

MILES CITY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

STRATEGIC PLAN 2025-2029



**MILES CITY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
1604 MAIN STREET
MILES CITY, MT 59301**

WHY PLAN FOR THE FUTURE?

Strategic planning is essential to the long-term success of the Miles City Unified School District. It provides a clear roadmap for the future, allowing us to proactively embrace change, maintain relevance in an evolving educational landscape, and ensure that our decisions are grounded in purpose and sustainability. By planning thoughtfully, our district positions itself to anticipate challenges and seize opportunities—creating a proactive, rather than reactive, organizational culture.

Located in rural Eastern Montana, the Miles City Unified School District serves a population of approximately 11,900 residents spread across a wide geographic area. Many of our students commute long distances to attend school, often without the benefit of district-provided bussing. Our community is built on strong agricultural and blue-collar values, and we are proud to serve families who embody a deep work ethic, resilience, and commitment to community.

Despite our rural location and small applicant pool, Miles City Unified is known for its “small-school feel” combined with the expanded opportunities typically found in larger districts. Families consistently choose our schools for their close-knit, supportive environment and the wide range of academic, extracurricular, and community-based opportunities we are able to sustain.

Districtwide, we employ approximately 125 full-time educators and 60 paraprofessionals, all dedicated to providing a high-quality education for every student. About 16% of our student body receives special education services through an Individualized Education Plan (IEP), and 34% of our students qualify for free and reduced lunch. These figures reflect both the unique needs of our students and our district’s deep commitment to equitable access and inclusive learning environments.

Our 11-member Board of Trustees governs with a strong sense of local responsibility and stewardship. The Board’s leadership—combined with a supportive, civically engaged community and a strong local tax base—provides a foundation for both stability and innovation. Our community consistently demonstrates its commitment to public education through volunteerism, fundraising, and collaboration on school and civic projects.

Miles City Unified also benefits from a close and productive partnership with Miles Community College, which provides dual-enrollment opportunities, academic collaboration, and shared programs that extend learning beyond the traditional high school setting. This partnership helps prepare our graduates for success in college, career, and community life.

As we move forward, our planning efforts—anchored by Board Governance, Strategic Planning, and Operational Planning—ensure that the district continues to build on its strengths while addressing emerging needs, such as student engagement and alternative

pathways to graduation through the Charter School Academy.

Board Governance

The governance of the Miles City Unified School District is provided by our 11-member Board of Trustees. The Board is responsible for supervising the superintendent, overseeing district finances, setting the district's mission and vision, and monitoring outcomes. Our Trustees bring diverse perspectives and a shared dedication to advancing educational excellence and fiscal responsibility. Their leadership ensures that every initiative—from curriculum development to facility use—reflects community values and student-centered priorities.

Strategic Planning

A strategic plan serves as a living document that defines the district's long-term goals, the priorities needed to achieve them, and the metrics for measuring success. The plan articulates our mission, vision, values, and strategic initiatives over a three- to five-year period.

For Miles City Unified, this process includes advancing innovative programs such as the Charter School Academy, designed to reengage at-risk and nontraditional learners while repurposing the Jefferson Elementary School—closed during the 2024–25 elementary consolidation—into a dynamic, student-centered learning environment. This initiative reflects our community's strong support for preserving a beloved facility while addressing dropout prevention and alternative educational pathways.

Operational Planning

An operational plan translates the district's long-term vision into an actionable, one-year framework that guides daily work. It aligns directly with the strategic plan and includes clear metrics to track progress across both academic and operational priorities.

A key strength of Miles City Unified's operational planning is the establishment of dedicated leadership and structures that support effective implementation. The creation of a Transportation and Facilities Director position beginning in the 2024–25 school year, along with the work of a strong Building Committee—a subcommittee of the Board of Trustees—provides vital oversight and coordination in the areas of facility maintenance, infrastructure planning, and transportation logistics. These additions enhance communication, accountability, and long-term planning across the district's operations.

Each year, the operational plan becomes the foundation for administrative and staff action steps, ensuring that goals are implemented with accountability and purpose. This integrated approach allows Miles City Unified to stay true to its mission—offering high-quality education, fostering community partnerships, and continuously improving opportunities for all students—while remaining flexible enough to respond to changing needs and challenges.

