



**Minutes**  
**Montana Board of Regents**  
**November 20-21, 2025**

**Thursday, November 20<sup>th</sup>, 2025**

Meeting convened at 8:30 a.m.

Regents Present: Todd Buchanan, Chair, Loren Bough, Vice Chair, Joyce Dombrowski, Jeff Southworth, Dean Folkvord, Heather Hoyer, and Carter Jasper. The Ex Officio member present was Commissioner of Higher Education, Clayton Christian. Superintendent of Public Instruction, Susie Hedalen, and Governor Greg Gianforte were excused.

Welcome and Comments by Chair Buchanan | 00:04:45

Chair Buchanan thanked everyone for their continued efforts in attending these meetings and their dedication to the MUS. He thanked President Bodnar and the UM staff for hosting and highlighted activities that occur on campuses that go beyond the classroom and enhance the student experience. He introduced two UM students as examples of resident student success. Chair Buchanan introduced faculty representative Dr. Valerie Moody and discussed the Native American cultural influence at UM. He expressed his gratitude for the continuing partnerships with the tribal colleges and introduced Craig Smith, Fort Peck Community College President, as the meeting's tribal college representative. He then gave a detailed agenda overview.

Welcome by President Bodnar | 00:19:58

University of Montana President Seth Bodnar welcomed and thanked everyone for their continued efforts in preparing for these meetings. He shared UM's mission of Inclusive Prosperity to ensure all students reach their full potential. He gave an enrollment and retention rate update and highlighted the impact UM students are having across Montana. He shared a presentation on the impact of Elevate Montana, the growth in research at UM, infrastructure growth and new building projects, and the recognition UM has received. He discussed the challenges higher education is facing and how UM plans handle these challenges by meeting students where they are and addressing Montana's workforce needs. He congratulated UM Western's Chancellor Reid on his retirement and thanked him for his leadership.

Approval of Minutes | 00:46:29

- September 18<sup>th</sup>, 2025 Meeting Minutes

With no corrections offered, the minutes were approved as distributed.

Commissioner's and System Report | 00:46:51



Commissioner Christian thanked everyone for their continued dedication to support the MUS and Montana students. He thanked President Bodnar and his staff for hosting the meeting. He expressed appreciation for the MUS's partnerships with the legislature, K-12 education, and tribal communities. He discussed the need for a system wide approach to staying relevant and meeting the challenges that higher education is facing. He stressed the importance of resident student access and retention.

- Enrollment Update | *00:52:13*

Scott Lemmon, Director of Admissions and Enrollment Strategy, led a panel discussion on national trends in higher education. An outline of what was discussed can be found below. Discussion followed.

**Panelists:**

- Colleen Falkenstern, WICHE
- Craig Cornell, Vice President of Enrollment Strategy Undergraduate and State Systems, Liaison
- Joe Schaffer, President, Laramie County Community College
- Steven Gentile, Executive Director, Tennessee Higher Education Commission

**Topics:**

Overview of national and Montana-specific enrollment data and trends collected and compiled by WICHE - **Colleen Falkenstern**

Overview of enrollment management trends - **Craig Cornell, Liaison**

College marketing in Wyoming - **Joe Schaeffer**

Insights into a Direct Admissions pilot program in Tennessee - **Steven Gentile**

- Residential Student Access Update | *01:14:08*

Joe Thiel, Interim Deputy Commissioner of Academic, Research and Student Affairs, reviewed the Pell grant expansion of shorter-term programs. He shared details on the approval process of these programs. He addressed some of the major questions that have yet to be answered, shared a timeline for rulemaking and implementation, and discussed eligible programs in Montana.

- Resolution on Direct Admissions and FAFSA Completion | *01:49:14*

Interim Deputy Commissioner Thiel presented the resolution that was passed by the Board of Public Education.

- Campus Reports | *01:52:00*
- Introductions | *01:52:20*



Commissioner Christian announced that Miles Community College was recognized by the Aspen Institute as being one of 200 community colleges eligible for the 2027 Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence.

