



## Board of Public Education

### BOARD MEMBERS

#### APPOINTED MEMBERS:

Darlene Schottle - Chair  
Big Fork

Tammy Lacey - Vice Chair  
Great Falls

Madalyn Quinlan  
Helena

Anne Keith  
Bozeman

Jesse Barnhart  
Broadus

Mary Jo Bremner  
Browning

Vacant

Paris Becker, Student Rep.  
Fairfield

#### EX OFFICIO MEMBERS:

Clayton Christian  
Commissioner of  
Higher Education

Elsie Arntzen,  
Superintendent of  
Public Instruction

Steve Bullock, Governor

#### EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:

Pete Donovan

Date: April 13, 2020

To: The Staff, Students and Community of Montana School for the Deaf and Blind

I would first like to take a moment during this unprecedented global health emergency to extend a thank you, on behalf of the Board of Public Education, for your added responsibility and care for the students who attend the Montana School for the Deaf and Blind. The staff is to be commended for their innovative practices in working remotely with the students and those of you at home supporting the instruction are "home heroes" for implementing and supporting these educational efforts. We all hope that we will be able to return to a new normal in the near future.

I also wanted to update you on the search for a new superintendent for MSDB. This school, like many others throughout the state and country, are struggling to recruit staff and/or new leadership at a time of restricted travel, social distancing and a reluctance to relocate in these unusual times. We have not been able to recruit a pool of candidates and would not be able to interview them in the current circumstances even if we had been successful.

Given these circumstances, and the fact that we have had excellent feedback on Mr. Furthmyre's skill and dedication as the interim superintendent; we are suspending the MSDB superintendent search for this year. We have asked Mr. Furthmyre and he has accepted, to extend his current contract as the interim superintendent through June 30, 2021. We appreciate his willingness to continue to serve in this capacity and support the programs and students of MSDB. The Board of Public Education will revisit the process and timelines for the selection of a new superintendent in the fall of 2020.

Thank you for your understanding and continue to practice safe habits.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Darlene Schottle Ed.D.".

Darlene Schottle Ed.D.  
Chairperson of the Montana Board of Public Education