

**2023-2025**

**Master Agreement**

**By and Between**

**Polson School District No. 23**

**And**

**Polson Unit MFPE**

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## **AGREEMENT**

THIS AGREEMENT is entered into between School District No. 23, Polson, Montana, (herein referred to as the "School District") and the Polson Unit, MFPE, (herein referred to as the "Exclusive Representative") pursuant to and in compliance with the Montana Public Employee Collective Bargaining Act, MCA Title 39, Chapter 31, (herein referred to as the "Act"), to provide the terms and conditions of employment for Teachers during the 2023 - 2025 school year. The School District and the Exclusive Representative are herein referred to individually as "Party" and collectively as "Parties".

## **ARTICLE ONE**

### RECOGNITION

1.1 In accordance with the Act, the School District recognizes the Polson Unit, MFPE as the Exclusive Representative of Teachers employed by the School District, with rights and duties as prescribed by the Act and as described in this Agreement.

1.2 The Exclusive Representative shall represent all teaching personnel employed by the School District who are certified by the State of Montana in class 1, 2, 4, or 5, (MCA § 20-4-106) and all counseling personnel who are certified by the State of Montana in class 6 (ARM § 10.57.433(b)) (herein referred to individually as "Teacher" and collectively as "Teachers"). Representation shall exclude the superintendent, principals, assistant principals, psychologists, substitute Teachers, substitute counselors, any Teacher whose employment is temporary, and Teacher aides.

## **ARTICLE TWO**

### MANAGEMENT RIGHTS

2.1 The Exclusive Representative recognizes that the Board of Trustees has the responsibility and authority to manage and direct, on behalf of the public, all the operations and activities of the School District to the full extent authorized by law (MCA § 39-31-303).

## **ARTICLE THREE**

### EXCLUSIVE REPRESENTATIVE'S RIGHTS

3.1 Unit Meetings.

The Exclusive Representative shall have the right to use School District school buildings for meetings outside of school hours when such use is approved by the School District administration and such use will not conflict with normal operations and order of the School District.

3.2 Use of School District Facilities and Equipment.

The Exclusive Representative may post notices regarding official Exclusive Representative business on staff bulletin boards and/or in Teacher mailboxes. In addition, the Exclusive Representative may make reasonable use of School District office equipment for official Exclusive Representative business when such equipment is not otherwise in use. The Exclusive Representative will provide consumable materials used such as paper. The Board of Trustees recognizes the need for communication between the Exclusive Representative and the School District during the workday. Access to communications such as phones and School District e-mail will be available to meet the needs

for that communication and to facilitate a good working relationship between the Exclusive Representative's members, the School District, and Administrative staff.

3.3 New Hires.

The School District shall notify the Exclusive Representative of each newly employed Teacher by providing the Teacher's name, address, and placement on salary schedule to the Exclusive Representative within ten (10) days following approval of her/his employment contract.

3.4 Board of Trustees Meetings.

The School District, when requested by the Exclusive Representative, will place items on the regular Board of Trustees' meeting agenda, pursuant to Board of Trustees' policy and procedure.

## ARTICLE FOUR

### TEACHER RIGHTS

4.1 Just Cause.

No teacher shall be disciplined without cause. No tenured teacher shall be discharged without cause. Nothing in this provision shall limit the Board's ability to non-renew a non-tenured teacher with or without cause.

4.2 Individual Teacher Contracts.

Contracts for individual Teachers will be issued for Tenure and Non-tenure Teachers in a form substantially similar to the School District standard form Teacher contract attached hereto as Appendix A.

## ARTICLE FIVE

### GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

5.1 Definitions

- A. Day means a calendar day, except for any day occurring on a Saturday, Sunday or legal holiday as denominated at MCA § 1-1-216.
- B. Grievance means a claim by a Grievant that there has been a violation, misapplication, or misinterpretation of the terms of the Agreement.
- C. Grievant means a Teacher, a group of Teachers, or the Exclusive Representative.

5.2 Individual Rights.

Nothing herein contained will be construed as limiting the right of any Teacher having a grievance to discuss the matter informally with her/his immediate supervisor or the superintendent and having the grievance adjusted at Level One without intervention by the Exclusive Representative, provided that the adjustment is not inconsistent with the terms of this Agreement. A Grievant may have a representative present at Level One of the Grievance procedure. The Exclusive Representative may have a representative present at any Level of the Grievance procedure. The Grievant, his/her representative, and a representative from the Exclusive Representative shall not suffer any loss of salary or benefits in order to participate in the grievance process.

### 5.3 Procedure

#### Level One - Immediate Supervisor

The Grievant shall, within twenty-one (21) days of the occurrence, or knowledge, of the act or condition from which the Grievance arises, present the Grievance in writing to her/his immediate supervisor. The grievance shall be written on the Grievance Report Form (Appendix B) and shall include a statement describing the facts of the grievance, identifying the article(s) of this Agreement that are in dispute, and identifying the requested remedy.

The Grievant and the immediate supervisor will arrange to meet within seven (7) days of presentation of the Grievance to provide the Grievant an opportunity to verbally explain the Grievance and to provide the immediate supervisor with an opportunity to ask questions so as to fully understand the nature, scope, and substance of the Grievance.

The immediate supervisor shall provide the Grievant and the Exclusive Representative with a written answer to the Grievance within seven (7) days of the Level One Meeting.

Level One is complete upon either seven (7) days after the Level One Meeting, or issuance of the immediate supervisor's written answer, whichever occurs first.

#### Level Two - Superintendent

If the Grievant or the Exclusive Representative is not satisfied with the action of her/his immediate supervisor at Level One, then within seven (7) days of completion of such action the Grievant may forward the Grievance to the superintendent or the superintendent's designee. The Grievant shall provide a copy of all materials submitted at Level One to the Superintendent.

The superintendent or her/his designee shall provide the Grievant with a hearing (Level Two Hearing) on the Grievance within seven (7) days after receipt for the purpose of receiving all evidence and argument that the Grievant may have in support of her/his claims. The superintendent or her/his designee shall issue a written decision on the Grievance within seven (7) days of the Level Two Hearing and shall provide a copy of her/his decision to the Grievant and the Exclusive Representative.

Level Two is complete upon the either seven (7) days after the Level Two Hearing, or issuance of the Superintendent's written decision, whichever occurs first.

#### Level Three - Board of Trustees

If the Grievant or the Exclusive Representative is not satisfied with the action of superintendent or her/his designee at Level Two, then within seven (7) days of completion of such action the Grievant may appeal the superintendent's action to the Board of Trustees. The Grievant shall provide a copy of all materials submitted at Level Two to the Board of Trustees. The Chairperson of the Board of Trustees shall arrange for the Board of Trustees to provide the Grievant with a hearing (Level Three Hearing) at the earlier occurring of either a special meeting of the Board of Trustees or the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees, through the Chairperson, shall issue a written decision on the Grievance within fourteen (14) days of the Level Three Hearing and shall provide a copy of the Board of Trustees' decision to the Grievant and the Exclusive Representative.

Level Three is complete upon either fourteen (14) days after the Level Three Hearing, or issuance of the Board of Trustees' written decision, whichever occurs first.

#### Level Four - Binding Arbitration

If the Exclusive Representative is not satisfied with the action of the Board of Trustees at Level Three, then the Exclusive Representative, in its sole discretion, may submit the Grievance for binding

arbitration. The Exclusive Representative shall exercise its right of arbitration by giving the superintendent written notice of its intention to arbitrate within twenty-one (21) days after completion of Level Three. If any questions arise as to whether the issue is subject to arbitration, such questions will first be ruled upon by the arbitrator selected to hear the dispute.