Commissioner Christian congratulated MUS's Executive Director of Human Resources, Kerry Davant, on being awarded the 2025 Governor's Award for Excellence in Performance.

Tyler Trevor, Deputy Commissioner for Budget and Planning, thanked Shauna Lyons for her invaluable service to the MUS and congratulated her on her new job.

Brock Tessman, Montana State University President, introduced the new Chief Data officer, Luke Schalewski, and announced MSU student Doriane Keiser as a Rhodes Scholar.

Commissioner Christian congratulated Chancellor Reid, UM Western, on his retirement.

Chancellor Reid, UM Western, congratulated Dean of Students, Nicole Hazelbaker on her retirement.

Chancellor Kegel, MUS Northern, announced the unexpected passing of Director of Facilities, Dan Ulmen and shared his condolences.

**Budget, Administration and Audit Committee | 02:09:31**

**CONSENT | 02:10:14**

**Staff Item:**

- a. Labor Agreements; OCHE/MUS ITEM 221-100-R0925 | Attachment #1

**Facility Items:**

- b. Request for Authorization to Grant an Electric Easement to Mission Valley Power at Yellow Bay State Park within Flathead Lake Biological Station Property; UM Missoula ITEM 221-1007-R1125 | Attachment #1
- c. Request for Authorization to Purchase a Multi-family Residential Property located at 524 E. Poindexter Street, Dillon, MT; UM Western ITEM 221-1601-R1125 | Attachment #1 | Attachment #2
- d. Request for Authorization to Construct Renovations in Hamilton Hall; MSU Bozeman ITEM 221-2006-R1125 | Attachment #1
- e. Request for Authorization to Repair and Renovate the Louise Shunk Day Care Center; MSU Bozeman ITEM 221-2008-R1125 | Attachment #1
- f. Request for Authorization to Construct a Montana Motorcycle Rider Safety (MMRS) Range; MSU Billings and Helena College ITEM 221-2701-R1125 | Attachment #1



**Other Items:**

- g. Request for Authorization to Appoint Members to the Fire Services Training Advisory Council; MSU Extension Service ITEM 221-2401-R1125

**ACTION | 02:10:54**

- a. Request for Authority to Design the 2027 Biennium LRBP CD-06 Classrooms and Teaching Labs Modernization; UM Missoula ITEM 221-1008-R1125 | Attachment #1

Dan Stevenson, Directory of Facilities, said the 69th Legislature appropriated a total of \$11,600,000 in funding for Classrooms and Teaching Lab Modernization at University of Montana-Missoula. This project will improve the function and quality of instruction space across campus. UM requested, and was granted, authorization to expend \$1,500,000 to plan and design these improvements. This project will improve classrooms and teaching laboratories. UM will request future authority for construction once planning and design are substantially complete to provide estimated project costs. The proposed work will be paid for with long-range building funds appropriated in the 69th Legislative Session.

- b. Request for Authorization to Issue Facilities Revenue Bonds for Energy Performance Contracts (EPC) for Multi-year, Multi-phased Projects; MSU Bozeman ITEM 221-2007-R1125 | Attachment #1 | Attachment #2 | Attachment #3 | Attachment #4

MSU Vice President, Terry Leist, presented this item for authorizing MSU to issue a new series of facilities improvement revenue bonds and authorizing MSU and the Commissioner of Higher Education to proceed with the issuance of these bonds with a value of up to \$28,000,000 to implement energy performance contracts (EPC) for multi-year, multi-phased projects to address deferred maintenance across the MSU campus.

- c. Request for Authorization to Issue Facilities Revenue Bonds for Major Maintenance Projects; MSU Billings ITEM 221-2702-R1125 | Attachment #1 | Attachment #2

Vice President Liest presented this item requesting authorization to MSU to issue a new series of facilities improvement revenue bonds for Montana State University Billings and authorizing MSU and the Commissioner of Higher Education to proceed with the issuance of bonds with a value of up to \$7,000,000 to address multiple major maintenance projects specific to upgrades to three elevator systems.

