



# 2025 STRATEGIC PLANNING SUMMARY

September 2025

*Prepared for*

## THE MONTANA TEACHERS' RETIREMENT SYSTEM

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*Please see pages 14 – 15 for a glossary of terms and a guide to acronyms relevant to the summary.*

## Introduction

The Montana Teachers' Retirement System (TRS) Board met on August 1st, 2025, to evaluate and update the agency's strategic plan.

The Board assessed and confirmed the TRS mission, vision, and guiding principles.

The planning session included review of previous strategic planning efforts, evaluation of progress on strategic goals and objectives, and discussion of state legislation. The Board considered survey responses and input from members, affiliates, staff, and leadership. The Board updated the agency operational and environmental assessment and established strategic goals and objectives for 2025 – 2027.

The following participants attended the 2025 strategic planning meeting:

- Kari Elliott Board Chair (active member)
- Daniel Chamberlin Vice Chair (public member)
- Dee Brown Board Member (retired member)
- Elliott Crump Board Member (active member)
- Daniel Trost Board Member (public member)
- Brian Youngren Board Member (active member)
- Shawn Graham Executive Director
- Tammy Rau Deputy Executive Director
- Nolan Brilz Accounting/Fiscal Manager
- Darla Fitzpatrick Communications Manager
- Lexi Newcomer Communications Specialist
- John Noble Information Technology Manager
- Jim Malizia Chief Legal Counsel
- Marilyn Hamer Executive Director, Montana Retired Educators Association
- Jim Kerins Communication & Management Services, LLC, Facilitator

## Background

The TRS Board invests in an established and ongoing process of identifying goals and objectives. Strategic planning efforts and achievements include:

Period	Activity	Achievements
2009	Initial strategic planning	Completed an operational and environmental assessment, defined the mission statement and guiding principles, and established goals and objectives.

<b>Period</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Achievements</b>
2010 – 2013	Plan implementation	Implemented outreach program, evaluated system design alternatives to ensure long-term system stability, hired an Executive Director, and developed staffing plans.
2014	Strategic plan update	Updated the operational and environmental assessment, affirmed the mission and guiding principles, developed a vision statement, and updated goals and objectives.
2015 – 2016	Plan implementation	Implemented Governmental Accounting Standards Board requirements and a disaster recovery and business resumption plan, improved workplace efficiency, and developed information systems including M-Trust.
2017	Strategic planning	Created new overarching goals including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain an actuarially sound qualified retirement plan.</li> <li>• Sustain a high-performance workforce through staff and Board development, innovative leadership and management strategies, and expanded organizational capacity.</li> <li>• Expand system communication efforts to increase member and employer knowledge and involvement, to educate stakeholders, and to foster support.</li> </ul>
2017 – 2019	Plan implementation	Transitioned to new facility and improved operations, workflow, services, outreach, customer service, and recordkeeping.
2019	Strategic planning	Affirmed the previously established operational and environmental assessment and goals and developed 2019 - 2021 objectives.
2019 – 2021	Plan implementation	Completed Risk Report and tax qualification review, continued M-Trust enhancement, implemented online member services, sold former TRS building, implemented clarifying legislation, and expanded member outreach and education.
2021	Strategic planning	Considered progress and discussed federal regulatory issues, potential actuarial changes, and recent state legislation to develop 2021 – 2023 strategic objectives.
2021 – 2023	Plan implementation	Participated in legislative pension study, completed tax qualification review and experience study, completed online withdrawal application, initiated online member services, increased external communication, continued member surveys and promotion of online services.
2023	Strategic planning	Considered regulatory and actuarial practice changes; state legislation; legislative initiatives; stakeholder and member input; communication, outreach, and documentation needs; online member service initiatives; and other contemporary issues.

