



*The Treasure State*  
MONTANA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

**Representative David Bedey**  
House District 86

February 17, 2024

The Honorable Elsie Arntzen  
Montana Superintendent of Public Instruction  
Office of Public Instruction  
1227 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Helena, MT 59601

via electronic delivery

Dear Superintendent Arntzen,

I am gravely concerned that the millions of taxpayer dollars appropriated for the OPI Database Modernization project may yield a product that does not meet the requirements in Montana law as articulated in HB 367 (2023). The basis for my concern is the position you took regarding education data collecting and sharing during the December meeting of Education Interim Budget Committee. The legal justifications you provided were contradicted both by our legislative staff attorney and by Lance Melton, who is an acknowledged expert in Montana school law.

To better understand the situation, I have summoned a representative from PowerSchool to appear before the committee to demonstrate the full capabilities of its system and the extent to which performance of the system would be degraded if the data limitations upon which you insist are in place. I have also referred this issue to the Education and Workforce Data Governing Board for resolution. (It is my understanding that the Board will take this matter up in early March.)

Because of this issue's fiscal implications, the potential negative impact on schools across the state, and its bearing on the capability of state agencies to assess the effectiveness of education and workforce programs, it is imperative that this matter be resolved expeditiously. Therefore, I ask that you appear in person before the committee to take questions when it meets at 10:00 a.m. on March 13, 2024.

Please respond to me no later than February 23, 2024, to confirm your attendance at the meeting.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David F. Bedey".

Chairman, Education Interim Budget Committee