- d. Request for Authorization to Execute the Refunding of the Series E 2018 Bonds, Series G 2021 Bonds, and Series K-1 2024 Bonds; MSU Bozeman ITEM 221-2009-R1125 | Attachment #1



Vice President Leist presented the request for authorization to refund a series of three bonds. He said this item would give MSU and its financial advisors flexibility to execute the refunding of Series E 2018, Series G 2021, and Series K-1 2024 Bonds, depending on market conditions. The refund is expected to be completed between March 2026 and December 2026.

- e. Request for Authorization to Construct Major Maintenance Projects; MSU Billings ITEM 221-2703-R1125 | Attachment #1

Dan Stevenson, Director of Facilities, presented this item requesting authorization for MSUB to spend up to \$6,200,000 for major maintenance projects to replace the elevator systems in the Liberal Arts, Petro Hall, and College of Education Buildings at MSUB. The work will be conducted with non-state funds.

**INFORMATION** | 02:22:26

- a. Long-Range Building Program (LRBP), 2027 Biennium
  - o LRBP Process and Planning

Deputy Commissioner Trevor presented a detailed overview of the planning and process of developing LRBP project priorities during the biennial cycle. He explained how projects are prioritized across the MUS and shared a detailed history of project funding over the past 25 years.

- o Preliminary Consolidated LRBP List

Dan Stevenson said the Preliminary LRBP Capital Project list consists of eleven projects with MSU Bozeman's Cheever Hall Deferred Maintenance and Accessibility Modernization as the top priority on the list.

- o Major Maintenance: UM | MSU

Dan Stevenson presented the lists for both MSU and UM with each side representing roughly the same cost for projects addressing deferred maintenance and repair needs.

- b. MSU Student Housing Update

Vice President Liest provided a housing update, including facilities added over the past 13 years and current housing inventory and occupancy rates.

Duane Morris, Vice President for Auxiliary Services, presented the results of an assessment study done in 2024 indicating new residence halls are needed to allow for renovations of existing residence halls to accommodate more students choosing to live



on campus. He shared the design and construction details of a 250-300 bed facility and gave an overview of some deferred maintenance projects. Discussion followed.

c. UM Capital Projects Update

President Bodnar reviewed the infrastructure at UM and the essential services it provides. He provided details of the largest infrastructure renewal in UM's history and shared a map highlighting where renovations have taken place along with future projects. He gave a breakdown of where the funds come from and said that the debt coverage ratio is now higher, which allows for more flexibility for future productivity.

Paula Short, UM Vice President Administration and Finance, said that the next planning phase is the 2025 SW Quadrant Campus Master Plan which is guided by student feedback and is a major factor in student success. She discussed the completed projects from the 2019 Student Life Master Plan along with the upcoming projects in the 2025 SW Quadrant Campus Master Plan.

Jameel Chaudhry, Interim Director of Facility Services, shared a presentation on the new residence hall opening in the fall of 2027.

Vice President Short said the infrastructure renewal at UM is to create spaces where students can reach their goals and places for community to gather. Discussion followed.

**Academic, Research and Student Affairs Committee | 03:49:35**

**CONSENT | 03:49:45**

**Emeriti Faculty:**

- a. Brown; UM Missoula ITEM 221-1001-R1125
- b. Wright; UM Missoula ITEM 221-1002-R1125
- c. Marlow; MSU Bozeman ITEM 221-2002-R1125
- d. Sowell; MSU Bozeman ITEM 221-2003-R1125
- e. McDermott; MSU Bozeman ITEM 221-2004-R1125
- f. Dockey; MSU Bozeman ITEM 221-2005-R1125

**Tenure Faculty:**

- g. MSU Bozeman; ITEM 221-2000-R1125

**ACTION | 03:50:03**

- a. Regents Professor Nomination, UM Missoula ITEM 221-1005-R1125 | Attachment #1



President Bodnar presented the request for authorization to award a Regents Professorship to Professor Julia Galloway. He highlighted her accomplishments and achievements and shared a video. Discussion followed.

A motion to approve action item a. ITEM 221-1005-R1125, was made by Regent Jasper; motion passed (7-0).

Professor Galloway shared her appreciation and gratitude for the honor of being awarded Regents professor and thanked her colleagues, family, and students.

