

Polson School District #23



Title I Schoolwide Plan

Cherry Valley Elem.  Linderman Elem.  Polson Middle School  Polson High School

Vision

Striving for Excellence - Everyone, Every Day!

Mission

Our Mission is to be a safe, thriving, and dynamic educational environment that teams with families and the community to inspire self-directed learners in an interconnected world.

We believe in

P.R.I.D.E.

Partnerships - Relationships - Integrity - Diversity - Excellence

Graduate Profile



Rigorous Academic Preparedness: Students develop academic and organizational skills to allow them to complete rigorous college and career preparatory classes and experiences. They possess strong communication skills, critical thinking skills, digital citizenship, and literacy skills. They demonstrate adaptive problem-solving abilities and ingenuity in utilizing resources and technology.

Advanced Opportunity Exposure: Students actively engage in forming post-secondary plans through research, experiences, exploration, networking, self-reflection, community connection, and career and technical opportunities. Students develop goals based on their aptitudes and interests. They also develop personal financial literacy to make informed decisions.

Belief in Self: Students possess a strong sense of self and act intentionally to build relationships, overcome setbacks, and seek help and feedback when needed. They understand their emotions, thoughts, and values, and demonstrate leadership traits and behaviors.

What is Title I?

Title I is one of the nation's oldest and largest federal programs supporting elementary and secondary education. Title I is based on three important ideas:

- Provide all children significant opportunity to receive a fair, equitable, and high-quality education, and to close educational achievement gaps.
- Local districts, schools, and parents know best what their students need to succeed. The Title I program allows them to decide how to use these funds to implement evidence-based practices to help students who are failing or who are at risk of failing in school.
- Parents are partners in helping all students achieve. They have the right to be involved in the design and operation of their school's Title I program, and, at the same time, a responsibility to help their children succeed in school.

Polson School District participates in the Consolidated Federal Program. This is a series of federal title grants, including Title I, which funds salaries and educational programs across our district. Amounts vary each year and depend on enrollment and percentage of free and reduced lunch eligibility.

Qualifying for Title I

To qualify for Title I funding, a school must meet certain criteria. Any school with a poverty average of at least 40% may operate a schoolwide program. This means that services and programs funded through Title I can be used for all students, schoolwide.

Use of Title I Funds

Polson School District uses Title I funds to improve and increase student achievement by funding additional teachers and paraprofessionals to work with students in math and literacy. While our main use of funds is for salaries and benefits, we have also used Title I funds to purchase educational materials for students. Materials, services and programs purchased with Title I funds must be high quality, researched, and evidence-based.

Parent and Family Engagement

- Polson School District encourages parents and families to be involved and informed about their student's education.
- Schools utilizing Title I funds must hold an annual Title I meeting each year to provide information to families. This is done through the District Office in collaboration with schools.
- Polson School District is required to have a Parent & Family Engagement policy. Please see our [Board Policy Manual](#) for specifics on Policy 2158 (Parent and Family Engagement and Educational Involvement) and Policy 2160 (Title I Parent Involvement).

Parent Rights Under Title I

- You have the right to know the teaching credentials of your child's teacher. You have the right to know whether your child works directly with a paraprofessional and what their qualifications are.
- You have the right to see how your child performs on state assessments and you have the right to know how your child's school performed on state assessments.

Title I School-Parent-Student Compact

Federal guidelines require that all schools receiving Title I funds develop a School-Parent-Student compact. A compact is an agreement among participants working together for a common goal. Teachers, students, and parents all have the responsibility to contribute to the effort to establish an effective climate for learning for all students. This compact outlines the role of each group in an effort to provide a high-quality education for our students.

As a student I will:

- Attend school regularly and arrive to all classes on time
- Complete homework assignments on time and to the best of my ability
- Always do my best to produce quality work
- Participate in school-related activities
- Set aside time at home to read each day
- Show respect for fellow students, teachers, and school property
- Follow classroom, school, and bus rules

As a parent, I will:

- Ensure that my child attends school regularly and arrives on time
- Ensure that my child completes his/her homework on time
- Provide a place in the home where my child can read, study, and complete assignments
- Discuss my child's progress with his/her teacher on a regular basis
- Support the school and encourage my child to be respectful of teachers and fellow students
- Encourage my child to read at home daily
- Volunteer at school whenever possible

As teachers, we will:

- Help each child meet his/her fullest potential in a safe learning environment
- Make efficient use of learning time by coming prepared to teach with meaningful activities
- Provide high-quality curriculum and instruction in a supportive environment where learning is encouraged and celebrated
- Adapt instruction to meet the individual needs of all learners
- Encourage students to read for enjoyment, as well as for information
- Supply students and parents with clear and frequent evaluations of progress and achievement
- Promote an environment where parents feel welcome in our school and are encouraged to volunteer and participate in classroom activities
- Encourage parents to contact teachers to discuss their child's progress academically and socially
- Hold parent-teacher conferences to discuss individual student achievement and share ways to support learning at home

Title I Parent Involvement Policy

In an effort to foster student success, partnerships between the school and parents are vital. In Polson School District, we believe parent/guardian support is crucial in our efforts to provide quality education, to maximize the success of our students and to help them achieve higher academic standards to succeed in school and life.

