



**MONTANA
ADMINISTRATIVE
REGISTER**



BOARD OF PUBLIC EDUCATION

NOTICE OF PROPOSED RULEMAKING

MAR NOTICE NO. 2025-215.1

Summary

Adoption of NEW RULE I and amendment of ARM 10.63.110 pertaining to Early Numeracy Integration and Early Childhood Education Standards.

Hearing Date and Time

Friday, July 18, 2025, at 2:00 p.m.

Virtual Hearing Information

Please click the link below to join the webinar:

<https://mt-gov.zoom.us/j/81441368113>

Comments

Comments may be submitted by 5PM using the contact information below.

McCall Flynn, Executive Director

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email bpe@mt.gov Comments must be received by Friday, July 18, 2025, at 5:00 p.m.

Accommodations

The agency will make reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities who wish to participate in this rulemaking process or need an alternative accessible format of this notice. Requests must be made by Friday, July 4, 2025, at 5:00 p.m.

Contact

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General Reasonable Necessity Statement

REASON: The Board of Public Education proposes to adopt NEW RULE I and revise the Early Childhood Education Standards to comply with HB 338 (2025) prior to the 2025-26 school year. The Early Literacy Advisory Council, created by the Board of Public Education, recommended the proposed rule in order to address the short turnaround between the end of the Legislative Session and start of the upcoming school year, while maintaining the intent of the legislation, which was to increase the number of children who are proficient in reading and math at the end of third grade. NEW RULE I will be adopted as ARM 10.54.903.

Rulemaking Actions

AMEND

The rules proposed to be amended are as follows, stricken matter interlined, new matter underlined:

10.63.110 EARLY LEARNING DEVELOPMENTAL DOMAINS AND CONTENT STANDARDS

- (1) The following early learning developmental domains represent the foundational skills all students need to be successful learners. The development of communication, language, and literacy skills supports the growth in all other domains of development. All developmental domains are applicable for public preschool programs and early-literacy targeted interventions implemented through

the classroom-based program for 4-year-olds and summer jumpstart program preceding kindergarten.

(a) The language domain includes communication and comprehension in oral and written language.

(i) Language instruction includes opportunities for students to develop:

- (A) receptive language, wherein students use listening and observation skills to make sense of and respond to spoken language and other forms of communication; enter into the exchange of information around what is seen, heard, and experienced; and begin to acquire an understanding of the concepts of language that contribute to learning;
- (B) expressive language, wherein students develop skills in using sounds, facial expressions, gestures, and words, such as to help others understand their needs, ask questions, express feelings and ideas, and solve problems;
- (C) social language, wherein students develop skills to interact and communicate with others in effective ways; and
- (D) support for dual language speakers, wherein students receive support in their home language(s) while becoming proficient in English.

(ii) Literacy instruction includes opportunities for students to develop:

- (A) written language, wherein students build an understanding and interest in the symbols, sounds, and rhythms of written language and develop awareness that the printed word can be used for various purposes;
- (B) written communication, wherein students develop interest and skill in using symbols as a meaningful form of communication;
- (C) print awareness, wherein students build an understanding that print carries a message through symbols and words and that there is a connection between sounds and letters (the alphabetic principle); and
- (D) speech development, wherein students develop an awareness of the sounds of letters and the combination of letters that make up words and use this awareness to manipulate syllables and sounds of speech.

(b) The social and emotional domain includes culture, family, community as well as social and emotional development.

- (i) Culture, family, and community skills instruction includes opportunities for students to develop:
 - (A) an awareness of and appreciation for similarities and differences between themselves and others;
 - (B) an awareness of the functions and diverse characteristics of families; and
 - (C) an understanding of the basic principles of how communities function, including work roles and commerce.
- (ii) Social development skill instruction includes opportunities for students to:
 - (A) develop trust, emotional bonds, and interact comfortably with adults;
 - (B) interact and build relationships with peers; and
 - (C) develop skills in cooperation, negotiation, and empathy.
- (iii) Emotional development skills instruction includes opportunities for students to:
 - (A) develop an awareness and appreciation of self as a unique, competent, and capable individual;
 - (B) demonstrate a belief in their abilities;
 - (C) manage internal states, feelings, and behavior, and develop the ability to adapt to diverse situations and environments; and
 - (D) express a wide and varied range of feelings through facial expressions, gestures, behaviors, and words.
- (c) The physical domain includes development of motor skills and instruction in health, safety, and personal care.
 - (i) Motor skills instruction includes opportunities for students to develop:
 - (A) small muscle strength, coordination, and skills;
 - (B) large muscle strength, coordination, and skills; and
 - (C) use of their senses to explore the environment and develop skills through sight, smell, touch, taste, and sound.
 - (ii) Health, safety, and personal care skills instruction includes opportunities for students to develop:

- (A) personal health and hygiene skills as they develop and practice self-care routines;
 - (B) healthy eating practices by eating a variety of nutritional foods;
 - (C) healthy behaviors through physical activity; and
 - (D) an awareness and understanding of safety rules as they learn to make safe and appropriate choices.
- (d) The cognitive domain includes approaches to learning.
 - (i) Approaches to learning skills instruction include opportunities for students to develop:
 - (A) curiosity through imagination, inventiveness, originality, and interest as they explore and experience new things;
 - (B) initiative and self-direction through engagement in new tasks and to take risks in learning new skills or information;
 - (C) persistence and attentiveness with the ability to focus their attention and concentration to complete tasks and increase their learning;
 - (D) reflection and interpretation skills in thinking about their learning in order to inform their future decisions; and
 - (E) reasoning skills in causation, critical and analytical thinking, problem solving, and representational thought.
- (2) The following early learning content standards are aligned to the Montana K-12 Content Standards and highlight what students should know, understand, and be able to do upon entering kindergarten. All early learning content standards are applicable for public preschool programs while only the English Language Arts and Literacy and Mathematics and Numeracy Content Standards apply to early literacy targeted interventions implemented through the classroom-based program for 4-year-olds and summer jumpstart program preceding kindergarten.
 - (a) English Language Arts and Literacy standards include:
 - (i) early reading, wherein students develop an understanding, skill, and interest in alphabet knowledge using the symbols, sounds, and rhythms of written language;
 - (ii) print development and writing, wherein students demonstrate interest and skill in using symbols as a meaningful form of communication;
 - (iii) speaking and listening, wherein students use phonemic and phonological awareness to identify and play with individual sounds in spoken words; and

- (iv) language, wherein students develop the ability to communicate with others to build relationships, share meaning, and express needs.
- (b) Creative arts standards include:
 - (i) creative movement wherein students produce rhythmic movements spontaneously and in imitation with growing technical and artistic abilities;
 - (ii) drama, wherein students show appreciation and awareness of drama through observation, imitation, and participation in simple dramatic plots;
 - (iii) music, wherein students engage in a variety of musical or rhythmic activities; and
 - (iv) visual arts, wherein students demonstrate a growing understanding and appreciation for the creative process and visual arts.
- (c) Mathematics and numeracy standards include:
 - (i) number sense and operations, wherein students develop the ability to think and work with numbers, to understand their uses, and describe their relationships through structured and everyday experiences;
 - (ii) measurement concepts, wherein students use measurement instruments to explore and discover measurement relationships and characteristics, such as length, quantity, volume, distance, weight, area, and time;
 - (iii) mathematical skills in data analysis, wherein students count, sort, and compare objects;
 - (iv) initial algebraic thinking and operations, wherein students identify, describe, produce, and create patterns using mathematical language and materials; and
 - (v) geometric and spatial reasoning, wherein students build the foundation for recognizing, creating, and manipulating shapes, and learning spatial reasoning and directional words as they become aware of their bodies and personal space in their physical environment.
- (d) Science standards include:
 - (i) scientific thinking and the use of the scientific methods through investigation using their senses to observe, manipulate objects, ask questions, make predictions, and develop conclusions and generalizations;
 - (ii) an understanding of and compassion for living things;

- (iii) an understanding of the physical world, the nature and properties of energy, and nonliving matter;
 - (iv) an understanding of the earth and planets; and
 - (v) an understanding of engineering as the process that assists people in designing and building.
- (e) Social studies standards include:
 - (i) an understanding of the concept of historical time, including past, present, and future;
 - (ii) knowledge of geographical places and regions by understanding that each place has its own unique characteristics and the reciprocal effect individuals have with the world around them; and
 - (iii) awareness of their natural world, including the environment and our interdependence on the natural world.
- (f) Technology standards include:
 - (i) an understanding of technology with awareness of technological tools and developmentally appropriate exploration of the ways to use these resources.

Authorizing statute(s): Mont. Const. Art. X, sec. 9, 20-2-114, 20-7-101, 20-7-1803, MCA

Implementing statute(s): Mont. Const. Art. X, sec. 9, 20-7-101, 20-7-117, 20-7-1803, MCA

ADOPT

The rules proposed to be adopted are as follows:

10.54.903 EARLY NUMERACY INTEGRATION FOR 2025-26 SCHOOL YEAR

1. A local school district that administered the evaluation methodology for early literacy targeted interventions in accordance with ARM 10.54.901 in preparation for the 2025-2026 school year may admit qualified students in the classroom-based program for 4-year-olds.
2. The early targeted interventions may include both English Language Arts and Literacy and Mathematics and Numeracy Content Standards as described in ARM 10.63.110(2).

Authorizing statute(s): Mont. Const. Art. X, sec. 9, 20-2-114, 20-7-101, 20-7-1803, MCA

Implementing statute(s): Mont. Const. Art. X, sec. 9, 20-7-101, 20-7-117, 20-7-1803, MCA

Small Business Impact

[“Pursuant to HB 592 the small business impact analysis, at a minimum, must: Identify by class or group the small businesses probably affected and include a statement of the probable significant and direct effects of the proposed rule on the small businesses identified in subsection (1)(a)(i).

If the agency proposes to adopt, increase, or decrease a monetary amount that a person shall pay or will receive, such as a fee, cost, or benefits, the analysis must include an estimate, if known, of: the cumulative amount for all persons of the proposed increase, decrease, or new amount; and the number of persons affected.

In all cases, agencies must also include a statement informing the public that documentation of the small business impact analysis is available upon request.”]

Bill Sponsor Notification

The bill sponsor is a member of the Early Literacy Advisory Council, which was created to advise the Board of Public Education, and is an active participant in legislative implementation.

Interested Persons

The board maintains a list of interested persons who wish to receive notices of rulemaking actions proposed by this agency. Persons who wish to have their name added to the list shall make a written request that includes the name, email, and mailing address of the person to receive notices and specifies for which program the person wishes to receive notices. Notices will be sent by email unless a mailing preference is noted in the request. Such written request may be mailed or delivered to the contact person above or may be made by completing a request form at any rules hearing held by the board.

Rule Reviewer

McCall Flynn

Approval

Dr. Tim Tharp
Board Chair