- b. Honorary Doctorate, UM Missoula ITEM 221-1006-R1125 | Attachment #1

President Bodnar presented the request to award an honorary doctorate to Lana Batts.

- c. Honorary Doctorate, MSU Bozeman ITEM 221-2001-R1125 | Attachment #1

President Tessman presented the request to award an honorary doctorate to Colonel Eric Hastings.

- d. Request to Plan Proposals | Supporting Documentation

Interim Deputy Commissioner Thiel presented the request to plan proposal to plan the Eloise Cobell Land and Culture Institute at UM; the request to plan to transition Jake Jabs College of Business and Entrepreneurship from a single department model to a three department structure consisting of Accounting and Finance, Management and Entrepreneurship, and Marketing and Analytics at MSU; and the request for authorization to plan a Western Lands and Waters Center at UM Western. Discussion followed.

- e. AI Centers/Institutes | MSU Bozeman ITEM 221-2012-R1125 | UM Missoula ITEM 221-1007-R1125 | Attachment #1

Interim Deputy Commissioner Thiel shared the need for campuses to have AI centered institutes to connect faculty and staff across the MUS to support a system wide approach to prepare students to use AI. He discussed the framework and said there is an AI task force set up to coordinate this effort.

Provost Robert Mokwa, MSU, presented the proposal to establish the MSU Institute on Artificial Intelligence and stressed its vital importance. He provided a detailed overview of the 4 components of the proposed institute and said that the MSU and UM Institutes would be complementary efforts. He spoke about grants available for the proposed institute. Discussion followed.

Provost Adrea Lawrence, UM, shared the request to plan proposal for the Center for Human-Centered AI and presented the key components of the request. She also emphasized the two institutes would allow for cross collaboration within the MUS. Discussion followed.



- f. Request for Authorization to Revise BOR Policies | MUS/OCHE ITEM 221-101-R1125 | Attachment #1
  - o 301.11 - Undergraduate Degree Requirements | Attachment #1
  - o 303.1 - Academic Program Proposals | Attachment #1

Interim Deputy Commissioner Thiel said these revisions clarify definitions in regard to Bachelor's Degree programs and their requirements.

### INFORMATION

#### Academic Review Items:

- a. Academic Approval Items
- b. Degree Approval Tracking
- c. Program Reviews

Interim Deputy Commissioner Thiel reviewed these three academic review items. He said Item a. is a step in the request to plan process for final approval; Item b. is the detailed tracking list of degree approvals across the MUS; Item c. is the campus review all programs undergo on a 7-year cycle.

#### Strategic Priority Items:

- d. Rural Healthcare Panel

Kailyn Mock, Director of the Office of Rural Health at MSU, shared a map of the current landscape and challenges of rural health care in Montana. She discussed the top statewide health concerns, how Montanans define a healthy community, how they learn about health services, and ways to improve healthcare. She addressed workforce development challenges and ways to overcome those challenges. Director Mock reviewed the Rural Health Transformation Program and listed the partnership opportunities that exist with MUS collaboration with clinical partners.

Dean Matt Fete, UM College of Health, gave an overview of the academic programs and degrees within the College of Health and said many alumni are now serving in leadership roles across Montana. He shared a list of the College of Health centers and clinics that are substantially funded to support health research across all of Montana's counties. He discussed the opportunities the Providence Health Partnership with UM will provide.

Dr. Dan Spoon, Chief Medical Officer at Providence, shared a detailed presentation on Resolve: A Providence and UM Rural Health Collaborative. He gave a brief history, explained the model being used, Resolve's mission and vision, and why it works. He



said that it is funded philanthropically and that Resolve will be transformative to rural health care. Discussion followed.

f. MUS Research Metrics | Forestry and Fire Research Panel

Interim Deputy Commissioner Thiel provided an MUS research metrics update including a year-to-year change in research activity and a federal budget outlook. He said Montana is the fastest growing research enterprise in the country.