After notice of submission to arbitration, the Exclusive Representative shall request in writing a list of no less than seven (7) qualified arbitrators from either the American Arbitration Association ("AAA") or Montana Board of Personnel Appeals ("BOPA"). Within fourteen (14) days of receipt of the list, the Exclusive Representative and the District shall, after the toss of a coin to determine the order of striking, alternately strike names from the list until one arbitrator is selected and appointed. If an arbitrator is selected from the list from the AAA, then the School District and the Exclusive Representative can at that time decide to choose either the "expedited procedure" or the "ordinary vol. arbitration rules" of the AAA.

The arbitrator shall consider the grievance and render a decision within sixty (60) days of the hearing or final submission of briefs, whichever is later. The arbitrator's decision shall be final and binding upon the parties.

Costs associated with binding arbitration shall be shared equally by the Exclusive Representative and the School District. If one of the parties wants a transcript of the arbitration proceedings, the party requesting the transcript will pay the costs for the transcript. If both parties request transcripts, they shall share equally the cost.

5.4 Exceptions to Time Limits.

The parties may only alter the time limits set forth in this Article by written agreement.

5.5 Time Limits for Calculation of Remedies.

For Grievances involving salary or insurance contributions, the back pay or back contribution portion of the remedy shall be limited to one hundred eighty (180) days prior to the date the Grievance was presented by Grievant to her/his immediate supervisor.

5.6 No Reprisals.

No person or entity subject to this Agreement, including the Board of Trustees, any School District administrator, the Exclusive Representative, any Teacher, and/or any agent or representative thereof shall commit or omit any act of reprisal against any person because of participation in this grievance procedure.

5.7 Cooperation of Parties.

The Board of Trustees, the School District administration, the Exclusive Representative, and a grievant Teacher will cooperate with one another in the investigation of any Grievance as is demonstrated by sharing such information as is necessary, within limits prescribed by law, for processing any grievance.

5.8 Personnel Files.

All documents, communications, and records produced for the purpose of processing a Grievance shall be filed separately from the personnel files of the participants.



5.9 Election of Remedies and Waiver.

After a grievance has been submitted to arbitration, the Grievant and the Exclusive Representative waive any right to pursue against the School District an action or complaint that seeks the same remedy. If a Grievant or the Exclusive Representative files a complaint or other action against the School District, arbitration seeking the same remedy may not be filed or pursued under this section.

5.10 Jurisdiction of the Arbitrator.

The arbitrator shall have no power to alter, add to, or subtract from the terms of this Agreement. The arbitrator's decision will be based upon the provisions of this Agreement. This arbitration provision shall be for Grievances only. There shall be no interest arbitration.

## **ARTICLE SIX**

### EVALUATION

6.1 Evaluation Form

Evaluations will be reduced to writing on the EPAS forms. Completed evaluation forms will be placed in the teacher's personnel file after the teacher and evaluator have met to discuss the evaluation and the teacher has signed the evaluation form.

6.2 Monitoring and Observation.

All monitoring or observation of the work performance of a Teacher shall be conducted openly and with full knowledge of the Teacher. The Exclusive Representative recognizes that casual observation on the part of the evaluator is a part of the overall evaluation of a Teacher.

6.3 Evaluation Schedule

Non-tenured teachers shall receive two formal evaluations annually, both mid-year and end of year. Tenured teachers shall be evaluated end of year once every third year. Mid-year evaluations will occur on or before January 29. The end of year evaluation will be on or before May 15. In the event that these dates fall on a non-workday the preceding workday shall be the deadline. In the event that an evaluation deadline is missed for a substantive reason, the deadline may be extended for up to ten (10) working days. Within five (5) days of a formal observation the evaluator will complete and return the evaluation form to the teacher and schedule a follow up conference. Should the teacher disagree with the contents of an evaluation they may write an official statement, within ten (10) days of the follow up conference, that will be attached to the evaluation form.

6.4 Right to Union Representation

Any teacher may have a representative present during any part of the observation/follow up conferences.

## **ARTICLE SEVEN**

### PROMOTION, VACANCIES, TRANSFERS

7.1 Promotions and Vacancies.

A list of all Teacher vacancies will be available to Teachers. Notices will routinely be posted electronically. Any Teacher vacancy may first be filled by an in-building transfer based on Teacher request(s) and as approved by the principal. Once in-building transfers are completed the resulting vacancies will be advertised as provided in this Article. On or before June 1 of each year, Teacher

vacancies will be posted electronically for at least one (1) week before filling the position. This provision will not apply when a Teacher vacancy occurs during the school year and it is in the best interest of the School District to immediately fill the position. After June 1 Teacher vacancy lists will be available on the district web site at least one (1) week before filling the position.

#### 7.2 Voluntary and Involuntary Transfers.

Except as provided hereafter in this section 7.2, Teacher transfers within the School District will be administered pursuant to School District Policy. The School District will take reasonable efforts to provide personal notification regarding a decision on transfer to each Teacher who applies for such transfer before the School District's final decision is made public. In the event two or more Teachers apply for transfer for one position and two or more of the applicants are deemed to be equally qualified for the position by the School District administration, then the School District administration shall award the position to the most senior Teacher among the applicants.

#### 7.3 Reduction in Staff.

If the Board of Trustees determines the need to reduce Teacher staff, such reductions will be achieved through the following Levels:

##### Level One

Normal attrition from retirement and resignation.

##### Level Two

If a teaching position is to be eliminated, the Board of Trustees shall give notification of layoff to the least senior Teacher in that position provided the more senior Teacher is certified and endorsed to hold that position.

##### Level Three

A Teacher who is notified of layoff will have the right to displace any less senior Teacher whose work he or she is certified and endorsed to perform. A Teacher who displaces another Teacher will maintain his/her proper Level on the salary schedule and will retain all accrued benefits.

##### Level Four

A Teacher who is to be displaced in Level Three will have the same displacement rights vis-à-vis less senior Teachers.

#### 7.4 Seniority.

Non-tenure Teachers will not acquire seniority prior to becoming tenured. Once tenured their seniority date will be the teacher's most recent date of hire.

For purposes of this Article, seniority will be computed from the Teacher's most recent date of hire in the bargaining unit. Seniority will continue to accrue during all paid leaves of absence. Seniority will not be broken by unpaid leaves of absence or employment by the Board of Trustees in a position outside the bargaining unit, but such time will not be counted in computing seniority. When seniority is equal between or among Teachers, ranking of those Teachers shall be determined first by full time vs. part time status. Full time status will have seniority over part time. Part time defined as less than 1.0 full time equivalent.

When part time status vs full time status is equal, ranking of Teachers would be determined by attainment level of education. When seniority, status, and attainment level of education are equal

between or among Teachers, ranking of those Teachers shall be determined by experience level (high school experience for high school position, middle school experience for a middle school position, etc.). When seniority, status, attainment level of education, and experience level are equal between or among Teachers, ranking of those Teachers shall be determined by the drawing of lots.

By September 30 of each school year, the superintendent will provide the Exclusive Representative with a list showing the seniority of each Teacher, her/his area of certification, and will, thereafter, promptly notify the Exclusive Representative of any changes in the list.

#### 7.5 Recall Procedure

A. Whenever there is a vacancy or anticipated vacancy in a bargaining unit position, laid-off Teachers who are certified and endorsed to perform the work in question will be recalled in order of seniority. No new Teachers shall be employed by the School District while there are Teachers on layoff unless none of the Teachers on layoff are certified and endorsed to fill the position in question.

