



EDUCATION INTERIM COMMITTEE 69th Montana Legislature

SENATE MEMBERS

Daniel Emrich
Sara Novak
Matt Regier
Sue Vinton

HOUSE MEMBERS

Lee Deming
Shelly Fyant
Randyn Gregg
Linda Reksten
Melissa Romano

COMMITTEE STAFF

Pad McCracken - Lead Staff
Becca Brown - Research Analyst
Laura Sankey Keip - Legal Staff
Ania Alduenda - Secretary

MINUTES LOG

January 27, 2026

Zoom Only

Helena, Montana

Please note: This document is a Minutes Log and provides annotation of the time elapsed between the beginning of the meeting and the time at which the item was presented or discussed, a motion was made, or a vote was taken. The narrative presented here is provided only as a guide to the audio or video recording of the meeting. The official discussion, motion, or vote is available on the audio or video archive of this meeting. The Legislature does not prepare a transcript of the meeting activities. The time designation may be used to locate the referenced discussion on the audio or video recording of this meeting.

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MEMBERS PRESENT:

Rep. Linda Reksten, Presiding Officer (R)
Sen. Sara Novak, Vice Presiding Officer (D)
Rep. Randyn Gregg (R)
Rep. Lee Deming (R)
Rep. Melissa Romano (D)

MEMBERS EXCUSED:

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Rep. Shelly Fyant (D)
Sen. Daniel Emrich (R)
Sen. Matt Regier (R)
Sen. Sue Vinton (R)

STAFF PRESENT:

Pad McCracken, Lead Staff
Rebecca Brown, Research Analyst
Laura Sankey Keip, Legal Staff
Ania Alduenda, Secretary

AGENDA ([Attachment 1](#))

VISITORS' LIST (Zoom Only)

CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

08:30:06 Presiding Officer Linda Reksten called the meeting to order at 8:30 AM. The committee secretary took roll.

MEETING OVERVIEW

08:31:18 Presiding Officer Linda Reksten

08:31:33 Pad McCracken, Lead Staff, Legislative Services Division (LSD)

ADMINISTRATIVE RULE REVIEW

08:34:51 Presiding Officer Linda Reksten

08:34:57 Laura Sankey Keip, Legal Staff, Legislative Services Division (LSD)
[EXHIBIT 1](#)

Committee Discussion / Questions

08:43:39 Presiding Officer Linda Reksten

08:43:58 Laura Sankey Keip, LSD

MISSOULA MEETING DEBRIEF / DISCUSSION

08:44:51 Presiding Officer Linda Reksten

08:45:06 Pad McCracken, Lead Staff, Legislative Services Division (LSD)
[EXHIBIT 2](#)

08:48:05 Vice Presiding Officer Sara Novak

08:49:23 Rep. Melissa Romano

08:49:38 Presiding Officer Linda Reksten

08:54:23 Vice Presiding Officer Sara Novak

08:57:40 Rep. Lee Deming

08:59:07 Presiding Officer Linda Reksten

08:59:37 Pad McCracken, LSD

SCHOOL FUNDING INTERIM COMMISSION UPDATE

09:01:41 Presiding Officer Linda Reksten

09:01:57 Pad McCracken, Lead Staff, Legislative Services Division (LSD)
[EXHIBIT 3](#)

Committee Discussion / Questions

09:04:39 Vice Presiding Officer Sara Novak

09:05:24 Rep. Randyn Gregg left the meeting via zoom.

09:05:29 Rep. Melissa Romano

09:07:22 Rep. Lee Deming

OFFICE OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION (OPI) UPDATE

09:07:53 Presiding Officer Linda Reksten
09:08:02 Pad McCracken, Lead Staff, Legislative Services Division (LSD)
09:08:17 Susie Hedalen, Superintendent, OPI
09:12:26 Sen. Sue Vinton joined the meeting via zoom.

Committee Discussion / Questions

09:31:21 Sen. Sue Vinton
09:31:57 Supt. Susie Hedalen, OPI
09:33:12 Vice Presiding Officer Sara Novak
09:33:51 Supt. Susie Hedalen, OPI
09:39:39 Rep. Lee Deming
09:40:02 Supt. Susie Hedalen, OPI
09:43:18 Presiding Officer Linda Reksten
09:44:18 Supt. Susie Hedalen, OPI
09:47:46 Rep. Melissa Romano
09:48:52 Supt. Susie Hedalen, OPI
09:54:18 Presiding Officer Linda Reksten

PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOLS ANNUAL REPORT

09:55:11 Presiding Officer Linda Reksten
09:55:28 McCall Flynn, Executive Director, Board of Public Education (BPE)
[EXHIBIT 4](#)
10:10:01 Vice Presiding Officer Sara Novak

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 53 STUDY OF SCHOOL SAFETY - HUMAN TRAFFICKING PREVENTION AND EFFORTS IN SCHOOLS

10:10:17 Presiding Officer Linda Reksten
10:10:38 Pad McCracken, Lead Staff, Legislative Services Division (LSD)

Overview of Problem

10:12:12 Presiding Officer Linda Reksten
10:12:28 Steve Crawford, Narcotics Bureau Chief, Division of Criminal Investigation, Department of Justice (DOJ)
10:22:57 Kelly Gilman, Missing Persons Specialist, Montana Missing Persons Clearinghouse, DOJ
[EXHIBIT 5](#)
10:33:01 Alan Doane, Legislative Liaison, Montana Attorney General's Office, DOJ

Recent Legislative Actions

10:38:46 Presiding Officer Linda Reksten
10:38:56 Dr. Casey Pallister, Lead Staff, State-Tribal Relations Interim Committee, LSD
[EXHIBIT 6](#)

Committee Discussion / Questions

- 10:48:28 Presiding Officer Linda Reksten
10:48:53 Dr. Casey Pallister, LSD

Senate Bill 107 (2025) Implementation

- 10:51:48 Presiding Officer Linda Reksten
10:51:59 Katie Bloodgood, Legislative Liaison, Office of Public Instruction (OPI)
[EXHIBIT 7](#)
10:53:26 Sarah Music, Coordinated School Health Director, OPI
10:55:24 Dr. Brooke Gondara, Director of Indian Education, OPI
[EXHIBIT 8](#)
[EXHIBIT 9](#)
10:57:17 Presiding Officer Linda Reksten
(See Exhibit 9)
10:59:54 Pad McCracken, LSD

11:00:49 **Recessed**
11:10:26 **Reconvened**

IMPROVING MATH ACHIEVEMENT / NUMERACY

Promising State-level Policies

- 11:10:27 Pad McCracken, Lead Staff, Legislative Services Division (LSD)
11:11:08 Presiding Officer Linda Reksten
11:11:25 Patrick Lyons, Senior Policy Specialist, National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL)
[EXHIBIT 10](#)

Practitioner Panel

- 11:32:49 Presiding Officer Linda Reksten
11:33:10 Dr. Jennifer Luebeck, Director, Mentor MT, & Professor, Mathematics Education, Montana State University (MSU)
11:33:28 Sandy Squillace, Math Teacher and Instructional Coach, Target Range Elementary, Missoula
11:40:57 Jake Warner, President, Montana Council of Teachers of Mathematics, & Math Teacher, Capital High School, Helena
11:47:43 Dr. Jennifer Luebeck, MSU
(See Exhibit 10)

New Math Standards and Implementation Support

- 11:52:39 Presiding Officer Linda Reksten
11:53:27 Marie Judisch, Senior Manager, Academic Outcomes and Instruction, OPI
[EXHIBIT 11](#)
11:53:39 Dr. Julie Murgel, Chief Program Officer, OPI
(See Exhibit 11)

Committee Discussion / Questions

- 12:15:43 Vice Presiding Officer Sara Novak

12:16:40 Dr. Julie Murgel, OPI
12:17:50 Rep. Melissa Romano
12:19:39 Dr. Julie Murgel, OPI
12:22:35 Patrick Lyons, NCSL
12:25:45 Presiding Officer Linda Reksten
12:26:45 Dr. Julie Murgel, OPI
12:29:44 Patrick Lyons, NCSL

PUBLIC COMMENT ON ANY OTHER TOPIC WITHIN THE COMMITTEE'S JURISDICTION

12:31:34 Presiding Officer Linda Reksten
12:32:01 Sarah Froehlke, Early Childhood Policy Analyst, Zero to Five Montana

MEETING WRAP UP

12:33:47 Presiding Officer Linda Reksten
12:34:46 Vice Presiding Officer Sara Novak
12:36:37 Rep. Lee Deming
12:37:46 Sen. Sue Vinton
12:39:37 Presiding Officer Linda Reksten
12:39:56 Pad McCracken, Lead Staff, Legislative Services Division (LSD)
12:40:01 Rep. Melissa Romano
12:42:19 Sen. Sue Vinton
12:43:33 Pad McCracken, LSD
[EXHIBIT 12](#)
12:45:03 Presiding Officer Linda Reksten

ADJOURNMENT

Adjournment: 12:46:04