



Education Interim Committee

69th Montana Legislature

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TO: Education Interim Committee Members
FROM: Laura Sankey Keip, Staff Attorney
DATE: January 26, 2026
RE: Administrative Rule Review – January 2026

BOARD OF PUBLIC EDUCATION

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| MAR Notice No. | 2025-479.1 Early Literacy Targeted Interventions Standards |
| Status | PROPOSED |
| Public Hearing Date | January 6, 2026 |
| Public Comment Period | Closed: January 6, 2026 at 5pm |
| Summary of Proposed Changes | <p>The Board of Public Education has proposed to update the early literacy targeted intervention standards to include mathematics in the now-called early targeted intervention programs. The proposed changes also include expanding the administration of an evaluation methodology to be available year round; specifying the numeracy skills that should be assessed at each age or grade level; requiring the Board to review the list of approved evaluation methodology screening tools in odd years; and clarifying the requirements for additional paraprofessional help in classrooms with 11-18 students.</p> <p>The Board did not receive any public comment on the proposed changes. At their January meeting, the Board voted to approve the adoption notice and the changes will be adopted as proposed, to take effect on February 7, 2026.</p> |

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| MAR Notice No. | 2025-242.2 English Language Arts and Literacy Content Standards |
| Status | ADOPTED |
| Public Hearing Date | August 29, 2025 |
| Public Comment Period | Closed: September 5, 2025 at 5pm |
| Summary of Proposed Changes | <p>This committee received information about the proposed changes to the English language arts and literacy content standards back in September, which was shortly after the public comment period for these proposed rules closed. No public comments were submitted.</p> <p>The Board voted to approve the adoption notice at the November Board meeting with no changes. There will be 12 new rules taking effect and</p> |

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| | replacing the 13 existing rules that will be repealed. The adoption notice was published in the December 5, 2025 issue of the Montana Administrative Register, as anticipated. The new content standards will take effect July 1, 2027. |
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OFFICE OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

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| MAR Notice No. | <u>2025-846.1 Background Checks for Certain Public School Employees and Volunteers</u> |
| Status | PROPOSED |
| Public Hearing Date | January 9, 2026 |
| Public Comment Period | Closed: January 16, 2026 at 5pm |
| Summary of Proposed Changes | OPI is proposing to adopt 2 new rules to require all adults who have unsupervised contact with students (for longer than the momentary absence of another adult) to have undergone a fingerprint-based national criminal history background check. The new rules will implement the provisions of HB 745 (Tilleman, 2025). |

MONTANA STATE LIBRARY

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| MAR Notice No. | <u>2025-218.2 Montana State Library Certification Program</u> |
| Status | ADOPTED |
| Public Hearing Date | November 3, 2025 |
| Public Comment Period | Closed: November 7, 2025 at 5pm |
| Summary of Proposed Changes | The Montana State Library received several public comments regarding the proposed changes to the Montana State Library Commission's library director certification program, and the adoption notice contains the Library's responses to those comments. The response also includes making a change to strike one clause out of the proposed new language, to clarify that Montana State Library is not the only entity that will be able to offer courses for continuing education credit. The amended rule will take effect on July 1, 2026. |

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| MAR Notice No. | <u>2025-255.2 Libraries' Open Hours Requirements</u> |
| Status | ADOPTED |
| Public Hearing Date | November 3, 2025 |
| Public Comment Period | Closed: November 7, 2025 at 5pm |
| Summary of Proposed Changes | The Library also received several comments from the public regarding the proposed changes to the minimum hours a library is required to be open. In response, the adopted rules will make one change, designating the higher category of hours open as "recommended" rather than "desirable". The amended rule will take effect on July 1, 2026. |