



The Treasure State
MONTANA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Representative David Bedey
House District 86

December 6, 2023

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

via electronic delivery

Dear Superintendent Arntzen,

Thank you for responding to my request for information regarding implementation of the OPI Database Modernization project. However, a few matters require some clarification. Please provide the information requested below to my lead LFD analyst, Julia Pattin, no later than 5:00 p.m. on December 11, 2023:

1. You assert that "House Bill 949 amended § 20-7-104, MCA, to narrow the amount and types of data that the Office of Public Instruction (OPI) may gather and release." This comes as a surprise since this issue was not raised as the bill passed through the Legislature. Please provide specifics to support your assertion.
2. Your concern about FERPA relative to the Education and Workforce Data Governing Board is unclear. The Board is to establish FERPA-compliant policies concerning data sharing among state agencies. It in itself is not a consumer of educational data. Please clarify your concerns regarding FERPA and this project.
3. You point out that "OPI gathers the information that it is **required** to gather under state and federal law." [emphasis added] Please provide a list of the data elements that OPI currently collects via its Achievement in Montana (AIM) system. Is the AIM system capable of collecting and sharing additional data elements? If so, at what cost?
4. Full functionality of any data system depends on the amount and type of data that is available to it. Please describe the functionality that the PowerSchool system will lose given the limited data set that OPI currently gathers.

My committee will be taking up the OPI Database Modernization project when it meets on December 13, 2023. We look forward to a robust discussion of this important project.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of David F. Bedey in black ink.

Chairman, Education Interim Budget Committee

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