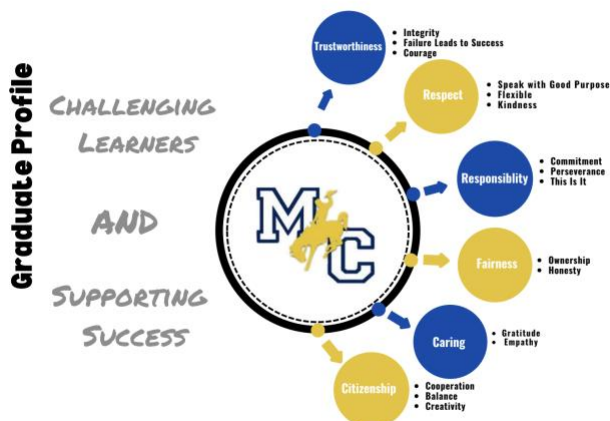
Strategic Plan Introduction

The Miles City Unified School District administration developed the district's strategic plan and priorities in collaboration with the Board of Trustees and its committees. Throughout this process, district leadership reviewed extensive qualitative and quantitative data and engaged in ongoing discussions with staff, stakeholders, and community partners to ensure a comprehensive and informed approach.



The strategic plan is grounded in the district's vision of C.L.A.S.S.: **Challenging Learners and Supporting Success**, which guides all decision-making and reflects our commitment to high expectations, student growth, and equitable support for every learner, and a Graduate Profile that uses the 6 Pillars of Character and the 8 Core Character Tenants of Character Strong to outline the essential skills, competencies, and attributes students should develop to be successful in college, career, and life.

Miles City Unified School District

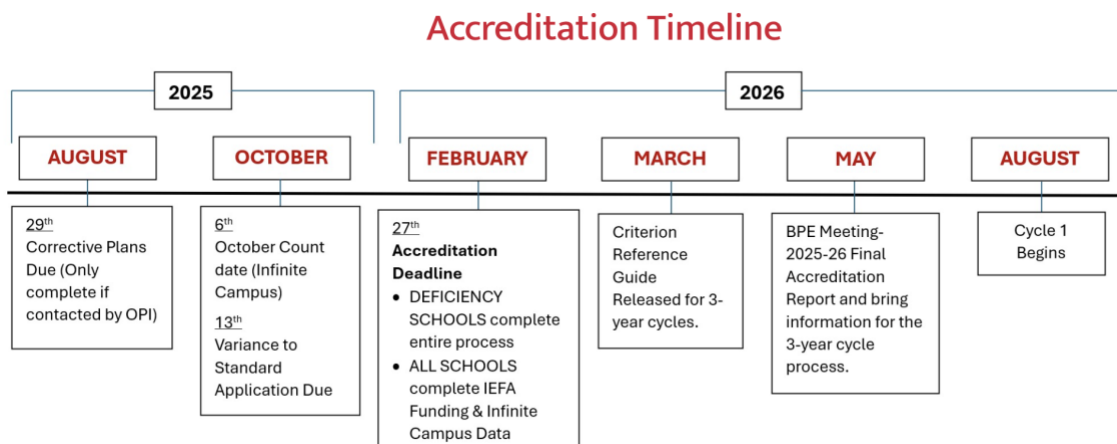


The Strategic Plan focuses on three strategic areas that are essential to achieving this vision:

1. **Curriculum** – Ensuring a rigorous, standards-aligned, and relevant curriculum that prepares students for college, career, and community success.
2. **Quality Instruction** – Supporting high-quality teaching practices that engage learners, foster critical thinking, and maximize student achievement.
3. **Partnerships** – Building and strengthening collaborative relationships with families, community organizations, and post-secondary partners to expand opportunities and support for students.

By aligning resources, initiatives, and operations with these priority areas, the district is positioned to provide meaningful learning experiences and pathways that prepare all students for future success.

The Miles City Unified School District will fulfill its mission, vision, and values through the implementation of this Strategic Plan following the Montana Office of Public Instructions Accreditation Timeline. These strategic areas will guide our work as we provide a high-quality education while maintaining the close-knit, supportive environment that is a hallmark of our district.



District School: (Circle One) CCDHS WMS Jefferson Highland Garfield Lincoln
Goal Area #1: Curriculum

By June 2028, Miles City Unified School District will ensure that a vertically and horizontally aligned curriculum adherent to state and local standards is implemented and reviewed. This will include the development of common assessments across all grade levels and departments, with updates made quarterly based on assessment data. Teachers will be trained to teach the curriculum with fidelity, with administrators conducting progress evaluations at least every 3 years to ensure accountability.

