

**Amendment - 1st Reading/2nd House-blue - Requested by: Connie Keogh - (S) Education and Cultural Resources**

- 2025

69th Legislature 2025

Drafter: Pad McCracken,

HB0151.002.001

HOUSE BILL NO. 151

INTRODUCED BY C. KEOGH, D. BEDEY, J. FULLER, L. JONES, E. MATTHEWS, J. WINDY BOY, B.

BARKER

A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT GENERALLY REVISING EDUCATION LAWS RELATED TO RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION AND THE MONTANA SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF AND BLIND; MAKING EDUCATIONAL SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETERS ELIGIBLE FOR THE QUALITY EDUCATOR PAYMENT AND THE QUALITY EDUCATOR LOAN ASSISTANCE PROGRAM; EXPANDING THE TYPES OF EDUCATIONAL ENTITIES THAT CAN RECEIVE INCENTIVES FOR MEETING STARTING TEACHER PAY BENCHMARKS AND THAT CAN PARTICIPATE IN THE TEACHER RESIDENCY PROGRAM; ALLOWING THE MONTANA SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF AND BLIND TO TRANSPORT RESIDENT STUDENTS BETWEEN HOME AND THE SCHOOL BY SCHOOL BUS; AMENDING SECTIONS 20-4-502, 20-4-503, 20-4-702, 20-8-121, 20-9-324, AND 20-9-327, MCA; AND PROVIDING ~~AN EFFECTIVE DATE~~ DATES AND AN APPLICABILITY DATE."

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

**Section 1.** Section 20-4-502, MCA, is amended to read:

**"20-4-502. Definitions.** For the purposes of this part, unless the context requires otherwise, the following definitions apply:

(1) "Education cooperative" means a cooperative of Montana public schools as described in 20-7-451.

(2) "Educational loans" means all loans made pursuant to a federal loan program, except federal parent loans for undergraduate students (PLUS) loans, as provided in 20 U.S.C. 1078-2.

(3) "Federal loan program" means educational loans authorized by 20 U.S.C. 1071, et seq., 20 U.S.C. 1087a, et seq., and 20 U.S.C. 1087aa, et seq.

(4) "Impacted school" means:

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with the department of corrections for female, as defined in 1-1-201, youth must be distributed to those facilities by the department of corrections.

(d) The quality educator payment for the Montana youth challenge program must be distributed to that program by the department of military affairs.

(3) The quality educator payment is calculated as provided in 20-9-306, using the number of full-time equivalent educators, as reported to the superintendent of public instruction for accreditation purposes in the previous school year, each of whom:

(a) holds a valid certificate under the provisions of 20-4-106 and is employed by an entity listed in subsection (1) of this section in a position that requires an educator license in accordance with the administrative rules adopted by the board of public education;

(b) (i) is a licensed professional under 37-8-405, 37-8-415, 37-11-301, 37-15-301, 37-17-302, 37-24-301, 37-25-302, 37-39-308, 37-39-309, or 37-39-311; and

(ii) is employed by an entity listed in subsection (1) to provide services to students; or

(c) (i) holds an American Indian language and culture specialist license; and

(ii) is employed by an entity listed in subsection (1) to provide services to students in an Indian language immersion program pursuant to Title 20, chapter 7, part 14; or

(d) meets the qualifications for educational sign language interpreting established by the board of public education and is employed by an entity listed in subsection (1) to provide educational sign language interpreting for deaf and hard-of-hearing students."

~~NEW SECTION. Section 7. Effective date. [This act] is effective July 1, 2025.~~

**NEW SECTION. Section 7. Effective dates.** (1) Except as provided in subsection (2), [this act] is effective on passage and approval.

(2) [Sections 1 through 5] are effective July 1, 2025.

**NEW SECTION. Section 8. Applicability.** [Section 6] applies to educational sign language

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1 interpreters employed during the school fiscal year beginning July 1, 2024, and subsequent school fiscal years  
2 so that quality educator payments for educational entities employing educational sign language interpreters are  
3 increased accordingly beginning school fiscal year 2026.

4 - END -

AMENDED