

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **Laurel Public Schools Board of Trustees Announces Opposition to the Proposed State Forensic Detention Facility**

**LAUREL, MT — January 27, 2026** — The Laurel Public Schools Board of Trustees and Superintendent Matthew Torix formally announce their unified opposition to the State of Montana’s proposed development of a Forensic Detention Facility within the Laurel Public School District.

The Board’s opposition is based primarily on the safety and well-being of the students of Laurel Public Schools. The planned state facility’s proposed property would be within 500 yards of Laurel Elementary School, where our youngest and most vulnerable students are educated. The proximity of such a facility to an elementary school raises significant concerns regarding student security and the potential impact on the educational environment.

“The safety of our students is our highest priority,” said Superintendent Matthew Torix. “The building of this Forensic Detention Facility in such close proximity to our elementary school is not supported by the Board on the grounds of safety for the students we serve”.

The Board of Trustees held a discussion regarding this proposed state facility during their regular meeting on January 26, 2026. Following this discussion, the Board confirmed that no state officials have contacted the district regarding how this facility would impact the student body of Laurel Schools.

Laurel Public Schools serves the Laurel School Community and is dedicated to providing a safe and high-quality educational environment for all students. The Laurel Board of Trustees does not feel the development of a Forensic Detention Facility within such close proximity to our schools meets this obligation.

Chris Lorash, Board Chair

Matt Torix, Superintendent