B. If a laid-off Teacher has been recalled to a position other than that held immediately prior to layoff, the Teacher will remain eligible for recall in accordance with the provisions of this Article.

C. Notice of recall will be given by certified mail to the last address given to the Board of Trustees by a Teacher. A copy of the notice of recall will be given to the Exclusive Representative. If a Teacher fails to respond within ten (10) calendar days after receipt of the above notice or if the certified letter is returned to the School District after being sent to the last known address, the Teacher will be deemed to have refused the position offered.

A Teacher who is laid-off will remain on the recall list for eighteen (18) months after the effective date of layoff unless the Teacher:

1. Waives recall rights in writing;
2. Resigns;
3. Fails to accept recall to the position held immediately prior to layoff or to a substantially equivalent position; or
4. Fails to report to work in a position that he or she has accepted unless such employee is sick or injured. If a Teacher has secured temporary employment elsewhere, he or she will be allowed a reasonable amount of additional time before being required to report for work.

#### 7.6 Layoff Benefits

A. All positions of substitute Teacher shall be offered to Teachers on layoff, in rotating alphabetical order, before any other person is offered such a position.

B. In the event a Teacher is recalled during the 18 month recall period they shall be given the option of buying back all leave for which they were paid when they were initially laid off. In the event a Teacher exercise(s) their right to buy back the leave the Teacher shall at their option repay the District the cost of said leave at the same rate they were cashed out. The teacher shall have the option to pay back the leave over a period of up to twelve months. A Teacher may also elect not to buy back the leave and will start over accruing leave.

Tenure/Tenure Track status shall not be affected by layoff. For example, if a teacher has signed two consecutive contracts with the District and is subsequently laid off if they are recalled during the 18 month recall period and offered a contract it shall be considered their third contract towards tenure status.

## ARTICLE EIGHT

### WORK LOAD AND CONDITIONS

#### 8.1 Duty Year.

Full time Teachers shall perform Teacher duties as provided in this Agreement for one hundred eighty-seven (187) days as scheduled by the School District on the School District calendar.

#### 8.2 School District Calendar.

The School District calendar shall be a schedule of duty days established each year by the School District prior to May 1 for the succeeding school year. Upon timely request, the School District shall meet with the Exclusive Representative to prepare the calendar. The School District calendar shall be a part of the School District Policy and shall not be a part of this Agreement. A committee of the following membership shall be organized for the purposes of preparing the School District calendar for presentation to the school board for approval:

- A. The superintendent or designee;
- B. Two persons appointed by the Board of Trustees;
- C. Four members of the Exclusive Representative appointed by the representative president.

The Board may close school for one school day each school year because of an unforeseen emergency and teachers shall not be required to make up time lost. Subsequent time lost due to emergency closure shall be made up as determined by the Board.

#### 8.3 Class Size and Teacher Workload.

School District administration will determine class size and Teacher workload using "Standards for Accreditation of Montana Schools" as minimum standards. Teachers who are required to travel to perform duties at more than one School District building during the work day will not be required to perform more non-instructional duties (e.g. bus duty, playground supervision, etc.) than non-traveling Teachers. School District administration will strive to provide these traveling Teachers with adequate preparation time.

#### 8.4 Elementary Teacher Preparation Time.

The District shall provide full-time teachers with one preparation period per day for the purpose of class preparation or planning. The amount of preparation time shall be pro-rated for part-time teachers. Teachers may be assigned other duties during their preparation period only for immediate student need as determined by the administration.

#### 8.5 Teacher Basic Workday.

The Teacher work day will not exceed eight (8) consecutive hours including the lunch period, except that it will be extended for two (2) hours once each school year for the purpose of facilitating parent contact time (e.g. Open House, Back-To-School night; 3rd Qtr. Parent-Teacher Conference) at each school. The Teacher workday shall include not less than sixty (60) minutes in total time to be distributed before and after the student day. (Student Day shall be defined as per OPI as student contact time). Except for early dismissal due to professional development, the Teachers' work day ends at the close of the school day on Fridays and days preceding holidays or recesses.

8.6 Teacher Flexible Workday Schedules.

The School District may schedule classes before and/or after the normal student day. The Principal may assign a Teacher to teach such a class, but in no event shall the Teacher's workday exceed eight (8) hours, including the lunch period, nor result in a split shift for the Teacher. When making such an assignment, the principal shall first solicit the entire building faculty for a volunteer. If no one volunteers, then the principal has the right to assign a Teacher involuntarily, with Teachers who have current extracurricular duties assigned last.

Similarly, any Teacher who has reasons for desiring a workday schedule which begins or ends at times other than as is provided in Section 8.5 shall apply for same in writing to the principal, with a copy to the Exclusive Representative. The principal may in his/her sole discretion decide to grant or deny the request.

If the School District schedules any classes before or after the normal student day or the principal denies a Teacher's application for an altered workday schedule, then the affected Teacher(s) may request a meeting with the principal in the presence of the Exclusive Representative to discuss the changed workday schedule and/or the denied application.

8.7 Early Dismissal for Professional Conventions.

School will be dismissed at 1:00 p.m. Wednesday before state professional conventions in October. This will only be in effect if the primary MFPE convention is more than 150 miles from Polson.

8.8 Involuntary Classroom Move.

An Employee being involuntarily transferred to another school, grade level, another building or classroom will be given one (1) staff day at his/her professional development rate for moving and preparation prior to the arrival of students. District custodial assistance will be provided to complete the physical moving of instructional supplies/materials from classroom to classroom.

## ARTICLE NINE

### PAYROLL DEDUCTIONS

9.1 Polson Unit MFPE Dues.

Upon written authorization by a Teacher, the School District will deduct from the pay of each Teacher, in nine (9) equal monthly installments, the cost of dues to the Polson Unit MFPE and deliver these dues to the treasurer of the Exclusive Representative. (39-31-203, MCA) New authorizations received after September 15 of the current year will be deducted in equal installments over the remaining monthly payments of the nine-month period. The Union's continuing membership form will serve as the recognized authorization form.

9.2 Retirement Contributions.

The School District, on behalf of each Teacher, shall make contributions to the Teachers' retirement system of the state of Montana provided for in MCA § 19-20-102.

9.3 Social Security Contributions.

The School District, on behalf of each Teacher, shall make contributions to the federal social security system as required by federal law.

9.4 Pre-Tax Payroll Deductions and Deposits.

The School District shall make all pre-tax employee payroll deductions and deposits that are required by law.

The School District may, upon receiving written request and authorization from a Teacher, make other pre-tax employee payroll deductions and deposits on behalf of the Teacher. The Teacher shall make each written request and authorization on a form provided by the School District for that purpose. If the School District elects to make pre-tax deductions and deposits on behalf of a Teacher, then the School District shall deduct funds in the amount authorized from the Teacher's paycheck and deposit the funds on behalf of the Teacher to the entity designated by the Teacher. The Parties mutually understand and agree that the School District has the exclusive right to determine if it will accept any request and authorization submitted pursuant to this paragraph, and is under no obligation to make or continue to make any pre-tax deductions and deposits that are not required by law.

9.5 Post-Tax Payroll Deposits.

The School District shall, on behalf of a Teacher, deposit funds from a Teacher's post-tax pay each month to entities designated by the Teacher in amounts prescribed by the Teacher so long as: The Teacher submits a written request and authorization for such deposits to the District Clerk on a form provided by the School District for that purpose; and such deposits can be made by direct electronic means.

