

1 **** BILL NO. ****

2 INTRODUCED BY ****

3 BY REQUEST OF THE ****

4
5 A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT ***."

6
7 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

8
9 NEW SECTION. **Section 1. Innovation and excellence in education council.** (1) There is an
10 innovation and excellence in education council. The purpose of the council is to formalize the opportunity for
11 coordination and cooperation by the educational entities that are constitutionally responsible for governing the
12 public education system and to develop a statewide vision and implementation plan to improve the public
13 education system of Montana.

14 (2) The innovation and excellence in education council is composed of the following members:

15 (a) six members of the house of representatives, three from the majority party and three from the
16 minority party, appointed by the speaker of the house in consultation with the house majority leader and the
17 house minority leader;

18 (b) six members of the senate, three from the majority party and three from the minority party,
19 appointed by the president of the senate in consultation with the senate majority leader and the senate minority
20 leader;

21 (c) four members of the public to be appointed as follows:

22 (i) two public members, one of whom must be a student currently enrolled in a Montana public
23 school and one of whom must be a parent of a student currently enrolled in a Montana public school,
24 appointed by the speaker of the house with the consent of the house minority leader; and

25 (ii) two public members, one of whom must be a student currently enrolled in a Montana public
26 school and one of whom must be a parent of a student currently enrolled in a Montana public school, appointed
27 by the president of the senate with the consent of the senate minority leader;

28 (d) the presiding officer of the board of public education or the presiding officer's designee;

(e) the superintendent of public instruction or the superintendent's designee;

(f) the presiding officer of the board of regents of higher education or the presiding officer's designee;

(g) the governor or the governor's designee; and

(h) a trustee of a Montana school board appointed by the governor from a list of three candidates provided by a state professional organization of school district trustees.

(3) The innovation and excellence in education council shall:

(a) review the recommendations and final report of the 2025-2026 school funding interim commission and the recommendation and implementation plan from the commission's innovation and excellence in education working group published in January 2026, and:

(i) evaluate and update the comparison of the education policies of Montana to the education policies of high-performing international and domestic education systems; and

(ii) review the existing recommendations and adopt new recommendations as necessary to adapt the appropriate education policies of high-performing education systems for the public education system in Montana and analyze the effectiveness of the implementation of the recommendations;

(b) identify and revise objectives to put the education performance of pupils in Montana in parity with that of pupils in high-performing education systems and make recommendations on how to meet the identified objectives;

(c) implement and update the implementation plan for the recommendations made pursuant to this subsection (3), including an analysis of the costs to implement the recommendations; and

(d) publish updates to the council's recommendations and implementation plan no later than September 1 of each year preceding the convening of a regular session of the legislature in accordance with 5-11-210.

(4) The innovation and excellence in education council may contract with a reputable national organization to support the council's efforts under this section.

(5) The council shall meet at least six times per biennium.

(6) The council is attached for administrative purposes to the legislative services division, and the legislative services division shall provide sufficient and appropriate support to the council to carry out its

1 statutory duties, within the limitations of legislative appropriations.

2 (7) The council is staffed by the legislative services division. The legislative fiscal analyst shall
3 assign staff to assist the council.

4 (8) The council may form committees or work groups to accomplish the council's purposes.

5 (9) Unless the person is a full-time salaried officer or employee of the state or a political
6 subdivision of the state, a nonlegislative member appointed to the council is entitled to salary and expenses to
7 the same extent as a legislative member. If the appointee is a full-time salaried officer or employee of the state
8 or of a political subdivision of the state, the appointee is entitled to reimbursement for travel expenses as
9 provided for in 2-18-501 through 2-18-503.

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