Period	Activity	Achievements
2021 – 2023	Plan implementation	Participated in legislative pension study, enhanced computer systems and online functionality, developed and identified needs for procedural documentation, expanded outreach and networking, maintained pay plan, succession planning, etc.
2025	Strategic planning	Considered legislative updates; stakeholder and member input; communication, outreach, and documentation needs; online member service initiatives and accessibility requirements; potential cost saving initiatives (e.g., electronic newsletter) and other opportunities to develop the summary and objectives documented herein.

## Mission, Vision, Guiding Principles

The Board affirmed the following Mission, Vision, and Guiding principles:

*Mission*

Our mission is to promote long-term financial security for our members while proactively maintaining the stability of the system.

*Vision*

The Montana Teachers' Retirement System (TRS) is the trusted partner for retirement services and security. TRS strives to earn the respect of our members, the public education community, and citizens of Montana. We accomplish this by communicating effectively to our constituents, being responsive to their needs, and employing an effective and empowered professional staff and board well-versed in state and national issues impacting our members.

*Guiding Principles*

To earn the respect and trust of our members, we adhere to the following values:

- Adherence to ethical standards
- Honesty, integrity, and impartiality
- Dignity, respect, and mutual support
- Service excellence

## Operational and Environmental Assessment

The Board reviewed and updated the 2023 Operational and Environmental Assessment by identifying and considering internal strengths and challenges and external opportunities and challenges.

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## Internal Strengths

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Qualities enabling TRS to address issues and opportunities in a determined and effective way include:

### *Staff*

- Employees are respected, experienced, dedicated, and knowledgeable.
- Staff retention rates are good due to the work environment, workforce development, and pay rates.
- Management and staff quickly adapt to improve capacity and service.
- TRS provides cross-training within departments and positions are interrelated resulting in a strong understanding of others' roles within the organization.
- Staff focus on members and provide prompt and courteous customer service.

### *Culture*

- The Board and staff demonstrate integrity and willingness to make tough decisions in the best interest of the system and are open to innovative ideas.
- Leadership is effective and values succession planning.
- Staff enjoy working with teachers and receive positive feedback.
- Board members bring strong institutional knowledge and openness to new ideas.
- The Board and staff have good rapport and close alignment. The Board supports and respects staff.

### *Communication*

- TRS maintains excellent internal communication and effectively addresses problems.

### *Training*

- TRS provides effective training for employers at Montana Association of School Business Officials (MASBO) events and by request.
- TRS provides member training relevant to career stages, including "TRS 101" for early- and mid-career members, and "Ready, Set, Retire!" for those approaching retirement.
- TRS provides staff training on policy compliance to reduce risk.

### *Infrastructure*

- TRS systems include full redundancy and backup capacity for disaster recovery using state resources.
- Information Technology (IT) staff adhere to technology replacement and support plans.
- TRS has an effective workspace with individual offices.
- M-Trust is an independently developed and customized system that effectively supports operational efficiency and member services.

### *Member Benefits and Plans*

- Members do not have to manage their own investments (defined benefit).

- TRS is a qualified plan that meets Internal Revenue Service (IRS) rules and that is certified by the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA).
- Two membership tiers help ensure the retirement system remains sound.
- TRS maintains automated processes to generate introductory letters and communication at key milestones, yearly statements, newsletters, etc.

#### *Partnerships*

- TRS leverages the expertise of outside agencies, organizations, and consultants including accountants and actuaries.
- The Board and staff collaborate with other boards including the Montana Board of Investments (MBOI) and the Montana Public Employees Retirement Administration (MPERA).
- TRS receives support from the Montana Legislature.
- The Board of Investments provides investment management and over time has provided a rate of return that exceeds our assessment rate.
- TRS benefits from collaboration with organizations such as the Montana Association of School Business Officials (MASBO), the National Council on Teacher Retirement (NCTR), the National Institute on Retirement Security (NIRS), the National Association of State Retirement Administrators (NASRA), the School Administrators of Montana (SAM), the Montana Retired Educators Association (MREA), the Montana Rural Education Association (MREA), the Montana Federation of Public Employees (MFPE), school boards and other groups.

