1	HOUSE BILL NO. 162
2	INTRODUCED BY N. SCHWADERER
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4	A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT REVISING LAWS RELATED TO THE MONTANA DIGITAL
5	ACADEMY; CLARIFYING THAT A PURPOSE OF THE ACADEMY IS TO PROVIDE COURSES FOR MEETING
6	GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS; PROVIDING FUNDING FOR THE ACADEMY THROUGH FEES FOR
7	COURSES PAID BY SCHOOL DISTRICTS; ESTABLISHING COMPENSATION AMOUNTS FOR TEACHERS;
8	PROHIBITING LIMITS ON THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS ENROLLED OR COURSES TAKEN AT THE
9	ACADEMY; AMENDING SECTION 20-7-1201, MCA; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE."
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11	BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:
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13	**Section 1.** Section 20-7-1201, MCA, is amended to read:
14	**"20-7-1201. Montana digital academy -- purposes -- governance.** (1) There is a Montana digital
15	academy at a unit of the Montana university system.
16	(2) The purposes of the Montana digital academy are to:
17	(a) make distance learning opportunities available to all school-age children through public school
18	districts in the state of Montana;
19	(b) offer high-quality instructors who are licensed and endorsed in Montana and courses that are in
20	compliance with all relevant education and distance learning rules, standards, and policies; ~~and~~
21	(c) emphasize the core subject matters required under the accreditation standards, offer advanced
22	courses for dual credit in collaboration with the Montana university system, and offer enrichment courses; and
23	(d) offer courses that allow a student to meet the minimum graduation requirements established in the
24	accreditation standards and enact enrollment policies allowing a student to pursue the student's high school
25	diploma through online distance learning.
26	(3) The Montana digital academy must be governed by a board with equal representation from:
27	(a) the commissioner of higher education or a designee;
28	(b) the superintendent of public instruction or a designee;
29	(c) a Montana-licensed and Montana-endorsed classroom teacher appointed by the board of public
30	education;

1   (d) a Montana-licensed school district administrator appointed by the board of public education;

2   (e) a trustee of a Montana school district appointed by the board of public education;

3   (f) the dean of the school of education of the hosting unit of the Montana university system or a designee

4   as a nonvoting member; and

5   (g) the two officers provided for in subsection (5) as nonvoting members.

6   (4) The governing board shall elect a presiding officer and vice presiding officer to 2-year terms without

7   limitation on the number of terms.

8   (5) The governing board shall hire a program director and a curriculum director who shall serve as chief

9   executive officer and vice chief executive officer respectively on the governing board in a nonvoting capacity. The

10   program director shall develop and, upon approval of the governing board, implement and publish policies and

11   guidelines for the Montana digital academy pertaining to:

12   (a) course offerings;

13   (b) software and hardware selection;

14   (c) instructor selection;

15   (d) partnering school agreements;

16   (e) instructor training and curriculum development;

17   (f) course evaluation;

18   (g) grant opportunities; and

19   (h) other activities that are essential to the success of a statewide distance learning program."

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21   NEW SECTION. **Section 2. Funding -- teacher compensation.** (1) In addition to any amount

22   appropriated to the Montana digital academy by the legislature, beginning July 1, 2016, school districts enrolling

23   students at the digital academy shall pay to the digital academy:

24   (a) for each original credit course a fee equal to the per-ANB entitlement for a student divided by 16 then

25   multiplied by:

26   (i) 0.85 per student per course for a student's first three courses within a school fiscal year; and

27   (ii) 0.70 per student per course for a student's fourth course and any additional courses taken by the

28   student within a school fiscal year;

29   (b) for each credit recovery course a fee equal to the per-ANB entitlement for a student divided by 16

30   then multiplied by 0.5 per student per course.

1   (2) For the purposes of the calculations in subsection (1), the per-ANB entitlement is the amount for

2   either the 800th or 1,000th ANB for a particular student pursuant to 20-9-306(15).

3   (3)   The program director of the Montana digital academy shall implement policies for teacher

4   compensation with minimum compensation amounts as follows:

5   (a) for original credit courses, $500 per course plus $150 for every student enrolled; and

6   (b) for credit recovery courses, $3,000 per course to supervise no more than 100 students at any time.

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8   NEW SECTION. **Section 3. Enrollment.** The Montana digital academy may not limit the number of

9   students it enrolls or the number of courses students are allowed to enroll in.

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11   NEW SECTION. **Section 4. Codification instruction.** [Sections 2 and 3] are intended to be codified

12   as an integral part of Title 20, chapter 7, part 12, and the provisions of Title 20, chapter 7, part 12, apply to

13   [sections 2 and 3].

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15   NEW SECTION. **Section 5. Effective date.** [This act] is effective July 1, 2015.

16   - END -