

House Bill 02 Testimony

DP 53 Gifted and Talented Assistance Page E11 LFD Summary

The executive recommends an increase of 0.5 FTE and \$34,917 general fund would be added to the Office of Public Instruction staff in FY 2007 to assist districts in providing gifted and talented education to students throughout the state with technical assistance and support.

The state superintendent requests an amendment of 0.5 FTE and \$52,213 in **each** year of the biennium.

The state statute and Administrative Rules of Montana require schools to provide educational services to gifted and talented students. Each school must also provide structured support and assistance to teachers in identifying and meeting the needs of these students. In addition, each school must provide a framework for considering a full range of alternatives for addressing student needs.

Currently, the Office of Public Instruction has .3 FTE paid with the general fund to provide assistance to schools. The amount of resources currently directed toward administering these vitally important programs is significantly less than what is required to administer educationally sound and effective programs for gifted and talented students. These students' gifts and talents often are neglected to the point that extraordinary potential for human advancement is squandered. Adding another .5 FTE will allow the office to provide technical assistance and resource materials to teachers, administrators, and parents so that gifted and talented students are better served.

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