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### Internal Challenges

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Vulnerabilities and limitations regarded as disadvantageous where TRS can leverage strengths to predict challenges and solve current problems include:

#### *Staff*

- Retirement and turnover could disrupt operations or impact our knowledge base.

#### *Communication*

- Reaching all constituents and stakeholders is challenging due to differing communication needs and interests.
- Active, inactive, and retired members have differing communication needs.
- Legislators, members, and taxpayers may undervalue TRS because they do not understand the economic benefits the plan provides to the State.
- Members may not engage and take advantage of opportunities to educate themselves about the system (e.g., information on the website or webinars).

#### *Training*

- Members do not always understand the need for financial planning or the fact that their pension plan provides guaranteed benefits.

### *Resources*

- Information systems may require modification to meet accessibility guidelines.
- TRS must improve and expand business process documentation to support continuity and internal training.

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## External Opportunities

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External opportunities suited to TRS. Strengths exist within situations or conditions that are favorable for goal attainment and advancement of the organization.

### *External Partnerships*

- Maintain relationships with committed, valuable external partners as well as a large, engaged constituency that TRS can activate.
- Maintain our partnerships with the Montana Federation of Public Employees (MFPE), the American Federation of Labor/Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL/CIO), the Montana School Boards Association (MTSBA), School Administrators of Montana (SAM) including the Montana Association of School Superintendents (MASS), Montana Retired Educators Association (MREA), and the Montana Rural Education Association (MREA).
- Maintain our relationship with experienced tax counsel.
- Engage stakeholders who have the capacity to collaborate and support the system.

### *Training*

- Utilize educational resources such as National Association of State Retirement Administrators (NASRA), National Council on Teacher Retirement (NCTR), and National Institute on Retirement Security (NIRS) websites, reports, and documents.
- Maintain adequate Board and staff training, such as by engaging in educational opportunities through the National Council on Teacher Retirement (NCTR), the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA), Public Retirement Information System Management (PRISM), the Public Pension Financial Forum (P2F2), and the National Association of Public Pension Attorneys (NAPPA).
- Continue to provide in-person MASS and MASBO training.
- Encourage Superintendents to bring information from MASS meetings to their boards and staff.
- Continue sending Board members to formal training.

### *Infrastructure*

- Improve or expand information systems and develop operational efficiencies within the M-Trust system (e.g., implementing an online retirement application and updating systems to comply with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act and ensure technology is inclusive and usable for everyone).
- Maintain data validation and audit processes.

- Increase capacity by establishing and maintaining agreements and contracts for system support, modification, enhancement, and process/system documentation.
- Streamline workflow and redefine business processes and/or roles to better utilize staff time.
- Ensure strategic plans address changing demographics and funding requirements.
- Encourage employers to distribute information to members.

#### *Communication*

- Communicate to school districts the value of TRS in attracting and retaining quality teachers.
- Build on the quality communication program and expand public relations (e.g., meeting with regional superintendent groups).
- Advocate for appropriate and enhanced regulatory requirements.
- Encourage the University System to adequately fund its participation in the program.
- Survey members to engage individuals and elicit feedback for service improvements.
- Communicate the positive impact of TRS on the state and local economy by providing members and the public with clear, accessible information.
- Expand website information and webinars to help promote understanding of TRS benefits and address member and employer misconceptions.

#### *Operations*

- Utilize external consultants to ensure the plan complies with state and federal law and administrative rules to reduce the risk of compliance failure and to enable the board to fulfill its duty of prudence as fiduciaries.
- Continue to evaluate staffing requirements in the TRS system to ensure we cover and have backups for key functions.
- Assess business processes to ensure continuity of operations in the face of external challenges.

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## External Challenges

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Disadvantageous limitations where TRS can leverage strengths to preemptively address issues:

#### *Advocacy*

- Legislation could adversely affect the system.
- Inadequate funding for teacher wages puts pressure on TRS to provide additional benefits or to use the System as a supplemental plan.
- If membership or wages do not increase according to actuarial assumptions, TRS can fall behind in amortizing unfunded liabilities.
- Actual market volatility may impact funding levels, unfunded liabilities, funding requirements, and investment returns.
- Perceived market volatility may impact public or policymakers' perception.