Dr. Rob Walker, Project Director for the Smart Fires Program, explained what Smart Fires is and their mission. He reviewed the EPSCoR track 1 projects and their long-term success since 2001. He discussed the Smart Fires Program across Montana, including participating institutions, faculty members, and development awards. He highlighted the impact that EPSCoR has had on the MUS and on Montana.

Dr. Libby Metcalf, UM lead for EPSCoR, discussed the building infrastructure, shared the current Smart Fires partners, and highlighted some of the work they are doing and training opportunities available. She reviewed the Partner Roundtable 2025 All Hands Meeting and said there is an upcoming two-day summer workshop. She introduced two students who shared their experiences being part of the Smart Fires Program.

Zia Maumenee, Headwaters Tech Hub representative, shared the vision of Headwaters Tech Hub to be a global leader in advanced smart photonic sensing and said the funding of \$45.9 million will be used to develop five component projects. Discussion followed.

Public Comment | 06:26:49

Jenny Levy, Creative Director, UM Marketing and Communications Unit, invited the BOR and attendees to attend the reception at the Lodge Dining Center and said the Lodge reflects UM's commitment to elevate the student experience. She discussed how visitation at the Lodge by students, faculty, staff, and families has increased since it opened.

Brady Schwertfeger, a UM employee, voiced his concerns on UM being a viable place of employment.

e. Montana's Grow Your Own Educator

Dr. Angela McLean, OCHE Director of American Indian/Minority Achievement and K-12 Partnerships, presented on the 2025 legislative appropriation for the Montana Grow Your Own Educator program. She said that award recipients to conduct this work are MSU Bozeman with Blackfeet Community College and the University of Montana Western. Dr. McLean highlighted that the Montana educator recruitment and retention landscape has a full slate of educator prep mechanisms that have been intentionally developed since the Board prioritized this focus in 2016 and that Montana leads the way



in this space. She concluded that Montana needs to continue to invest in the developed initiatives and infrastructure while also looking to grow the high school to educator prep pipeline. Discussion followed.

**Friday, November 21, 2025**

Meeting Convened at 8:32 a.m.

**Two Year and Community College Committee | 06:46:42**

**INFORMATION | 06:48:19**

a. Validated Skills Training Task Force Recommendations | Attachment #1

Dean Stephanie Erdmann, Great Falls College, said the recommendations are to build a coherent statewide framework to strengthen noncredit training across the MUS. She gave an overview of the taskforce, and the work it does. She said non-credit pathways are essential to strengthen local and statewide economies and can be gateways to credit bearing programs. Dean Erdmann discussed the Non-Credit Mobility Academy and detailed the workforce initiatives that will create a modern, responsive workforce ecosystem. She said there is widespread confusion surrounding non-credit training and how it connects to the MUS. She noted that the task force has several one-page fliers to explain what validated skill training is and how it connects learners to jobs.

Dean Tom Gallagher, Missoula College, shared a presentation of the seven recommendations from the task force to bring coherence, transparency, and alignment to the non-credit system. He thanked the committee members and partners that contributed to this work for the past 2 years. Discussion followed

b. Educational Design Labs Year2Career Phase II

Dr. Angela McLean highlighted that a second phase of the Education Design Lab micro pathway development work was funded by the Dennis and Phyllis Washington Foundation for the next two years. Eight campuses will develop pathways in education, healthcare, and the trades. Dr. McLean said that through a state appropriation to DPHHS and in partnership with them, OCHE will develop micro pathways in developmental disabilities and behavioral health. Dr. McLean added that the Future Ready effort (outlined in the STARS Act) provides an intentional pathway in supporting K-12 schools to meet the MUS in supporting more students. Discussion followed.

**Committee Reports & Action | 07:44:48**

- Resolution on Direct Admissions and FAFSA Completion | 221-102-R1125 | Attachment # 1

A motion for approval of Resolution on Direct Admissions and FAFSA Completion was made by Regent Hoyer; motion passed (7-0).