The purpose of this policy is to inform and educate parents about the Title I program and the responsibilities of the school in regards to parent involvement. It was developed in conjunction with parents, teachers, and administrators of Polson School District.

The Polson School District Title I program will:

- Involve parents in the development of this policy and the school/parent/student compact.
- Inform parents annually about the Title I program and the rights of parents and review these components each year.
- Design parent involvement programs and meetings that are aimed toward increasing parent involvement in student education and learning.
- Offer a number of meetings throughout the school year that are scheduled at reasonable and flexible times to encourage maximum participation.
- Provide timely information about school programs, curriculum and instruction, assessments, and measures of progress.
- Involve parents in the planning, review, and improvement of Title I programs.
- Provide opportunities for parents to offer suggestions and participate in discussions related to the Title I programs and receive timely responses. If dissatisfied with the school's Title I program, parent comments will be taken to the District level.
- Utilize parent involvement funding in a responsible manner based on the needs.
- Inform parents of school activities through multiple methods of communication. Activities that allow for additional opportunities for parent involvement may include, but aren't limited to:
 - Parent / Teacher Conferences
 - Monthly Newsletters
 - Parent/School Compact
 - District Website
 - Parent Advisory Groups

Parent and Community Stakeholder Involvement

Polson School District is deeply committed to fostering a collaborative partnership with families and the community to support each student's academic and personal growth. Key engagement events, including the annual Pirate Welcome and back-to-school events in September and multiple Family Engagement Nights throughout the year, create spaces for families to connect with school staff, learn about district initiatives, and provide feedback on our Title I programs. These events, along with parent committee meetings and surveys, provide families with opportunities to share their perspectives on our Title I and academic support programs.

To ensure transparency and broaden engagement, the district utilizes BrightArrow communication technologies in the form of automated phone calls, emails, text messages, and

online postings to invite families to participate in events, meetings, and surveys. Title I information is readily accessible on the district website, individual school handbooks, and through social media, which reinforces our commitment to open communication. Each year, a comprehensive review meeting is held to evaluate the effectiveness of the Title I program. Additionally, our School Improvement Committee, which includes parents, educators, school board trustees, and community members, works closely to focus on improving family engagement and student attendance—a priority aligned with our Integrated Strategic Action Plan. We also actively engage parents in decision-making through advisory committees, which provide direct insights that shape our Title I and Family Engagement programs.

Comprehensive Needs Assessment

In our district-wide Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CNA), which informs the goals of our Integrated Strategic Action Plan along with our Title I plan, input from educators, parents, and community members is gathered through surveys and performance data analysis. Primary areas of need identified include:

- **Supporting Social-Emotional Needs:** Our district faces complex challenges related to students' social and emotional well-being, which often stem from socioeconomic pressures, trauma, and the lasting effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. To address these, Polson School District is implementing the CharacterStrong curriculum and AVID strategies district-wide. These programs provide a structured approach to developing self-regulation, resilience, and interpersonal skills. Building family-school-community partnerships further supports these efforts, ensuring that students have a network of support that nurtures their social and emotional health.
- **Improving Facilities and Safety:** As part of our district's commitment to creating safe, inclusive learning environments, we have focused on upgrading our school facilities, supported by bond initiatives. Facility improvements include enhanced security measures, expanded classroom spaces for small-group instruction, and updated air quality systems. These enhancements directly support our Integrated Strategic Action Plan's focus on ensuring a conducive learning environment for all.
- **Post-Secondary Planning and Academic Achievement:** To ensure that students are prepared for life after high school, our district has set a goal to increase proficiency in ELA and Math by 10% and to close the achievement gap for Native American students by the spring of 2027. Comprehensive career exploration activities, Pirate Pursuits (senior projects), and partnerships with local colleges enable students to explore various post-secondary pathways and build essential skills for their futures.

Schoolwide Plan Strategies

Opportunities for All Students: Our district is dedicated to providing all students, including subgroups such as Native American and low-income students, with access to a high-quality education that aligns with state standards. For English Language Arts core curriculum, we use Wonders and StudySync, focusing on essential standards, pacing, and integrating best instructional practices and science of reading strategies. In Mathematics, while focusing on best

instructional practices, we employ the Bridges in Mathematics program (K-5) and Open Up Resources curriculum to help students develop inquiry-based mathematical reasoning while creating an inclusive and equitable learning community for all students.