- The economic climate and market volatility are outside of TRS’s control.
- Shifting demographics are resulting in longevity (retirees living longer) beyond current actuarial assumptions.

#### *Workforce*

- Declining membership due to decentralization of education may decrease contributions to the system and increase our unfunded liability.
- Teacher shortages will continue to increase pressure on TRS to reduce working retiree limitations.
- Factors such as retirement, illnesses and disabilities, school closures and consolidations, and family care may lead to workforce shortages.
- Projections indicate changing demographics in the next 15 – 20 years may impact TRS participation.

## **Goals and Objectives**

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### 2023 – 2025 Goals Assessment

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The Board confirmed the 2023–2025 organizational goals remain appropriate and aligned with current initiatives:

1. Maintain an actuarially sound “qualified” retirement plan in compliance with the Montana State Constitution and State and Federal laws and regulations governing such plans.
2. Sustain a high-performance work culture and service excellence through staff and board development, innovative leadership and management strategies, and expansion of organizational capacity.
3. Continue and expand communication and outreach efforts to increase member and employer knowledge of and involvement with the system, to educate and inform other stakeholders about the system, and to foster support for the system.

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### 2023 – 2025 Objectives Assessment

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The Board evaluated the 2023 – 2025 Strategic Planning Commitment Worksheet and determined TRS met several key objectives:

- Participated in the interim study of Montana’s defined benefit public retirement systems (Senate Joint Resolution 4).
- Enhanced computer systems and online functionality by designing a modern, responsive website and identifying best practices in system security.
- Developed information systems procedural documentation and identified documentation needs for other programs.

- Implemented Board, Executive Director, and staff participation in external meetings, conferences, and informational opportunities.
- Completed a member survey regarding the defined benefit program.
- Hired a Communications Specialist to support outreach.
- Maintained the employee pay plan, training, and succession planning.
- Implemented business process and workflow improvements.
- Continued implementing the TRS audit program.

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## 2025 Contemporary Issues and Surveys

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The Board also evaluated the following information to develop objectives for the coming biennium:

### 1. Recent state legislation such as:

- HB67, the TRS "Housekeeping bill," which clarifies existing law and expands certain provisions to the benefit of members including allowing school district teachers, teacher's aides, paraprofessionals, and administrators to receive service credit and/or salary credit for certain "extra duties" involving student supervision (e.g., playground duty or study hall monitor).
- HB 359, which expands the exception allowing recently retired members to substitute teach or mentor newly hired teachers during the required 120-day break in service before returning to work in a reportable position.
- HB 158, which temporarily expands an existing exception allowing smaller school districts to fill critical vacancies with TRS retirees who had at least 27 years of creditable service at the time of retirement, and HB 349, which creates a similar "exception for the Office of Public Instruction.
- HB 924, a major funding bill that contains provisions that could benefit TRS by creating a pension reserve fund and by raising employer contribution rates (not member rates) by 0.1% each year for 20 years, beginning July 1, 2027.

### 2. Survey input from the following groups:

- Montana Association of School Business Officials (MASBO) Shelley Turner
- Montana Federation of Public Employees (MFPE) Kim Popham
- Montana Retired Educators Association (MREA) Marilyn Hamer
- Teachers' Retirement System Board
- Teachers' Retirement System Staff
- Teachers' Retirement System members

A sample of the survey comments considered by the Board include:

*"I received necessary information that answered my questions quickly and satisfactorily."*

*– Member Survey Response*

*"I think you are doing a fine job with customer service. TRS personnel seem to be knowledgeable in all my interactions with them, as both an active and as a retired member"*

*– Member Survey Response*

*"TRS is always looking out for ways to serve its members. They are always in tune with what is in the legislature, keeping members informed of any changes in TRS."*