- Budget, Administration and Audit Committee | 07:45:37

**CONSENT** | 07:45:39

**Staff Item:**

- a. Labor Agreements; OCHE/MUS ITEM 221-100-R0925 | Attachment #1

**Facility Items:**

- b. Request for Authorization to Grant an Electric Easement to Mission Valley Power at Yellow Bay State Park within Flathead Lake Biological Station Property; UM Missoula ITEM 221-1007-R1125 | Attachment #1
- c. Request for Authorization to Purchase a Multi-family Residential Property located at 524 E. Poindexter Street, Dillon, MT; UM Western ITEM 221-1601-R1125 | Attachment #1 | Attachment #2
- d. Request for Authorization to Construct Renovations in Hamilton Hall; MSU Bozeman ITEM 221-2006-R1125 | Attachment #1
- e. Request for Authorization to Repair and Renovate the Louise Shunk Day Care Center; MSU Bozeman ITEM 221-2008-R1125 | Attachment #1
- f. Request for Authorization to Construct a Montana Motorcycle Rider Safety (MMRS) Range; MSU Billings and Helena College ITEM 221-2701-R1125 | Attachment #1

**Other Items:**

- g. Request for Authorization to Appoint Members to the Fire Services Training Advisory Council; MSU Extension Service ITEM 221-2401-R1125

A motion for approval of consent items a.- g. was made by Regent Jasper; motion passed (7-0).

**ACTION** | 07:46:15

- a. Request for Authority to Design the 2027 Biennium LRBP CD-06 Classrooms and Teaching Labs Modernization; UM Missoula ITEM 221-1008-R1125 | Attachment #1

A motion for approval of action item a. ITEM 221-1008-R01125 was made by Regent Dombrowski; motion passed (7-0).

- b. Request for Authorization to Issue Facilities Revenue Bonds for Energy Performance Contracts (EPC) for Multi-year, Multi-phased Projects; MSU Bozeman ITEM 221-2007-R1125 | Attachment #1 | Attachment #2 | Attachment #3 | Attachment #4

A motion for approval of action item b. ITEM 221-2007-R01125 was made by Regent Dombrowski; motion passed (7-0).



- c. Request for Authorization to Issue Facilities Revenue Bonds for Major Maintenance Projects; MSU Billings ITEM 221-2702-R1125 | Attachment #1 | Attachment #2

A motion for approval of action item c. ITEM 221-2702-R01125 was made by Regent Southworth; motion passed (7-0).

- d. Request for Authorization to Execute the Refunding of the Series E 2018 Bonds, Series G 2021 Bonds, and Series K-1 2024 Bonds; MSU Bozeman ITEM 221-2009-R1125 | Attachment #1

A motion for approval of action item d. ITEM 221-2009-R01125 was made by Regent Dombrowski; motion passed (7-0).

- e. Request for Authorization to Construct Major Maintenance Projects; MSU Billings ITEM 221-2703-R1125 | Attachment #1

A motion for approval of action item e. ITEM 221-2703-R11925 was made by Regent Southworth; motion passed (7-0).

Academic, Research and Student Affairs Committee | 07:48:26

**CONSENT** | 07:48:10

**Emeriti Faculty:**

- a. Brown; UM Missoula ITEM 221-1001-R1125
- b. Wright; UM Missoula ITEM 221-1002-R1125
- c. Marlow; MSU Bozeman ITEM 221-2002-R1125
- d. Sowell; MSU Bozeman ITEM 221-2003-R1125
- e. McDermott; MSU Bozeman ITEM 221-2004-R1125
- f. Dockey; MSU Bozeman ITEM 221-2005-R1125

**Tenure Faculty:**

- g. MSU Bozeman; ITEM 221-2000-R1125

A motion for approval of consent items a.- g. was made by Regent Hoyer; motion passed (7-0).

**ACTION** | 07:49:10

- b. Honorary Doctorate, UM Missoula ITEM 221-1006-R1125 | Attachment #1

A motion for approval of action item b. ITEM 221-1006-R11925 was made by Regent Dombrowski; motion passed (7-0).