## ARTICLE TEN

### LEAVE

10.1 Annual Paid Leave.

Definition: Annual Paid Leave means all regularly employed Teachers shall earn Annual Paid Leave at the rate of thirteen (13) days per school year. These days may be used for personal business or illness. The intent of the "Annual Paid Leave" is:

- To provide Teachers with 13 days of paid leave while recognizing the importance of Teacher presence in classrooms and the District's calendar;
- To give Administrators the ability to manage the workforce in their buildings over the course of the school year and within the District's Calendar;
- To acknowledge Teachers as professionals who can make their own choice about how to distribute their Annual Paid Leave days;
- To assist Teachers in understanding that responsible use of Annual Paid Leave can be a benefit upon retirement.

Annual Paid Leave requires notification and approval of the building administrator and completion of the District's Certified Staff Leave Form prior to the absence. In the event of an emergency or sickness, the request form must be submitted immediately upon return to work. The Superintendent must approve requests involving four or more consecutive days.

Not more than 10 percent of the appropriate building may be on Annual Paid Leave - without principal or superintendent approval - at any one time the day before or following a school holiday or non-scheduled day. Requests shall be filled on a "first come, first served" basis.

Annual Paid Leave shall accrue on a proportionate basis to the Teacher's work year. Up to thirteen (13) Annual Paid Leave days may be added to a Teachers accumulated Sick Leave Days but will not exceed one hundred and twenty-five (125 days).

Leave shall first be deducted from the Annual Paid Leave days. Approved sick leave days that exceed the Annual Paid Leave shall be deducted from the accrued sick leave days credited to the Teacher.

Annual Paid Leave days that were used for medical purposes can be traded for a teacher's personal sick leave bank days through an appeal process with medical documentation with building administrator approval. The appeal must be submitted on or before April 1st of the current school year and be a maximum of two days.

#### 10.2 PEA Leave Bank.

The maximum number of days per year in the PEA leave bank shall be 100. This leave may be used to cover personal illness or illnesses of the immediate family. Each Teacher may individually donate days of sick leave from her/his accumulated sick leave to the PEA Leave Bank as directed in writing, signed by the Teacher donor. The Exclusive Representative will manage the PEA Leave Bank and inform the District Clerk when days are donated and when days are used.

#### 10.3 Bereavement.

Five (5) days of bereavement leave are given per year. Additional days for bereavement leave may be taken from sick leave for members of the immediate family.

Bereavement days do not accumulate.

#### 10.4 Civic, Judicial, and Quasi-Judicial Duty.

A Teacher called to appear for legal proceedings before any judicial or quasi-judicial or administrative tribunal, including but not limited to: jury duty, arbitration, mediation or fact-finding proceedings, shall not lose compensation for the performance of such obligation. The Teacher's daily salary rate will be continued while on such duty, however, the stipend paid by any court will be deposited at the School District business office. The Teacher may keep monies remitted by the court for expense or mileage allowance while performing such duty.

#### 10.5 Salary Deduction for Authorized Leave without Pay.

Any authorized leave of absence without pay will result in a reduction of 1/187 for each day or any portion thereof

#### 10.6 General Leaves of Absence.

A general leave of absence may be granted a tenured Teacher for reasons acceptable to the Board of Trustees for a period not to exceed one (1) year. A request for leave must be submitted to the superintendent on or before March 1 of the school year prior to the year in which the leave is requested and shall include the specific reason(s) for the request. Such leave will be granted without pay or benefits. The Teacher shall notify the district by March 1 of the leave year of his/her intent to return to the district. Failure to do so will result in an end of employment. Upon return to the district the Teacher will be assigned to a position for which he/she is qualified. Placement on the salary ladder will be the

same it would have been during the year of absence. However, Teachers participating in an approved exchange program will advance on the salary schedule and retain their same teaching position if it still exists.

A new employee hired to replace a Teacher on General Leave will be hired with the express understanding that she/he is replacing a regular Teacher temporarily on General Leave and will have no expectation of continued contracted employment beyond the term of his/her current contract as a replacement. Such a replacement employee may apply for any open position for which she/he is qualified without expectation of guaranteed hire. If subsequently hired for an open position, she/he will be placed on the salary schedule and seniority list with full recognition of his/her replacement experience with the District. Except as specifically provided herein, such replacement Teachers are fully covered by all the terms of this Master Agreement between the parties.

#### 10.7 Extended Maternity Leave.

A Teacher may request maternity leave without pay for purposes of postnatal childcare. Upon request the Teacher shall be granted leave for a period not to exceed one year but may be for a lesser period of time as agreed with the district as long as a certified teacher in the endorsed content area can be hired in their absence.

Upon return from maternity leave the Teacher shall be placed in a position for which the Teacher is certified and endorsed.

This leave shall be in addition to maternity leave benefits under paragraph one above and any applicable leave for family illness under Section 10.1 of this Agreement.

A new employee hired to replace a Teacher on Extended Maternity Leave will be hired with the express understanding that she/he is replacing a regular Teacher temporarily on Extended Maternity Leave and will have no expectation of continued contracted employment beyond the term of his/her current contract as a replacement. Such a replacement employee may apply for any open position for which she/he is qualified without expectation of guaranteed hire. If subsequently hired for an open position, she/he will be placed on the salary schedule and seniority list with full recognition of his/her replacement experience with the District. Except as specifically provided herein, such replacement Teachers are fully covered by all the terms of this Master Agreement between the parties.

#### 10.8 Sabbatical Leave.

A Teacher who has served seven (7) consecutive years in School District No. 23 is eligible for a Sabbatical Leave for up to one (1) year.

The purpose of the leave shall be such as to directly reflect on the classroom performance of the Teacher and prime consideration by the Board of Trustees in granting leave shall be the future benefits of the School District as a result of the leave.

Applicants for the Sabbatical must submit an application to the Superintendent by March 1 of the school year prior to the year of intended leave.

In any year that the Superintendent receives any Sabbatical applications, a committee shall be formed consisting of two trustees, four teachers, and two administrators, and the Superintendent or other administrator appointed by the Superintendent. The Committee shall convene before the April Board meeting to review each application and determine whether each application meets the requirements stated herein and complies with the requirements as stated in the rubric, which will be



available on the District Website. The committee will have sole power to decide how a decision is reached and such process and discussion shall remain private. The Trustees shall take action on approving an eligible sabbatical on or before the April regular Board meeting.

Pay Levels will be granted as normal and the Teacher will be paid at one-half the rate he/she would earn if continuing teaching duties. The Teacher upon return to the School District will be placed at the appropriate step on the Salary Ladder he/she would have been on if the leave had not been taken.

The number of Sabbatical leaves during any one school year shall be limited to one (1). The recipient of the leave shall enter into a contract with the School District in which he/she shall be obligated to reimburse the School District for the gross amount of the salary paid while on leave should he/she elect through his/her own choice to not return to or resign from the District within five (5) years of the conclusion of the leave. However, if the Teacher leaves the district after three (3) years but before five (5) years of having taken a sabbatical, and the leave is due to unforeseen circumstances, then the Teacher may request to negotiate a lesser reimbursement with the Board of Trustees. The employee on Sabbatical shall retain all accumulated leave and tenure privileges.

The recipient shall notify the district by March 1 of the sabbatical year that the recipient intends to return to the District the following year after the conclusion of the awarded sabbatical.