*– Affiliate Survey Response*

*"I see one of TRS's greatest strengths as its dedicated staff, who work tirelessly to ensure members receive the best possible service and support. Their commitment and strong work ethic help maintain the system's stability and efficiency. The dedication of the team plays a key role in building trust and delivering on TRS's mission for educators' retirement security."*

*– Board Survey Response*

*"Thank you for the wage increases. It is appreciated however, access to procedure manuals would improve my day-to-day work."*

*– Staff Survey Response*

*"It is my opinion that TRS should look at continuing to change how it reaches out to its membership. Placing more energy into online and app driven communication will make it much more efficient for the staff and easier for all members to make time attend events and ask questions."*

*– Staff Survey Response*

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## Organizational Goals and Objectives

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The TRS Board established or updated the following objectives and goals based on the operational and environmental assessment, evaluation of organizational accomplishments, and consideration of contemporary issues and surveys:

**Goal 1: Maintain an actuarially sound "qualified" retirement plan in compliance with the Montana State Constitution and State and Federal laws and regulations governing such plans.**

Objectives:

- Conduct periodic tax qualification reviews and maintain qualified plan status by ensuring the plan complies with the Federal Internal Revenue Code, state and federal law, and the Montana State Constitution.
- Proactively address legislative initiatives through risk analysis, active participation in legislative studies and dissemination of accurate system information.
- Eliminate the unfunded actuarial accrued liability and establish a stabilization reserve.

- Provide a comprehensive annual financial report prepared in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) and applicable Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) standards.
- Conduct an experience study for the five-year period ending July 1, 2025.

**Goal 2: Sustain a high-performance work culture and service excellence through staff and board development, innovative leadership and management strategies, and expansion of organizational capacity.**

Objectives:

- Promote a work environment in which staff adheres to TRS principles: ethical standards; honesty, integrity, and impartiality; dignity, respect, and mutual support.
- Continue and expand board and staff training to maintain knowledgeable, proactive leadership and to identify system improvements.
- Identify, catalog, and prioritize potential information technology (IT) enhancements including a responsive and accessible web presence.
- Maintain best practices in system security.
- Continue business process and workflow improvements and develop procedural documentation for each team.
- Maintain formal strategic planning efforts to identify, prioritize, and achieve goals and objectives that are in the best interest of the system.
- Implement succession planning to include internal development and experiential learning opportunities for staff.
- Maintain market and performance-based pay to attract and retain employees in compliance with State Pay Plan Policy and Broadband 25.
- Meet or exceed industry best practice standards (e.g., Government Finance Officers Association Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting Program).

**Goal 3: Continue and expand communication and outreach efforts to increase member and employer knowledge of and involvement with the system, to educate and inform other stakeholders about the system, and to foster support for the system.**

Objectives:

- Facilitate Executive Director and Board member attendance at school superintendent meetings and staff attendance at conferences and outreach opportunities.
- Continue external communication with members and employers about system functions, improvements, processes, and transactions.
- Continue with Member Surveys to inform our strategic direction, increase retirement awareness, promote engagement, and inform policymakers.
- Promote the system as a benefit to help school districts attract and retain teachers.

- Improve procedural documentation for TRS employers.
- Promote a deferred compensation system for teachers and communicate options to superintendents.
- Provide membership with retirement seminars, periodic newsletters and memos containing pertinent information in a timely manner.
- Utilize technology to enhance communication with members and other constituents.
- Maintain communication with national organizations to stay abreast of recent and on-going pension related issues and disseminate this information to policymakers and stakeholders.
- Research retirement options and be prepared to inform policymakers on how options will impact the system and members.

## **Plan Implementation**

The Board concluded the 2025 strategic planning session by providing guidance to staff related to the implementation of the defined goals and objectives.