Instructional and Enrichment Strategies: Polson School District integrates WIN (What I Need) time and reading support classes across elementary and middle school levels, offering tailored interventions and extended learning opportunities. At the high school level, literacy classes support students struggling with reading, addressing individual needs through targeted instruction. Additionally, we have offered after-school tutoring to further support students' success in ELA, mathematics, and other core areas, along with partnering with organizations like the Boys and Girls Club, Upward Bound, and Talent Search to meet student's needs. Professional development sessions for teachers and paraprofessionals funded by Title I have focused on the science of reading, AVID strategies, AI, and using personalized learning platforms like Read180 and DreamBox to support student learning and teachers' instructional practices.

Meeting Needs of At-Risk Students: Title I teachers collaborate with certified staff and work with Tier 2 and Tier 3 students in grades K-12 to support non-proficient students in meeting academic standards. Benchmark assessment tools like STAR, AIMSWEB, and MAP along with state assessments like MAST and ACT allow us to monitor student progress, ensuring data-driven instruction and targeted interventions. We use intervention materials such as WonderWorks, Reading Mastery, Phonics for Reading, Decoding Strategies, Corrective Reading, Rewards, Read180, and Bridges Intervention to help target root causes of students' reading struggles, and to help them improve their skills and move toward proficiency.

Professional Development: Title I funds support professional development aligned with district and school goals. Certified teachers and paraprofessionals participate in sessions on best instructional practices, AVID College & Career Readiness, and culturally responsive teaching. These sessions are designed to increase staff capacity and consistency in implementing best practices across classrooms. PLCs provide a collaborative space for teachers to review student data and share effective strategies, contributing to continuous improvement district-wide.

Coordination and Integration

Polson School District's Title I Schoolwide Plan is developed in close alignment with other Federal, State, and local services to effectively use resources that enhance student outcomes. By coordinating Title I funds with other funding streams, the district maximizes fiscal, human, and time resources to support strategies focused on academic growth, social-emotional development, and family engagement. Key coordination efforts include the following partnerships and programs:

Tribal Education - our partnership with CSKT Tribal Education and the Project AWARE grant supports initiatives like CharacterStrong, our K-12 social and emotional learning program, and the Indigenous Immersion Program, which provides culturally relevant, project-based experiences that engage students and promote graduation success, particularly for Native

American students. We also partner with Tribal Education to provide valuable professional development opportunities for our educators.

Additional Grant Funding - Title I funds are braided with multiple other funding sources to reinforce district-wide academic and enrichment programs. Some of these key funding sources include Title VI (addressing the unique academic and cultural needs of American Indian and Alaska Native students), REAP (Rural Education Achievement Program) for flexibility in rural school support at the secondary level, Montana Comprehensive Literacy State Development Program to strengthen literacy instruction, 21st Century Learning for after-school academic and enrichment programs, Montana Advanced Opportunities to increase access to opportunities, coursework, and career exploration, McKinney-Vento grant to support homeless students, and Math for All to enhance mathematics instruction. These grants and programs align with Title I efforts, enabling a comprehensive approach to meet the academic and social needs of all students, especially those most vulnerable.

Community and Educational Partnerships - Polson School District collaborates with various organizations to provide a robust support system for all students. Partnerships with organizations such as Families First, Friends of the Children, Helping Hands, Polson Loaves & Fish Pantry, the Greater Polson Community Foundation, Rotary Club, Chamber of Commerce, Reach Higher Montana, Upward Bound, Talent Search, Native Youth Community Project, and the Boys and Girls Club (among many other organizations and local businesses) offer critical resources such as after-school homework assistance, tutoring, mentorship, basic needs assistance, and college and career planning. Additionally, collaborations with Salish Kootenai College, Flathead Valley Community College, and the University of Montana provide dual-enrollment opportunities, fostering pathways to post-secondary success.

These partnerships and braided funding sources reflect the district's commitment to a holistic support system for students and families. By integrating multiple resources and programs, Polson School District addresses the unique needs of our student population, ensuring that each funding source fulfills its intent and purpose in alignment with ESSA standards. The district also regularly evaluates the effectiveness of these coordinated efforts during meetings and through surveys, making adjustments as needed to ensure that resources are optimized for student success.

Evaluation and Plan Revision

To ensure our Title I Schoolwide Plan remains effective, we conduct annual evaluation meetings involving parents, educators, and other stakeholders. Additionally, we conduct a comprehensive needs assessment annually and evaluate student performance data during weekly PLC meetings. Adjustments to our Title program are made as necessary based on this feedback collection and discussion. The School Improvement Committee also monitors and evaluates the effectiveness of family engagement activities, making modifications as needed to ensure continuous improvement. These efforts align with the goals outlined in our Integrated Strategic Action Plan, ensuring that every student has opportunities to succeed academically and personally.