A new employee hired to replace a Teacher on Sabbatical Leave will be hired with the express understanding that she/he is replacing a regular Teacher temporarily on Sabbatical Leave and will have no expectation of continued contracted employment beyond the term of his/her current contract as a replacement. Such a replacement employee may apply for any open position for which he/she is qualified without expectation of guaranteed hire. If subsequently hired for an open position, she/he will be placed on the Salary Ladder and seniority list with full recognition of his/her replacement experience with the District. Except as specifically provided herein, such replacement Teachers are fully covered by all the terms of this Master Agreement between the parties.

#### 10.9 Professional Leave.

Professional staff members may apply for leave to attend professional conferences, workshops, visitations to schools, comprehensive exams, defense of thesis or dissertation, etc. Prior approval must be given by both the principal and the superintendent. Expenses for travel, lodging, and registration fees may be reimbursed at the discretion of the superintendent.

Leave for participation in appropriate public service activities which will benefit the school and the community may be granted at no cost to the district except for substitute costs as may be approved by the superintendent.

A Teacher approved to attend conferences or meetings shall be granted sufficient leave time without loss of compensation. The cost of the substitute Teacher (if any) shall be deemed an appropriate expense of the district.

## **ARTICLE ELEVEN**

### DURATION

**11.1 Compliance of Individual Contract.**

Any contract between the Board of Trustees and an individual Teacher, heretofore or hereafter executed, shall be subject to and consistent with the terms and conditions of this Agreement. If an individual contract contains any language inconsistent with this Agreement, during its duration this Agreement shall be controlling.

**11.2 Term of Agreement.**

This Agreement shall be effective as of July 1, 2023 and shall continue in effect until June 30, 2025.

**11.3 Changes in Agreement.**

For the term of this Agreement, no change shall be made in any provision of this Agreement or in any other working condition that is a mandatory subject of bargaining, unless by mutual consent of the parties hereto.

**11.4 Savings / Severability.**

If any provision of this Agreement or the application of any such provision under any circumstances is held contrary to law, a Board of Trustees/Exclusive Representative meeting, at the request of either party, shall commence within ten (10) working days in order to alter said provision. Such action shall not affect any other provision of this Agreement or the application of any provision thereof.

**11.5 Renewal and Reopening.**

This agreement will be automatically renewed and continue in full force and effect from year to year unless either party gives notice to the other party on or before March 1, 2025 or the anniversary date thereof of the party's desire to negotiate a new agreement.

## **ARTICLE TWELVE**

### COMPENSATION

**12.1 Salary Schedule.**

The teacher Salary Schedule shall be attached as an appendix to this agreement.

The School District reserves the right to withhold the payment of a Teacher's salary (MCA 20-4-202) until such time the Teacher has met all applicable requirements of the School District and the State of Montana.

Each Teacher is individually responsible for continuing her/his professional training by earning approved college credits in keeping with the certification requirements of the Montana Office of Public Instruction and the State Board of Public Education.

\$1501 shall be added each year to teachers with a Master's Degree.

## 12.2 Health Insurance.

The School District will participate in an employee group health insurance plan, a paid benefit, that makes health insurance coverage available on a voluntary basis to each Teacher. For the 2023-2025 school years the School District shall contribute funds in the amount of \$567.00 per month to the provider of the health insurance plan on behalf of each Teacher who elects to participate and who is employed at least .75 full time equivalent. The School District agrees to contribute funds on behalf of each Teacher who elects to participate and who is employed at less than .75 full time equivalent but equal to or more than .5 full time equivalent in an amount prorated to be equivalent with the Teacher's full-time equivalency. Any Teacher who works less than .5 full-time equivalent will not be eligible for School District contributions on her/his behalf.

If the School District contribution is in excess of an individual Teacher's health insurance premium, then the excess amount will be placed each month either into a Flex account in the name of that Teacher, Health Care Savings Plan or into that Teacher's post-employment health plan (VEBA). The Teacher must be a participant in the School District's employee group health insurance plan in order to receive any School District contribution.

An insurance committee will be organized and composed of the following membership:

- The superintendent or designee.
- Two (2) persons designated by the Board of Trustees;
- Three (3) members of the Exclusive Representative appointed by the representative president; and
- Two (2) members of the Polson Classified Education Association.

The insurance committee will:

- A. Monitor School District health insurance policy.
- B. Recommend changes in the health insurance policy to the School District. Such recommendations will only be made on behalf of the insurance committee as a whole when such recommendations are supported by a majority vote of all members of the insurance committee. The Parties agree that this protocol for adopting and communicating such recommendations from the insurance committee as a whole shall not control or restrict in any way the right of the superintendent or a person designated as a member of the insurance committee by the Board of Trustees to communicate her/his individual recommendations regarding health insurance policy directly to the Board of Trustees.

## 12.3 Post Employment Health Plan.

All newly hired employees will have a one-time option for a district contribution of \$10.00 per month to either VEBA or HSA.

## 12.4 Sick Leave Buy Back.

The School District shall compensate a Teacher for her/his sick leave accumulated in excess of one hundred, twenty-five (125) days as of the last day of the school year. The School District may, if the School District and a Teacher agree, compensate a Teacher for her/his sick leave accumulated in excess of forty (40) days as of the last day of the school year. Compensation paid pursuant to this Section 12.4 shall be calculated at the rate of 0.0028 x the annual base salary established pursuant to Section 12.1 for each sick leave day and shall be made in the form of a cash payment to the Teacher. To be eligible for compensation pursuant to this Section 12.4, for accumulated sick leave days in excess of forty (40) days but less than one hundred twenty-five (125) days, a Teacher must submit a fully executed and signed Request for Sick Leave Buy Back (form attached hereto as Appendix F) no later than May 1 of the current school year. Upon payment of compensation pursuant to this Section 12.4, the Teacher's accumulated

sick leave balance shall be reduced by an amount equal to the number of days paid. In no event shall compensation be paid more than once for any single accumulated sick leave day. Payment made pursuant to this Section 12.4 shall be administered by the School District with equal treatment for all applicant Teachers

#### 12.5 Sick Leave Buy Out.

The School District shall, upon receiving notice of a Teacher's intent to exit the School District at the end of the current contract year, compensate the exiting Teacher for some or all of her/his accumulated sick leave. Compensation paid pursuant to this Section 12.5 shall be calculated at the rate of  $0.0036 \times$  annual base salary established pursuant to Section 12.1 for each accumulated sick leave day and shall be made in the form of a cash payment to the Teacher (this compensation is not eligible as TRS termination pay). To be eligible for compensation pursuant to this Section 12.5, a Teacher must submit a fully executed and signed Request for Sick Leave Buy Out (form attached hereto as Appendix G) no later than May 1 of the current school year. If due to extenuating circumstances a Teacher severs employment with the District after the final day of the school year, any unused sick leave will be compensated as stated in this Section 12.5.

Compensation pursuant to this Section 12.5 shall be paid prior to the end of the school year. Upon payment of compensation pursuant to this Section 12.5, the Teacher's accumulated sick leave balance shall be reduced by an amount equal to with the number of days paid. At the end of the school year an existing Teacher may be compensated for any remaining accumulated sick leave days pursuant to Section 12.6. In no event however, shall compensation be paid more than once pursuant to this contract for any single accumulated sick leave day.

#### 12.6 Termination Pay.

The School District shall, upon retirement of a Teacher who is eligible for retirement with TRS, compensate the retiring Teacher for the balance of her/his accumulated sick leave. Compensation paid pursuant to this Section 12.6 shall be calculated at the rate of  $.0020 \times$  annual base salary established pursuant to Section 12.1 for each accumulated sick leave day, shall be made in the form of a contribution on behalf of the Teacher to TRS, and shall be considered termination pay. To be eligible for compensation pursuant to this Section 12.6, a Teacher must submit an irrevocable written notice of intent to retire to the School District no later than March 1 of the current school year. In no event shall the School District compensate a Teacher for a sick leave day pursuant to this Section 12.6 when the School District has previously paid compensation for that same accumulated sick leave day pursuant to either Section 12.4 or Section 12.5.