SMART Breakdown:

- **Specific:** The goal focuses on implementing and reviewing a rigorous, standards-aligned curriculum supported by common assessments.
- **Measurable:** Success will be measured by continuous curriculum updates through the PLC process based on data and annual evaluation sampling.
- **Achievable:** Developing and reviewing the curriculum over the 36 months, with a structure for assessments and accountability, ensures feasibility.
- **Relevant:** The goal aligns with the district's mission to improve instructional quality and student outcomes.
- **Time-bound:** The goal is to be achieved by June 2028, with checkpoints for progress (quarterly updates via the PLC process, annual teacher evaluation samplings).

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES				
OBJECTIVE	WHAT DOES THIS MEAN	PRIORITIES NEEDED TO MEET OBJECTIVE	WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?	ACCOUNTABILITY DATA
1. Vertical and horizontal alignment	Curriculum is aligned from lower to higher grades, and across the same grade level or subject area.	TIME PLCs, Curriculum Committee, Common Prep Time Transition Years/Gap Years (ie. 6th to 7th grade) Meet Across District Specials/Elective District Meetings	Administrators Schedule Time Teachers Do the Work Include Special Services	Curriculum Templates

2. Teachers follow the district mandated curriculum, which matches state and local standards and requires scope and sequence be clearly articulated and followed. An added emphasis on Indian Education For All (IEFA) will be added at each grade band and in each content area.	Curriculum is what is being taught in the classroom. Standards define what a student should know and be able to do at each grade level. The scope refers to the areas of development addressed by the curriculum. The sequence includes plans and materials for learning experiences to support and extend children's learning at various levels of development.	Our curriculum is rigorous, relevant, and taught with fidelity. Rigor is the result of work that challenges students' thinking in new and interesting ways. Fidelity occurs when all aspects of the curriculum are taught. Principals and teachers hold each other accountable to following the curriculum Need a comprehensive list of all supplies and materials for IEFA as a resource. Create IEFA annual survey to monitor growth.	Grade Level Teams Administrators Support and Facilitate Curriculum Director Administrators responsible for annual survey and for facilitating PLC discussions of incorporating and using IEFA at all grade levels and in all content areas.	Book Study Participation PLC Notes Leadership Teams (Department Heads) IEFA Survey https://forms.gle/yPZc8AKz4UWWeA4D9 Librarians could provide data on IEFA materials accessed in the libraries
3. Common assessments are used regularly across all buildings and grade levels with progress monitoring to provide data/feedback	Any means of measuring student performance that meet these criteria: 1. Content is the same for each subject area 2. Time is the same for each subject area	Grade-level and Building-level PLCs	Admin creates time Teachers create documents Curriculum Director	Assessments

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	3. Use of the results are held constant for each area tested			
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Goal Area #2: Quality Instruction

By the end of the 2028 school year, Miles City Unified School District will create a high-quality, supportive, and inclusive educational environment that nurtures the holistic development of every student and empowers exceptional instruction. This will be achieved by assessing student and staff engagement levels and learner results through regular feedback surveys and academic performance indicators.

SMART Breakdown:

- **Specific:** Increase student and staff engagement and learner results by developing and implementing effective new strategies based on feedback from student academic indicators, staff PLC meetings, and staff and student engagement surveys and instructional Professional Development.
- **Measurable:** Achieve a measurable improvement in the overall engagement score from baseline surveys administered in 2024 and a measurable improvement across academic performance indicators through June 2028.
- **Achievable:** Use feedback from the 2024 student and staff surveys and PLC meetings, as well as academic assessments, to identify key engagement and academic gaps and implement targeted programs.
- **Relevant:** This aligns with the District's goal to create a supportive and inclusive educational environment that nurtures every student and is focused on learner outcomes.
- **Time-bound:** To be achieved by the end of 2028

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES				
OBJECTIVE	WHAT DOES THIS MEAN	PRIORITIES NEEDED TO MEET OBJECTIVE	WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?	ACCOUNTABILITY DATA
1. Hire quality teachers, classified staff, coaches, and advisors		Use Evaluations (for growth) w/Fidelity The district evaluation tools provides adequate feedback and focuses on continual improvements Review Evaluation Tool and Self-Evaluation Incorporate PD to Evaluation to the Teaching Staff	Department Heads Mentor Program *Strong Pairings Colleagues Admin's responsibility to provide proper training with a new concentration on Para training and PD opportunities and substitute training	Mentor Program PD Evaluations

