

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
STATE OF MONTANA

GREG GIANFORTE
GOVERNOR



KRISTEN JURAS
LT. GOVERNOR

June 20, 2025

The Honorable Brandon Ler
Speaker of the House
State Capitol
Helena, MT 59620

The Honorable Matt Regier
President of the Senate
State Capitol
Helena, MT 59620

Dear Speaker Ler and President Regier:

Over the last four years, we've worked to provide record support for education, focusing our investments on our classrooms where they make the biggest difference with students and educators, not on bureaucracy. We've invested in programs that support teachers, students, and classrooms while also expanding educational opportunities.

We continued delivering on our shared priorities during the 2025 Legislative Session by making a historic investment in Montana's educators, raising starting teacher pay through The STARS Act, or Student and Teacher Advancement for Results and Success Act. STARS invests a historic \$100 million to raise teacher pay with a focus on educators who are just starting their careers. Through common sense measures like STARS, we've demonstrated our shared commitment to recruiting and retaining the highest quality teachers for our students.

House Bill 340 appropriates \$1 million from the General Fund annually through 2031 to the Office of Public Instruction (OPI) to start a new statewide program designed to support early career teachers with training and mentorship.

While well-intentioned, House Bill 340 is unnecessary, as it duplicates existing programs. OPI, the Montana University System (MUS), and other non-profit education service organizations already offer programs like the one contemplated by the bill. Specifically, OPI offers high-quality professional learning and development resources to support every Montana educator. Through the OPI Learning HUB, all educators have access to tools, guidance, and opportunities tailored to help them grow and succeed.

I appreciate the sponsor's intent to provide mentoring and training for new educators. OPI, the MUS, and other educational partners, however, already have the authority and ability to accomplish the goals of this legislation. Further, many of the other education bills enacted into law this year, including the STARS Act, will help ensure Montana's educators have the tools and resources they need to succeed.

Therefore, in accordance with the power vested in me as Governor by the Constitution and the laws of the State of Montana, I hereby veto House Bill 340: "AN ACT CREATING THE MONTANA B.E.S.T. TEACHER TRAINING PROGRAM; CREATING A STATEWIDE PROGRAM TO PROVIDE TARGETED TRAINING AND SUPPORT TO EARLY CAREER TEACHERS IN THE FIRST 3 YEARS OF THEIR TEACHING CAREERS, INCREASE TEACHER RETENTION, AND ENHANCE EDUCATION FOR MONTANA STUDENTS; PROVIDING PROGRAM PARAMETERS AND DUTIES FOR THE OFFICE OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION; ESTABLISHING REPORTING REQUIREMENTS; PROVIDING AN APPROPRIATION; PROVIDING A DEFINITION; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE AND A TERMINATION DATE."

Sincerely,



Greg Gianforte
Governor

Enclosure

cc: Legislative Services Division
Christi Jacobsen, Secretary of State