#### 12.7 Severance Pay.

The School District shall, upon termination of employment of a Teacher, who has successfully performed twelve (12) continuous years of service with the School District as a Teacher, issue severance pay to the exiting/retiring Teacher at the rate of  $0.2019 \times$  the annual base salary. Severance pay issued pursuant to this Section 12.7 will, at the discretion of the School District, be paid after July 1 from the ensuing school year budget. However, the School District reserves the right to pay any or all severance pay from the current school year budget.

#### 12.8 Mileage Allowance.

The School District shall reimburse a Teacher who is required and authorized in the course of her/his employment to operate her/his personal automobile at mileage rates stipulated by the State of Montana.

#### 12.9 Lunch Duty.

The School District will provide a school lunch during the term of lunchroom duty, to each Teacher for each day she/he performs a lunchroom duty.

12.10 Hourly Rate Stipends

The School District shall pay a Teacher who, at the request of the School District and outside of regular school pay, trains other School District employees, engages in curriculum or professional development, engages in class preparation and class instruction, teaches certified drivers' education, or teaches summer band (not to exceed five hours per day for thirty days or the equivalent thereof) for PMS and PHS. The rate of pay for such Teacher duties shall be base X 0.00076.

12.11 Professional Development Reimbursement.

The School District shall reimburse each Teacher, who successfully completes an academic class through an accredited university or college, for the cost of tuition and fees for such class upon the Teacher submitting proof of award of credit and a receipt for cost of tuition and fees. The amount of reimbursement is limited to \$1,000 per Teacher per year. To be eligible for reimbursement, a Teacher must provide written notice to the School District of intent to seek professional development reimbursement no later than May 1<sup>st</sup> of the contract year in which the reimbursement will be sought, and submit proof of credit and receipt for costs within 90 days of the end of the same contract year. If official transcripts are not available within 90 days, unofficial transcripts can be used for proof of credit.

12.12 Extra-Duty Stipends

Extra-Duty stipends shall be determined from the Extra-Duty Stipend Schedule located in the Extra-Duty/Coaches Handbook and shall be board approved annually.


The Extra-Duty Stipend Schedule base value used to determine each stipend shall be equivalent to the base salary on the Certified Salary Schedule (Appendix C).

An Extra-Duty Committee shall be organized and composed of the following membership: The superintendent or designee; two (2) persons designated by the Board of Trustees; and, three (3) members of the Exclusive Representative appointed by the representative president."

The Extra-Duty Committee will oversee the descriptions and expectations of extra-duty activities, number of positions, and stipends, and recommend changes to the School District as necessary. Such recommendations will only be made on behalf of the extra-duty committee as a whole when such recommendations are supported by a majority vote of all members of the extra-duty committee. The Parties agree that this protocol for adopting and communicating such recommendations from the extra-duty committee as a whole shall not control or restrict in any way the right of the superintendent (or designee) to communicate his/her individual recommendations regarding extra-duty policy directly to the Board of Trustees.

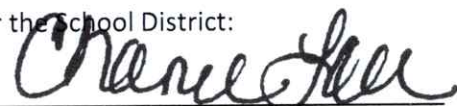
IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties have executed this Agreement as follows:

For the Exclusive Representative:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
President  
Polson Unit MFPE  
Polson, MT 59860

Dated this 15 day of January, 2024

For the School District:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Chairman of the Board of Trustees  
School District No. 23  
Polson, MT 59860

Dated this 15<sup>th</sup> day of January, 2024

APPENDIX A

STANDARD FORM INDIVIDUAL TEACHER CONTRACT

Teacher Contract

School District No. 23 Polson, Lake County, Montana

THIS AGREEMENT, entered into this [ DATE] between School District No.23, Lake County, Polson, Montana, Party of the First Part, hereinafter referred to as the District, [TEACHER NAME] Party of the Second Part, a legally qualified and certified Teacher under the School Laws and Regulations of Montana (hereinafter referred to as the Teacher).

WITNESSETH: That the said Teacher agrees to teach the subjects and grades and perform the duties as assigned by the Superintendent of Schools and/or Principal in a faithful and efficient manner for the 2023-24 school year, to keep legally qualified and to observe in all things the Policies, Rules, and Regulations of the Polson School District, and the School Laws of the State of Montana.

[SALARY SCHEDULE PLACEMENT] [FTE] [Amount]

IN CONSIDERATION WHEREOF, School District No. 23 agrees to pay said Teacher the sum of [AMOUNT] including any special provisions stated above, for the period of this contract for services rendered, less all deductions as required by law, and requested by the Teacher. The salary shall be paid in twelve (12) equal payments beginning on September 20th and continuing on the 20th of each month with the final two payments on the 30th of June until the total contract shall be paid.

Payroll will be issued on the 20th day of each month. If the 20th falls on a weekend or school holiday, payroll will be issued on the day prior to the weekend or holiday.

IT IS UNDERSTOOD, that the salary stated above, based on the Negotiated Teacher's Salary Schedule currently adopted by the Board of Trustees, shall be considered as part of this Agreement, and the Teacher signing this Agreement assents to each provision of the said school salary schedule and other provisions as outlined in the Master Agreement.

This contract must be returned to the School District, properly signed by the Teacher, within twenty (20) days of its date of issuance, or the contract will be of no force and effect and said offer of the School District is withdrawn.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, we have hereunto subscribed our names on the dates indicated under our respective signatures.

Teacher \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Board of Trustees, School District No. 23, Lake County, Montana  
By:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chairman of the Board of Trustees

Attest:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Clerk of the Board of Trustees

Signed by the Chairman and Clerk on this \_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_



LEVEL II

1. Date Received by Superintendent or Designee \_\_\_\_\_
2. Decision of Superintendent or Designee: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Superintendent of Designee

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

3. Grievant's Response

\_\_\_\_\_ I accept the above decision

\_\_\_\_\_ I hereby refer the above decision to the next Level of the Grievance Procedure

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Aggrieved

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

LEVEL III

1. Date submitted to the Board of Trustees \_\_\_\_\_
2. Date heard by the Board of Trustees \_\_\_\_\_
3. Action of the Board of Trustees: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Grievant's Response:

\_\_\_\_\_ I accept the above decision

\_\_\_\_\_ I hereby refer the above decision to the next Level of Grievance Procedure

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Aggrieved

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

=====

LEVEL IV

1. Date Referred to the Board of Personnel Appeals \_\_\_\_\_
2. Referred by \_\_\_\_\_
3. Arbitrator Selected \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature: Association

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Action of the Arbitrator:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Arbitrator

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

(A letter from the Arbitrator can be attached in place of the report of the Arbitrator in Level IV).