		Find opportunities to show appreciation/Compensation, monetary and otherwise Continue to improve and enhance resources available to teachers and students There is accountability and focus on collaboration Overhaul Mentoring Program “Sell our School” (Re)Branding Make connections with Education Colleges Openness to MCC practicum students earning their hours in our buildings “Grow Your Own” High School Pathways Program		
2. Our focus is on the whole child and his/her unique needs	The object of the whole child approach is not just to improve students’ academic performances, but also contribute to their overall development. A whole child approach to education is defined by policies, practices, and	Restorative Justice Trauma Informed Schools Most lessons incorporate real world applications including inquiry, project based, direct instruction,	Everybody	Office Referrals Testing Data Use of Technology Title Program Activity Counts

	relationships that ensure each child, in each school, in each community, is healthy, safe, engaged, supported and challenged.	peer to peer, and school to school Staff appropriately incorporates technology into instruction Teachers are provided the opportunity to use effective, differentiated instruction There is accountability and focus on collaboration Offer a variety of extra- and co-curricular opportunities Collect data and analyze utilizing PD time		P/T Participation Rates Community Engagement Panorama Results/Data
3. Hire and retain leaders who are supportive, encouraging, and positive		Continue use of Kim Marshall Principal Evaluation Rubric for Head and Assistant Principals Continue use Adopted AD Evaluation Rubric Delegation of Duties and Supervision (Committees, Games, Activities)	Superintendent Admin Team School Board Community	

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Goal Area #3: Partnerships

By June 2028,, Miles City Unified School District will establish and/or maintain at least five active partnerships per building with local agencies to foster collaboration between the school and community. These partnerships will include at least two community resource events or communications per year to connect families with available support. Feedback will be gathered annually from parents and biannually from students through surveys to measure the effectiveness and impact of these relationships.

SMART Breakdown:

- **Specific:** Focus on fostering community-school collaboration through partnerships and resource events and communication.
- **Measurable:** Success measured by the establishment and/or maintenance of five partnerships, hosting two events or communications annually, and collecting feedback through surveys.
- **Achievable:** Creating partnerships and hosting events or communication with support from local agencies is realistic within the timeline.
- **Relevant:** Aligns with the district's commitment to building meaningful relationships for a holistic approach to family and community needs.
- **Time-bound:** Completion by June 2028, with regular milestones (quarterly meetings and biannual surveys).

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES				
OBJECTIVE	WHAT DOES THIS MEAN	PRIORITIES NEEDED TO MEET OBJECTIVE	WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?	ACCOUNTABILITY DATA
1. Continue to foster and build a culture of collaboration between the community and school to maintain or increased family and community involvement		Inviting Outside Agencies Volunteer Invites Family Night Open Houses P/T Conferences Facebook/Website	Teachers Administration School Board	Sign-in Sheets
2. Pursue flexible funding sources			School Staff	
3. Build and maintain healthy partnerships within the community (school to work, volunteers, members of	Wrap-around is a way or process of working with children and youth with serious mental health challenges and their families. During the Wraparound process	CSCT/EMMHC YDI Vocational Rehab Pathways EMHC Juv. Probation DEAP	Everybody	Enrollment Numbers

committees, business, service groups, wrap around service agencies, etc.)	community-based services and supports “wrap around” a child or youth and their family in their home, school, and community in an effort to help meet their needs.	DFS Job Service MCC CNADA		
4. Work with local service organizations to promote and develop student citizenship	Kiwanis (K Kids, Builders Club, Key Club) MCII RSVP Miles City Chamber Keep MC Beautiful Rotary (InterAct Club) VICA HOBY Boys and Girls State (American Legion) Voice of Democracy (VFW)	Students are connected to the community and can transfer knowledge Support extra-curricular groups such as Key Club, K Kids, Builders Club, Student Council, NHS	Everybody Club Advisors Admin Community	Document Participation
5. Further develop pathways that create college and career ready/CHOICE READY students	A choice ready graduate is defined as having evidence of meeting criteria in at least two of the three categories of post-secondary, workforce, and military ready.	Reconfigure Pathways Committee to promote more communication between the District and local businesses, partner with MCC to facilitate prerequisites to Pathways program, and coordinate with MCC dual enrollment coordinator to maximize student opportunities and communication to stakeholders Most lessons incorporate real world applications	Pathways Coordinator and Committee Counseling Center Administrative Oversight	Numbers Involved Paired w/Partners Dual Enrollment

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including inquiry, project based, direct instruction, peer to peer, and school to school

There is accountability and focus on collaboration
Change format of Parent/Teacher Conferences (high school) to provide more information to parents/guardians about possible pathways after high school