Implementation steps for the upcoming biennium include:

1. Develop a written work plan to implement Board-approved goals and objectives and document the plan in a Strategic Planning Commitment Worksheet (attached).
2. Establish specific actions to accomplish the objectives documented in the workplan and include these actions in staff performance objectives as appropriate.
3. Provide regular updates to the Board on progress toward goals and objectives.
4. Evaluate the plan and commitment worksheet regularly and update or modify the documents as needed.

## Glossary

Following is a glossary of partner organizations and terms (including acronyms) relevant to TRS and the planning summary.

### **American Federation of Labor/Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL/CIO)**

A democratically governed federation of unions, each with its own distinct membership and unique voice.

### **Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB)**

An independent nonprofit organization responsible for establishing accounting and financial reporting standards.

### **Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP)**

A common set of accounting principles, standards, and procedures issued by the FASB.

### **Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB)**

The source of generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP) used by state and local governments in the United States.

### **Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA)**

An association of public finance officials aligned to advance excellence in public finance. Members are federal, state/provincial, and local finance officials who are deeply involved in planning, financing, and implementing governmental operations.

### **Montana Association of School Business Officials (MASBO)**

A non-profit dedicated to training and supporting the people responsible for business operations in Montana schools.

### **Montana Association of School Superintendents (MASS)**

Works toward the continuing improvement in educational procedures, techniques, administration, supervision, and public relations.

### **Montana Board of Investments (MBOI)**

An agency of state government that provides prudent investment management of state and local government funds.

### **Montana Conference of Education Leadership (MCEL)**

Education conference jointly planned and provided by MASBO, MREA, MTSBA and SAM.

### **Montana Federation of Public Employees (MFPE)**

A union of professionals that promotes the welfare of its members by representing them to all terms and conditions of employment.

### **Montana Public Employees Retirement Administration (MPERA)**

An agency of state government that administers eight different retirement systems including the Public Employees, Judges, Highway Patrol Officers, Sheriffs, Game Wardens and Peace

Officers, Municipal Police Officers, Firefighters, and Volunteer Firefighters' Compensation Act systems as well as the State's Deferred Compensation Plan.

**Montana Rural Education Association (MREA)**

An organization which is concerned about all aspects of the K-12 public education system in rural Montana.

**Montana School Boards Association (MTSBA)**

A private non-profit membership organization with the Core Purpose of maximizing the potential of each child in Montana's public schools through school board leadership.

**My TRS**

The member portal to TRS online services.

**National Association of Public Pension Attorneys (NAPPA)**

A professional legal, educational and information resource organization that consists exclusively of attorneys who represent public pension funds.

**National Association of State Retirement Administrators (NASRA)**

Serves the members in managing sustainable public employee retirement systems through research, education, and collaboration.

**National Council on Teacher Retirement (NCTR)**

Dedicated to safeguarding the integrity of public retirement systems in the United States and its territories to which teachers belong and to promoting the rights and benefits of all present and future members of the systems.

**National Institute on Retirement Security (NIRS)**

A non-profit research and education organization established to contribute to informed policymaking by fostering a deep understanding of the value of retirement security to employees, employers, and the economy.

**Public Pension Financial Forum (P2F2)**

Serves its membership through education, pension advocacy, and networking by promoting financial excellence for public pension plans.

**Public Retirement Information System Management (PRISM)**

Provides a forum for Information Technology (IT) managers of public pension funds where they could share information, as well as their experiences, as they strive to provide “state-of-the-art” technology and systems support to the retirement funds they serve.

**School Administrators of Montana (SAM)**

A member-led, model education organization dedicated to developing instructional leaders advocating for student success.