APPENDIX C  
Salary Matrix

\$43,212		<h1>Polson School District</h1>				
1.00 \$43,212						
		<h2>Certified Salary Schedule - (2.5%) 2023-2024</h2>				
STEPS	BA	BA+15	BA+30	MA	MA+15	MA+30
0	\$43,212	\$44,707	\$46,203	\$47,698	\$49,193	\$50,689
1	\$44,707	\$46,203	\$47,698	\$49,193	\$50,689	\$52,184
2	\$46,203	\$47,698	\$49,193	\$50,689	\$52,184	\$53,679
3	\$47,698	\$49,193	\$50,689	\$52,184	\$53,679	\$55,175
4	\$49,193	\$50,689	\$52,184	\$53,679	\$55,175	\$56,670
5	\$50,689	\$52,184	\$53,679	\$55,175	\$56,670	\$58,166
6	\$52,184	\$53,679	\$55,175	\$56,670	\$58,166	\$59,661
7	\$53,679	\$55,175	\$56,670	\$58,166	\$59,661	\$61,156
8	\$55,175	\$56,670	\$58,166	\$59,661	\$61,156	\$62,652
9	\$56,670	\$58,166	\$59,661	\$61,156	\$62,652	\$64,147
10	\$58,166	\$59,661	\$61,156	\$62,652	\$64,147	\$65,642
11	\$59,661	\$61,156	\$62,652	\$64,147	\$65,642	\$67,138
12	\$61,156	\$62,652	\$64,147	\$65,642	\$67,138	\$68,633
13	\$62,652	\$64,147	\$65,642	\$67,138	\$68,633	\$70,128
14	\$64,147	\$65,642	\$67,138	\$68,633	\$70,128	\$71,624
15	\$65,642	\$67,138	\$68,633	\$70,128	\$71,624	\$73,119
16	\$67,138	\$68,633	\$70,128	\$71,624	\$73,119	\$74,614
17	\$68,633	\$70,128	\$71,624	\$73,119	\$74,614	\$76,110
18	\$70,128	\$71,624	\$73,119	\$74,614	\$76,110	\$77,605
19	\$71,624	\$73,119	\$74,614	\$76,110	\$77,605	\$79,100
20	\$73,119	\$74,614	\$76,110	\$77,605	\$79,100	\$80,596
21	\$74,614	\$76,110	\$77,605	\$79,100	\$80,596	\$82,091
22	\$76,110	\$77,605	\$79,100	\$80,596	\$82,091	
23	\$77,605	\$79,100	\$80,596	\$82,091		
24	\$79,100	\$80,596	\$82,091			
25	\$80,596	\$82,091				
26	\$82,091					

<b>\$44,508</b>	<b>Polson School District</b>					
1.00	<b>Certified Salary Schedule - (3%) 2024-2025</b>					
<b>\$44,508</b>						
<b>STEPS</b>	<b>BA</b>	<b>BA+15</b>	<b>BA+30</b>	<b>MA</b>	<b>MA+15</b>	<b>MA+30</b>
0	\$44,508	\$46,048	\$47,588	\$49,129	\$50,669	\$52,209
1	\$46,048	\$47,588	\$49,129	\$50,669	\$52,209	\$53,749
2	\$47,588	\$49,129	\$50,669	\$52,209	\$53,749	\$55,289
3	\$49,129	\$50,669	\$52,209	\$53,749	\$55,289	\$56,830
4	\$50,669	\$52,209	\$53,749	\$55,289	\$56,830	\$58,370
5	\$52,209	\$53,749	\$55,289	\$56,830	\$58,370	\$59,910
6	\$53,749	\$55,289	\$56,830	\$58,370	\$59,910	\$61,450
7	\$55,289	\$56,830	\$58,370	\$59,910	\$61,450	\$62,990
8	<b>\$56,830</b>	\$58,370	\$59,910	\$61,450	\$62,990	\$64,531
9	\$58,370	\$59,910	\$61,450	\$62,990	\$64,531	\$66,071
10	\$59,910	<b>\$61,450</b>	\$62,990	\$64,531	\$66,071	\$67,611
11	\$61,450	\$62,990	\$64,531	\$66,071	\$67,611	\$69,151
12	\$62,990	\$64,531	<b>\$66,071</b>	\$67,611	\$69,151	\$70,691
13	\$64,531	\$66,071	\$67,611	\$69,151	\$70,691	\$72,232
14	\$66,071	\$67,611	\$69,151	\$70,691	\$72,232	\$73,772
15	\$67,611	\$69,151	\$70,691	<b>\$72,232</b>	\$73,772	\$75,312
16	\$69,151	\$70,691	\$72,232	\$73,772	\$75,312	\$76,852
17	\$70,691	\$72,232	\$73,772	\$75,312	\$76,852	\$78,392
18	\$72,232	\$73,772	\$75,312	\$76,852	<b>\$78,392</b>	\$79,933
19	\$73,772	\$75,312	\$76,852	\$78,392	\$79,933	\$81,473
20	\$75,312	\$76,852	\$78,392	\$79,933	\$81,473	\$83,013
21	\$76,852	\$78,392	\$79,933	\$81,473	\$83,013	<b>\$84,553</b>
22	\$78,392	\$79,933	\$81,473	\$83,013	<b>\$84,553</b>	
23	\$79,933	\$81,473	\$83,013	<b>\$84,553</b>		
24	\$81,473	\$83,013	<b>\$84,553</b>			
25	\$83,013	<b>\$84,553</b>				
26	<b>\$84,553</b>					

**APPENDIX E**  
Master's Degree Intent

POLSON SCHOOL DISTRICT #23

**20\_\_ – 20\_\_ Master's Degree Intent**

In an effort to assist the negotiations and budgeting process, we are asking those of you who are intending on obtaining a Master's Degree to earn an additional \$1501 per to complete this intent form.

I intend to move into another lane on the salary schedule before the beginning of the 20\_\_ - 20\_\_ school year.

Teacher's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for your assistance.

- As per Appendix H in the Master Agreement, this form must be submitted no later than April 1 of the current school year

**APPENDIX F**

REQUEST FOR SICK LEAVE BUY BACK

**Pursuant to Section 12.4**

I hereby notify the School District that I wish to be compensated for \_\_\_\_\_ days of my accumulated sick leave in excess of 40 days as of the last day of the current school year. I further understand the payment shall be a cash payment made directly to me.

I understand this notification must be made to the District Clerk on or before May 1 of the current school year. I further understand application and payment administered by the District shall be made with equal treatment for all applicant Teachers.

Upon payment of this compensation pursuant to section 12.4 of the Collective Bargaining Agreement, my sick leave balance shall be reduced by an amount equal to the number of days paid.

Teacher's Signature/Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*FOR BUSINESS OFFICE USE ONLY:*

*DAYS REQUESTED* \_\_\_\_\_

*DAYS PAID* \_\_\_\_\_

*NEW BALANCE* \_\_\_\_\_

*AMOUNT PAID* \_\_\_\_\_

*EFFECTIVE DATE* \_\_\_\_\_

**APPENDIX G**

REQUEST FOR SICK LEAVE BUY OUT

**Pursuant to Section 12.5**

This is to notify the School District that I shall be terminating my employment with the School District at the end of the current contract year and am exercising my right under Section 12.5 of the Collective Bargaining Agreement to buy out \_\_\_\_\_ accumulated sick leave days (not to exceed 125 days). I understand this notification must be made to the District Clerk on or before May 1 of the current school year. I further understand this buy out shall occur prior to the end of the current school year.

Upon payment of this compensation pursuant to Section 12.5 of this collective bargaining agreement, my sick leave balance shall be reduced in an amount equal to the number of days paid.

Teacher's Signature/Date: \_\_\_\_\_

I choose the following option for payment of my sick leave buy-out:

- Cash payment made directly to the employee.
- Payment to a tax-deferred program.

