

EXHIBIT 10
DATE 1-28-05
HB 369

RE: HB 369.

Given the College Board's commitment to connect high school students to college opportunity and academic success HB 369's goal of advancing college access is one we would like to be able to support.

By way of quick background, according to the Montana OPI approximately 22-24 percent of the state's high school seniors take the SAT college entrance examination. This past year 3,179 Montana 12th graders took the SAT. So there is much common purpose in the College Board's work to expand college opportunity for students in your state and what we perceive to be the intent behind HB 369.

In light of the appreciable share of Montana students and families that avail themselves of the College Board's SAT program we hope that the Committee might be open to amending the bill's language so as to ensure that Montana students who choose to take the SAT can also benefit from the provisions of HB 369. The point in question is the use of the words "curriculum-based" in the bill's current language. There is some difference of opinion on the use of the term "curriculum-based... exam". Does the term apply to only one specific exam or to multiple different college entrance exams? We have been told that the use of the term was meant to refer to only one entrance exam. We respectfully ask that consideration be given to including language stating that the bill's provisions apply to all professionally recognized national college entrance examinations. Thank you for your consideration.

Amendment Options re: MT HB 369

Option 1 Seek to drop the reference to curriculum-based.

A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT REQUIRING SCHOOL DISTRICTS TO PAY THE FEE FOR STUDENTS TO TAKE A NATIONAL, ~~CURRICULUM-BASED~~ COLLEGE ENTRANCE EXAMINATION; PROVIDING AN APPROPRIATION; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE."

Option 2 Seek the dropping of the reference to curriculum-based, introduce the notion of multiple test organizations and suggest an increase in appropriation that can accommodate current SAT takers in MT.

NEW SECTION. Section 1. District to pay for college entrance examinations -- fee waivers.
(1) A school district shall pay the fee for a student enrolled in the district to take a national, ~~curriculum-based~~ college entrance examination that measures students' skills in reading, writing, and mathematics. The district shall pay the fee for only one examination for each student. The superintendent of public instruction shall reimburse a district for the costs incurred in paying for the examinations from an appropriation provided to the superintendent for that purpose. The superintendent of public instruction shall adopt rules to implement this section.

(2) A school district shall assist students who qualify to apply for an examination fee waivers from the organizations sponsoring the examination.

NEW SECTION. Section 2. Appropriation. There is appropriated \$600,000 from the general fund to the superintendent of public instruction for the biennium beginning July 1, 2005, to reimburse school districts for the costs incurred in paying for students to take a national, curriculum-based college entrance examination.

Option 3 Seek to amend the bill with language specifying that all professionally recognized national college entrance examinations would be covered under the proposed bill.

NEW SECTION. Section 1. District to pay for college entrance examinations – fee waivers. (1) A school district shall pay the fee for a student enrolled in the district to take a national, curriculum-based as your schedule permits.

college entrance examination. All nationally recognized college entrance examinations that are widely accepted for college admissions purposes are equally covered under the bill's provisions. The district shall pay the fee for only one examination for each student. The superintendent of public instruction shall reimburse a district for the costs incurred in paying for the examinations from an appropriation provided to the superintendent for that purpose. The superintendent of public instruction shall adopt rules to implement this section.

(2) A school district shall assist students who qualify to apply for an examination fee waivers from the organizations sponsoring the examination.