



**Meeting the
Needs of
Diverse
Students**



**College, Career,
and Military
Opportunities**

