
Chief Charlo third grade

Susan Ray <sray@mcpsmt.org>
To: Public Comment <publiccomment@mcpsmt.org>

Fri, Jun 20, 2025 at 9:00 AM

Dear MCPS Board Members,

My name is Susan Ray. I teach 2nd grade at Chief Charlo. I recently received a thank you note from the parent of a child. She thanked me for advocating for the return of a third-grade teacher next year. She asked me to use whatever power I have to continue to speak out for the needs of these kids. The only power I have is my voice, so here I go (again). This time with the help of AI.

As I said before, this particular group of kids have a vast array of needs. In 44 years of teaching, I've never seen a group like this. It will be impossible for 2 teachers, who are masters of their craft, to meet them. Third grade is a crucial year for so many reasons.

The following text was generated by AI.

Here's why third grade is so important:

- **Reading Shift:**

Up until third grade, the focus is often on learning basic reading skills. In third grade, students are expected to apply those skills to understand more complex texts and subjects.

- **Long-Term Academic Success:**

Studies show that students who struggle with reading in third grade are at a higher risk of falling behind in later grades and even dropping out of high school.

- **Increased Independence:**

Third grade marks a period where students are expected to become more independent learners, managing their time, materials, and homework with less direct supervision.

- **Social and Emotional Development:**

Third graders are also developing socially and emotionally, becoming more aware of their peers and the wider world.

- **Foundation for Future Learning:**

Mastering reading and other foundational skills in third grade sets students up for success in more advanced subjects in the later elementary grades and beyond.

Because of these factors, many schools and educators emphasize the importance of third grade and may have policies or interventions in place to support students who are struggling.

If you can find a way to give these kids one more year of reasonable class size, it will set them up for a greater chance of success throughout their entire academic career. While I'm not naïve enough to think it's a "cure", I am knowledgeable enough to know the positive effect it will have. Class size matters!

Please keep them in your heart and mind as you make decisions for the upcoming school year.

Thank you for your time and commitment to our schools. I appreciate all you do.

Susan Ray

Recent MCPS Property talks are causing more pain on Missoulians

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Wed, Jul 2, 2025 at 1:19 PM

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It was with great sadness when I saw the article about Missoula County Public Schools properties in the May 22, 2025, newspaper.

As a long time Missoulian, about 70 years with about 10 years elsewhere in Montana, I feel very offended that I once again have to put up with shenanigans by the MCPS Board of Trustees.

It appears that none of you understand the public and what they desire or you would not be constantly getting rid of the most precious resource that you are currently taking care of, that is the neighborhood school. YOU KNOW WHAT THE PUBLIC DESIRES - you just don't want to hear it or you just ignore it. Earth to MCPS - Missoula wants neighborhood schools.

The title of the article, "MCPS seeks community input on how to use vacant district properties" is offensive enough. One must ask, "How did these vacant properties become vacant?" Having lived here for so many years and being subjected to the painful closure, sale, lease circus being led by disloyal Trustees and Superintendents, I actually know how these neighborhood assets became vacant.

These schools who weren't so lucky on the Roullet wheel of Trustee closure decisions were pawns in the hands of shortsighted and meanspirited people who were always listening to anybody else other than their constituents.

At every closure decision were students, parents, teachers, families, and neighbors, who were literally begging the district not to close their neighborhood school. Some were seen on television crying as their school was closed at the last minute. Some children were gathering at the closed schools shedding tears together.

Two of our schools were closed and leased to private schools, and one school bought by a private school and the other left for what is obviously planned obsolescence. Prescott School, one of Missoula's most precious, more than a century old asset, was closed by ruthless, bribing(in my opinion), disloyal Trustees ignoring the pleas of the public who at one time filled the Sentinel High School gym with supporters. Roosevelt School, which is now St. Joseph's Catholic School and is the same age as Lewis and Clark school was said by one Trustee to have "reached the end of its useful life". Yes, and that is why St. Joseph's is thriving, right, Jim? And Lewis and Clark is also going full steam ahead as an IB School(a UN affiliate).

For any of these properties to be used for anything but a school would be a tragedy and nothing else. There are many other options for housing, etc. These school buildings were built and paid for by the Missoula taxpayers to be used for schools, not anything else that is being proposed by developers and others, perhaps housing entities, and who knows what looking for a cheap buck.

Remember, once these schools are gone, they are gone forever. Will it be your name on the School Board minutes as voting to approve the sale of a school. Will the history books of MCPS and the city tell the story of how you sold out the children of Missoula? Will it be you that continues to relegate our Missoula youth

to sitting on a bus a huge portion of their school day rather than letting them simply attend the school in their neighborhood? Will there be caravans of Beach buses running to and fro across our city with our most precious asset, our children? Will you join the names of [REDACTED], etc., to continue to destroy what was built over a century of labor and money to provide the most basic of school needs, a neighborhood school?

We all know that our schools are failing our children. America's proficiency in reading and writing and math are abysmal. Yet, it is the smaller school that is optimal for our children. Not as some MCPS Trustees have said "educational centers". Please read, "The Cost and Effectiveness of Small Schools". This study needs to be your guide to how to handle our school buildings. Not the developers, not NGO's, not homelessness advocates, etc.

Please take to heart my letter as it is truly from my heart. MCPS has forced dark days and years on our city. MCPS is built on a dark past. Let there be light, finally, for our city and for our children and for our schools.

With earnestness in saying please do not get rid of any of our precious and needed school resources.

Jeanne Joscelyn, Prescott School Missoula advocate and Neighborhood School advocate for all of Missoula's schools