- c. Honorary Doctorate, MSU Bozeman ITEM 221-2001-R1125 | Attachment #1



A motion for approval of action item c. ITEM 221-2001-R11925 was made by Regent Hoyer; motion passed (7-0).

d. Request to Plan Proposals | Supporting Documentation

A motion for approval of action item d. Request to Plan Proposals was made by Regent Bough; motion passed (7-0).

e. AI Centers/Institutes | MSU Bozeman ITEM 221-2012-R1125 | UM Missoula ITEM 221-1007-R1125 | Attachment #1

A motion for approval of action item e. ITEM 221-2012-R1125 was made by Regent Folkvord; motion passed (6-1). Regent Jasper opposed the motion.

f. Request for Authorization to Revise BOR Policies | MUS/OCHE ITEM 221-101-R1125 | Attachment #1

- o 301.11 - Undergraduate Degree Requirements | Attachment #1
- o 303.1 - Academic Program Proposals | Attachment #1

A motion for approval of action item f. ITEM 221-101-R1125 was made by Regent Bough; motion passed (7-0).

Public Comment | 07:52:03

Buddy Wilson UM President of Associated Students shared some highlights on how students at UM are modeling inclusive prosperity.

Appeal #1  
Appeal #2  
Appeal #3

Chair Buchanan explained the process related to appeals. He called for a motion to hear the appeals. No motion was made to hear the appeals, and therefore the Commissioner's decisions were upheld.

Education Interim Committee / Board of Regents Joint Session | 08:08:49

- Welcome and Introductions

Chair Buchanan expressed his gratitude for the MUS's partnerships with the Executive and Legislative Branches that advance public education.

EDIC Chair, Representative Linda Reksten, discussed the 2025 Legislative Session and some of the bills that passed that dealt with teacher pay and facility maintenance. She acknowledged Senator Novak and expressed her gratitude for the opportunity to meet with the BOR.



- Dual Enrollment Update

Chase Stahl, OCHE Data Specialist, said the 2024-25 Dual Enrollment Report includes several key metrics including growth rates, public high school participations rates, public high school student participation rates, pass rates, and matriculation rates. Overall, the MUS dual enrollment program is displaying patterns aligned with broader national trends, particularly in rising participation rates and sustained growth. Mr. Stahl said in-person concurrent enrollment represents the primary modality and credit type of MUS dual enrollment programs. He said 68% of dual enrollment students continue in higher education after high school graduation and on average, these students achieve higher graduation and retention rates than students who did not participate in dual enrollment. Discussion followed.

Jacque Treaster, OCHE Director of Dual Enrollment and Career & Technical Education, introduced a panel to discuss how workforce-aligned dual enrollment can shape students' futures and strengthen Montana's talent pipeline. The panelists included UM Pre-Nursing student Ariana Dahl, Hamilton High School principal Marlin Lewis, Corvallis High School Counselor Josh Hattabaugh, Bitterroot College Director Kristina Berger, and Sentinel High School Assistant Principal Jennifer Terzo. Discussion followed.

- HB 252 (STARS Act) Future Ready Payment Implementation

Interim Deputy Commissioner Thiel provided an overview of the STARS Act explaining what it is and the parameters required for school districts to receive this funding. He said the first payments will go out in 2028 and toolkits are being developed so districts understand what is required, adding those should be finalized in January. Discussion followed

- Ongoing Collaboration

Chair Buchanan expressed his gratitude for the ongoing collaboration with the Education Interim Committee.

Senator Novak discussed her concerns with administrative capacity and enough open slots for students who want to enroll in programs as dual enrollment and CTE rates increase.

EDIC Chair Reksten discussed some of work the legislature needs to do going forward, emphasized the importance of getting to students earlier with career building programs, and shared her gratitude for the ongoing partnership with the MUS.

Representative Shelly Fyant highlighted Salish Kootenai College as an institution that offers dual credit.

The meeting adjourned at 11:48 a.m.



MONTANA UNIVERSITY SYSTEM

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Approved by the Board of Regents  
on

January 14, 2026

Date

Handwritten signature of Clayton T. Christian in cursive.

Clayton T. Christian  
Commissioner of Higher Education  
and Secretary to the Board of Regents

January 14, 2026

Date

Handwritten signature of Todd Buchanan in cursive.

Todd Buchanan  
Chair, Board of Regents