## TRS 2025 – 2027 Strategic Planning Commitment Worksheet

Goal/Objective	Outcome/Measure	Status/Outcome	Responsible Party	Resources Required
<p><i>Maintain an actuarially sound qualified retirement plan</i>                      Conduct periodic tax qualification reviews (every 5 years) to support our goal of maintaining an actuarially sound “qualified” retirement plan using the established process and experts. Discontinue if IRS resumes doing qualification letters.</p>	Documented compliance of plan terms with the Montana State Constitution and State and Federal laws and regulations.	Every 5 years. FY2026.	Executive Director, Chief Legal Counsel	Staff time, Contractor fees
<p><i>Maintain an actuarially sound qualified retirement plan</i>                      Conduct an experience study for the five-year period ending July 1, 2025.</p>	Updated actuarial assumptions.	Starts July 1, 2025, with completion in May of 2026.	Executive Director, Board	Staff time, Contractor fees
<p><i>High-performance work culture and service excellence</i>                      Modernize TRS website with mobile responsiveness and accessible design to improve member service and information sharing and ensure Section 508 compliance.</p>	Improved functionality and member convenience and legal compliance.	2026.	Information Systems Manager, Communications Manager	Staff time, Licensing fees
<p><i>High-performance work culture and service excellence</i>                      Continue business process and workflow improvements while building online processes to achieve a paperless process with priority on major business processes (e.g., online retirement application (ORA) functionality).</p>	Automation and improved processes.	Implement ORA 2026 – 2027. Other enhancements are ongoing.	M-Trust Steering Team	Staff time
<p><i>High-performance work culture and service excellence</i>                      Create and update comprehensive desk/function manuals and update M-Trust online help to ensure business continuity, support knowledge transfer/succession planning, and support partners.</p>	Improved internal documentation and business processes.	Ongoing.	Management Team, Staff	Staff time, Possible contractor fees
<p><i>High-performance work culture and service excellence</i>                      Continue strategic planning every 2 years.</p>	Comprehensive and timely strategic goals.	Board Update 2026 Formal Strategic Planning 2027.	Management Team, Board	Staff time, Contractor fees

Goal/Objective	Outcome/Measure	Status/Outcome	Responsible Party	Resources Required
<p><i>High-performance work culture and service excellence</i>  Maintain best practices in system security and proactively assess options. Pursue identity verification and e-signature options to improve member convenience while ensuring continued transaction security for all online forms.</p>	Improved functionality and member convenience with continued system security.	ID Verification roll out after web redesign is complete in FY 2026.	Information Systems Manager, Communications Manager	Staff time, Licensing fees
<p><i>High-performance work culture and service excellence</i>  Succession planning to prepare for turnover (e.g., retirement of key staff). Consider internal development, cross-training, limited double-filling of positions, and documentation of retired payroll processes.</p>	Improved process documentation; knowledge transfer; cross-training.	2026.	Management Team	Staff time, Contractor fees
<p><i>High-performance work culture and service excellence</i>  Maintain and enhance TRS competitiveness related to staff compensation under the State Pay Plan Policy and Broadband 25</p>	Competitive pay in relation to Broadband 25.	Ongoing.	Executive Director, Deputy Executive Director	Staff time.
<p><i>Communication and Outreach</i>  Integrate Board and Executive Director participation in superintendent meetings, staff engagement in key conferences (educator, MASBO, SAM, MCEL), collaboration with partners such as MFPE</p>	Consistent attendance at annual conferences and superintendent meetings (non-legislative years), sustain or increase participation via webinars,	Annual schedule with adjustments based on effectiveness (e.g., leveraging webinars where appropriate).	Executive Director, Board, Communications Manager	Staff time, Board time
<p><i>Communication and outreach (member communication)</i>  Continue Member Surveys to inform our strategic direction, increase retirement awareness, and promote engagement. Distribute results to legislators and other interested parties.</p>	An informed and engaged constituency. Valuable data for interim study.	2025 Survey in progress.	Communications Manager	Staff time
<p><i>Communication and outreach</i>  Promote the system as a benefit to help school districts attract and retain teachers.</p>	Promotional materials and information illustrating TRS benefits for employer use.	Ongoing.	Communications Manager	Staff time
<p><i>Communication and outreach (member communication)</i>  Transition newsletter to an electronic-only format over the next 12 months.</p>	Cost savings and improved member convenience and accessibility	July 2026.	Communications Manager	Staff time