



The Big Sky Country

EXHIBIT 3
DATE 3-8-05
SB 152

MONTANA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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March 11, 2005

Dr. Kirk Miller, Chairperson
Board of Public Education
2500 Broadway
Helena, MT 59620

Dear Dr. Miller:

As you are well aware, the Montana Legislature is working to adopt a definition of a "basic system of free quality public elementary and secondary schools" and to devise a new school funding formula based on the definition as well as legislatively-identified educationally relevant factors. A major area of debate has been over what role the accreditation standards should play in the definition and who is responsible for those standards. Some legislators believe that if the Legislature is responsible for providing funding to implement the standards, the Legislature should have a greater role in the adoption of the standards. There is a perception that the Board, when adopting standards, does not consider the implementation costs to school districts.

The House Select Committee on Education recognizes that even though the Board of Public Education is not required to adopt administrative rules in compliance with the Montana Administrative Procedures Act (MAPA), the Board has voluntarily chosen to follow MAPA. The House Select Committee on Education respectfully requests the Board, when adopting a standard, to include in the written notice the probable costs of the proposed standard to a school district. This would provide the Legislature with more information on the possible financial impacts of a proposed standard.

The Committee appreciates the Board's willingness to work with the Legislature to provide a quality system of schools for Montana's children. The Committee looks forward to continuing this collaboration.

Sincerely,

Representative Monica Lindeen, Chair
House Select Committee on Education