

Elsie Arntzen, Superintendent

PO Box 202501
Helena, MT 59620-2501
406.444.5643
In-State Toll-free: 1.888.231.9393
TTY Users: 406.444.0235
opi.mt.gov

August 10, 2020

Peter Dovovan, Executive Director
Board of Public Education
46 N Last Chance Gulch, Suite 2B
Helena, MT 59601

Subject: August 30, License Renewal Waiver Request

Dear Director Donovan,

The 2020 calendar year has challenged and continues to challenge districts and educators across the state of Montana for a variety of reasons. These challenges absorbed and reallocated valuable resources for both educational organizations and staff. One of the challenges for this fall is full staffing Montana districts with qualified, currently licensed teachers.

Montana ARM (10.57.215 (1)) regulates the deadline for license renewal as August 30. The final disposition of licenses is determined by the Office of Public Instruction (OPI) by December 1 of each year in order to process and districts to receive their Quality Educator Payment (20-9-327, MCA; 10.21.201(4) ARM). From September 1 to the end of November, about 100 additional licenses are reinstated¹ (see included table).

The request before the Board of Public Education (BOPE) is to provide a 30-day extension for renewals increasing the number of licenses available in Montana, minimally impact BOPE and Certification Standards and Practices Advisory Council (CSPAC) budgets as evidenced by historical data, and avoid further waiver requests related to statutes /rules such as the Quality Educator Payment deadline.

Each year, OPI estimates 5,000 licenses² in need of renewal. By December of each year, 1,700 licenses are left unrenewed. There are many reasons for this including retirement, change of profession and/or preferences, and change of life circumstances. This one month extension will serve Montana students during these uncertain times.

¹ Reinstatements are expired licenses (typically expired for an extended period of time) going through the reinstatement process. This includes licenses recently expired.

² Some educators have multiple licenses.

An approval of this waiver request will result in OPI promoting this opportunity through all relevant communication channels encouraging educators to renew their license by September 30, 2020.

Annual License Renewal Patterns

Year	Number of renewed licenses from Jan 1 - Feb 28/29	Number of renewed licenses from Mar 1 - Jun 30	Number of licenses needing renewal as of July 1	Number of licenses needing renewal as of Sept 1	Number of licenses needing renewal as of Dec 2	Number of licenses renewed between July 1 and Dec 2
2020	885	1690	2063			
2019	845	1710	2150	1754	1659	491
2018	819	1762	2196	1824	1707	489
2017	786	1937	2115	1771	1668	447
2016	773	1670	2176	1720	1646	530



Tim Johnson

Deputy Superintendent
 Montana Office of Public Instruction

- Phone: 406-444-3449
- Cell: 406-410-1525
- Website: <http://opi.mt.gov/>
- Email: timothy.johnson@mt.gov