## Appendix H

### CRITERIA FOR SALARY SCHEDULE PLACEMENT

- All new hires will be capped according to the colored portion of the matrix.
- All employees hired before the 2023-2024 school year will be moved from the current ladder (2023-2024 placement) into the column that matches their level of education using all earned degrees and approved credits. For correct column placement, credits need to be verified by September 1, 2023. Their current salary on the ladder (2023-2024) will be used to determine the appropriate step onto which they will be placed. Placement will first be made onto a matrix showing a 0% raise then that placement will be transferred to the new matrix with a 2.5% raise.
- All employees hired before the 2023-2024 school year will be allowed to move down their column for three years. This may include movement into or within the gray area. Any employee positioned at a step in the gray area at the beginning of the 2026-2027 school year will be capped at that step unless they move horizontally by earning additional credits and/or an MA degree and enter the colored portion of the matrix.

#### **Masters Stipend:**

\$1501 added per year for a Master's Degree

#### **Previous Experience:**

Up to five years of previous experience in approved schools will be granted for current salary schedule placement.

#### **Column Movement:**

Column advancement will be restricted to no more than two (2) columns advancement per year.

#### **Qualifying Semester Credits:**

In order to advance from an educational placement an educator must have a bachelor's degree and hold a valid Montana Teaching certificate with an endorsement in the assigned teaching field. Movement requires approved credits with a grade of "B" or better. Credits must be in an assigned teaching field or approved field by the district. These must be approved by the superintendent and submitted in writing to the business manager by March 1st of each year. Any approved credits earned after a BA will be applied to placement in the BA+15 and BA+30 columns.

- An MA degree from an accredited college or university is required for placement in the MA column.
- In addition to an MA degree, approved graduate-level credits (400-level and above, or superintendent-approved) are required for placement in the MA+15 and MA+30 columns.

#### For the purpose of the 2023-2024 matrix transition:

- For employees hired before the 2023-2024 school year, a total of 30 approved credits (regular or graduate-level) must first be applied to placement in the MA column. Any remaining graduate-level credits earned prior to attainment of an MA may then be applied to placement in the MA+15 or MA+30 columns.
- For employees hired after July 1, 2023, all credits used for placement in the MA+15 and MA+30 columns must be obtained after earning an MA degree.

#### **Approved Master's Degree:**

Must be in the major teaching assignment or contain 20 semester hours graduate credits in an assigned teaching field with a grade of "B" or better. These must be approved by the superintendent and submitted in writing to the business manager by March 1st of each year. (Note: Any master's program that was started prior to the 2023-2024 school year will be automatically approved.)

**Teacher Request for Approval of Credits for Salary Advancement**  
**FORM TO BE UPDATED**

**Employee Information:**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Request \_\_\_\_\_  
Current Teaching Assignment \_\_\_\_\_  
Number of Years in District \_\_\_\_\_ Hire Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Salary Schedule Placement at Hire: \_\_\_\_\_  
Salary Schedule Current Placement: \_\_\_\_\_

**Credit Information:**

Class Title \_\_\_\_\_  
Class Number \_\_\_\_\_ Start Date \_\_\_\_\_ End Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Class Dates \_\_\_\_\_ Class Times \_\_\_\_\_  
Instructor Name \_\_\_\_\_ College or University \_\_\_\_\_  
# of hours in Class \_\_\_\_\_ # of Credits requested: \_\_\_\_\_ Semester \_\_\_\_\_ Quarter \_\_\_\_\_

How is this class designed to enhance your ability to plan and implement your curriculum to fit the needs of the district? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Type of Approval Requested:**

A) College Credit for movement on salary schedule - this credit if approved will apply towards my movement From \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_  
B) Other ... Describe and Explain:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Are there any special circumstances in this request? (Please write your explanation on the reverse side of this page or attachment)

Materials on reverse side or attached: \_\_\_ yes \_\_\_ no  
Is your credentials file and review sheet in the personnel office up to date? \_\_\_ yes \_\_\_ no  
Are additional information sheets attached? \_\_\_ yes \_\_\_ no  
Teacher signature verifying the above and attached materials is correct:  
\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Administrative Determination:**

Principal Determination:  
Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Principal's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Superintendent's Determination:

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Superintendent's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Check if additional Administrative comments or materials are attached: \_\_\_ yes

**Note: Incomplete request forms will be returned.**



**2022-2023 Former Salary Ladder**

<b>\$42,158</b>	<u>Rung</u>	<u>Salary</u>
	21	<b>80,089</b>
	20	<b>78,421</b>
	19	<b>75,611</b>
	18	<b>73,942</b>
	17	<b>72,274</b>
	16	<b>70,605</b>
	15	<b>68,938</b>
	14.5*	<b>68,449</b>
	14	<b>66,128</b>
	13	<b>64,460</b>
	12	<b>62,791</b>
	11	<b>61,123</b>
	10	<b>59,457</b>
	9	<b>56,645</b>
	8	<b>54,976</b>
	7	<b>53,308</b>
	6	<b>51,641</b>
	5	<b>49,974</b>
	4	<b>47,162</b>
	3	<b>45,493</b>
	2	<b>43,827</b>
	1	<b>42,158</b>

<b>\$42,158</b>		<b>Polson School District - 0%</b>				
1.00						
<b>\$42,158</b>		<b>Placement Matrix - 2023-2024</b>				
<b>STEPS</b>	<b>BA</b>	<b>BA+15</b>	<b>BA+30</b>	<b>MA</b>	<b>MA+15</b>	<b>MA+30</b>
0	\$42,158	\$43,617	\$45,076	\$46,535	\$47,994	\$49,452
1	\$43,617	\$45,076	\$46,535	\$47,994	\$49,452	\$50,911
2	\$45,076	\$46,535	\$47,994	\$49,452	\$50,911	\$52,370
3	\$46,535	\$47,994	\$49,452	\$50,911	\$52,370	\$53,829
4	\$47,994	\$49,452	\$50,911	\$52,370	\$53,829	\$55,288
5	\$49,452	\$50,911	\$52,370	\$53,829	\$55,288	\$56,747
6	\$50,911	\$52,370	\$53,829	\$55,288	\$56,747	\$58,206
7	\$52,370	\$53,829	\$55,288	\$56,747	\$58,206	\$59,665
8	\$53,829	\$55,288	\$56,747	\$58,206	\$59,665	\$61,123
9	\$55,288	\$56,747	\$58,206	\$59,665	\$61,123	\$62,582
10	\$56,747	\$58,206	\$59,665	\$61,123	\$62,582	\$64,041
11	\$58,206	\$59,665	\$61,123	\$62,582	\$64,041	\$65,500
12	\$59,665	\$61,123	\$62,582	\$64,041	\$65,500	\$66,959
13	\$61,123	\$62,582	\$64,041	\$65,500	\$66,959	\$68,418
14	\$62,582	\$64,041	\$65,500	\$66,959	\$68,418	\$69,877
15	\$64,041	\$65,500	\$66,959	\$68,418	\$69,877	\$71,336
16	\$65,500	\$66,959	\$68,418	\$69,877	\$71,336	\$72,794
17	\$66,959	\$68,418	\$69,877	\$71,336	\$72,794	\$74,253
18	\$68,418	\$69,877	\$71,336	\$72,794	\$74,253	\$75,712
19	\$69,877	\$71,336	\$72,794	\$74,253	\$75,712	\$77,171
20	\$71,336	\$72,794	\$74,253	\$75,712	\$77,171	\$78,630
21	\$72,794	\$74,253	\$75,712	\$77,171	\$78,630	\$80,089
22	\$74,253	\$75,712	\$77,171	\$78,630	\$80,089	
23	\$75,712	\$77,171	\$78,630	\$80,089		
24	\$77,171	\$78,630	\$80,089			
25	\$78,630	\$80,089				
26	\$80,089					