

**From:** [Arntzen, Elsie](#)  
**To:** [Barker, Brad](#)  
**Cc:** [Salomon, Dan](#); [Bedey, David](#); [McCracken, Pad](#); [Pattin, Julia](#)  
**Subject:** RE: Legislative Intent Related to the Implementation of HB 352  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 5, 2024 6:48:47 PM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)

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Dear Rep. Barker:

Thank you for your February 29, 2024, letter regarding implementation of [HB 352](#). I agree with the importance of early literacy programs, which was why I supported the bill during the legislative session. Your leadership to advance the early literacy legislation is very much appreciated.

The Office of Public Instruction (OPI) has worked closely with the Board of Public Education, school districts, and educators to ensure a smooth implementation of the legislation. To that end, OPI has hired two staff members, prepared guidance, developed [web-based resources](#), and provided outreach to school districts that will deliver services under the legislation. The response from the field has been very enthusiastic.

OPI staff continues works with school districts to ensure the jumpstart program, established in Sec. 3(7) of the bill, is implemented for “the school year beginning July 1, 2024” as required by the transition in Sec. 9 of the bill. This will allow school districts to include those participants in the expanded Average Number Belonging (ANB) calculation under Sec. 7(4)(e)(ii) of the bill, which becomes effective on July 1, 2024, as required by the effective date in Sec. 11 of the bill. Reviewing the bill – in particular, the legislative declaration that the jumpstart program be implemented for “the school year beginning July 1, 2024” – and Ms. Sankey Keip’s letter, OPI is confident that implementing the jumpstart program beginning July 1 would withstand the scrutiny of an auditor, but does not feel confident that hours or dates implemented by a jumpstart program before July 1 would be supported by an auditor.

Most school districts have expressed no concern about the July 1 implementation date. School districts eager to begin the program before then may do so, as long as they also meet the requirements for the program after July 1. Notably, there will be no transition or effective date considerations under the bill during future school years; any questions related to the implementation date are non-recurring.

OPI will continue to work with school districts to advance early literacy intervention programs, including the jumpstart program, this year and beyond.

Blessings,

Elsie Arntzen  
Montana Superintendent of Public Instruction

**Elsie Arntzen**  
Montana State Superintendent



## Montana Office of Public Instruction

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**From:** Barker, Brad <Brad.Barker@legmt.gov>

**Sent:** Thursday, February 29, 2024 6:10 PM

**To:** Arntzen, Elsie <Elsie.Arntzen@mt.gov>

**Cc:** Salomon, Dan <Dan.Salomon@legmt.gov>; Bedey, David <David.Bedey@legmt.gov>; McCracken, Pad <Pad.Mccracken@legmt.gov>; Pattin, Julia <Julia.Pattin@legmt.gov>

**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Legislative Intent Related to the Implementation of HB 352

Superintendent Arntzen,

Good evening. I've attached a letter to bring my concern about HB 352 (Early Literacy Targeted Interventions) implementation to your attention. I look forward to working with you to resolve this issue.

Very Respectfully,  
Brad

Brad Barker  
Representative  
House District 58  
406-426-1034

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