

Monte Gris  serves as the Arts Education Director for the Missoula County Public Schools in Missoula, Montana, where he oversees all K-12 visual and performing arts throughout the district. A native of Western Montana, Dr. Gris  brings 23 years of conducting, teaching and leadership experience to this position.

Before coming to Missoula, Dr. Gris  served as the Director of Bands, Professor of Music, and Chair of the School of Performing Arts at Minnesota State University Moorhead. At MSUM, he conducted the Wind Symphony, Chamber Winds, and Pep Band, as well as teaching courses in conducting, and secondary instrumental methods. He was also the Applied Saxophone Instructor as well as the Music Education Coordinator. During his tenure at MSUM, he also held the position of Conductor and Music Director of the Lake Agassiz Concert Band, in the Fargo/Moorhead area.

In 1997, he launched his teaching career as the 5-12 Band and Choir Director in Manhattan, Montana. After completing his Master's Degree in Music at Oklahoma State University in 2002, he returned to Montana to take the position of Director of Bands at Capital High School in Helena. After several years at CHS, an offer to become the Associate Director of Bands at Idaho State University took him to Pocatello, Idaho, where he would remain until 2009, directing the Bengal Marching Band, concert band, jazz band, and teaching Applied Saxophone. In 2009, he was offered a teaching assistantship at James Madison University, where he completed his Doctor of Musical Arts degree in 2012.

In 2005 Dr. Gris  was recognized as a *Distinguished Educator* by the Helena Education Foundation, and in 2018 was awarded the *Excellence in Service to the Community* award presented by the President of MSUM, and was promoted to Full Professor in 2020.

Dr. Gris  continues to teach and serve on several arts organization boards, adjudicates and guest conductors around the country, and recently began conducting the Missoula Community Band.