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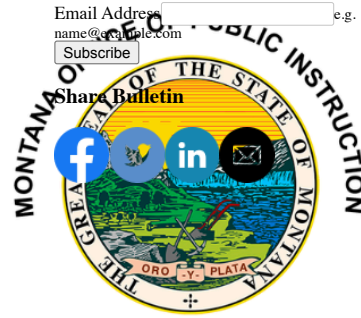
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Compliance with State and Federal Law

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10/20/2025

Dear Colleagues,

In light of recent media coverage regarding potential violations of state and federal law in public schools related to DEI and gender identity instruction, I want to remind school districts to remain in full compliance with the law and to uphold the responsibilities entrusted to us by Montana families.

First, I want to draw your attention to [House Bill 819](#), sponsored by Representative Braxton Mitchell. This law strictly limits the display of flags and banners on government property, including public schools. Only officially recognized government flags are permitted. Personal, political, or activist flags are not allowed. School grounds must reflect neutrality and adherence to the law, not serve as platforms for political or ideological expression.

Second, [House Bill 471](#), carried by Senator Jedediah Hinkle, revises Montana law regarding human sexuality and identity instruction. This legislation reinforces parental rights by requiring an explicit opt-in before a student may receive identity instruction. It is not enough to notify parents **active, written permission is required**. Schools must honor the role of parents as the primary decision-makers in their child's upbringing. This is not optional and must be strictly enforced in all districts.

The Office of Public Instruction has already distributed a [legislative guide](#) outlining these and other recent changes. I strongly urge you to review it carefully and ensure your staff is familiar with its contents.

As a reminder, when applying for education funding and for state accreditation schools certify compliance and alignment with state and federal law. Any programming or instruction that conflicts with these requirements must be addressed and removed.

Administrators must lead by example. It is our duty to uphold the law and to ensure your school environment reflects the values of transparency, accountability, and respect for the rights of parents and students alike.

If you have any questions regarding these obligations, contact the Office of Public Instruction directly.

Sincerely,

Susie Hedalen

Superintendent of Public Instruction

Questions? Contact:

[McKenna Gregg](#), Communications Director

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