



# MONTANA LEGISLATIVE BRANCH

## Legislative Fiscal Division

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Legislative Fiscal Analyst  
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DATE: December 4, 2003

TO: Legislative Finance Committee

FROM: Jim Standaert  
Senior Fiscal Analyst

RE: Legislative Study Committees

K-12 renewal Commission – The K-12 Renewal Commission has met 8 times since July. It has produced a vision statement, a mission statement, and is working on producing a definition of a quality education. The Montana K-12 Public School Renewal Commission will research and provide recommendations regarding the provision of a basic system of free, quality elementary and secondary schools.

### Proposed Mission Statement

The mission of the Montana K-12 Public School Renewal Commission is to make recommendations based on the following underlying values:

- The Montana accreditation standards form the base of all schools programs;
- Public school resources shall be allocated to enable our public schools to offer equitable educational programs for all Montana's students that meet their unique and diverse needs;
- Public school resources shall be understandable and sufficient to ensure that schools are able to meet educational standards for every public school student in a safe and accessible manner; and
- Public schools shall be funded in a predictable and sustainable manner.

The commission is exploring various legislative options at its next meeting.

Tax Reform Study Committee – The Tax Reform Study committee has finished its study of background topics. These included a comparison of revenues and expenditures in Montana in 1980, 1990, and 2000, as well as for Montana compared with other states in 2000. Also, presented were a comparison of the MACO sales tax bill (from the 1997 session) with Peterson and Mangan sales tax bills from the 2003 session, a report on progressive taxes, a report on a spreadsheet to design a sales tax, a compendium of business tax incentives in Montana and a report on the provisions on SB407 and its impacts. The next meeting will be conducted jointly with the tax reappraisal committee on January 12.

Property Tax Reappraisal Committee – The property tax reappraisal committee has met twice. It has completed informational background work on Montana’s property tax system, review of property tax revenues for K-12, and for local governments, a comparison of the importance of property taxes in Montana with other states. The next meeting will be held jointly with the Tax Reform Committee on January 12<sup>th</sup>.

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