

Shadow an Educator

Given the important decisions the Montana Legislature makes regarding school funding, please take advantage of this valuable opportunity to give your legislators firsthand knowledge of education issues in your local community.

Montana PTA is contacting lawmakers, school administrators, PTA and other education leaders throughout the state asking them to participate in this program.

Should you have additional questions regarding this program, please feel free to contact the Montana PTA office at 628-9007.

Thanks to all of you who are taking action by contacting your representatives and asking school officials to prepare and participate in this program.

**"To accomplish great things,
we must not only act but also
dream, not only plan but also
believe."**

-Anatole France



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Montana PTA is delighted to share details of a program designed to develop non-partisan, two-way, meaningful, communication between schools and lawmakers.

The Shadow an Educator program encourages a lawmaker to follow a school staff member for the day, helping students in the classroom, familiarizing themselves with teachers' expected grade level curriculum, eating lunch with students and staff, and observing students in physical activities, particularly at recess. This is also an opportunity to speak to administrative staff about their roles in running an effective educational environment.

The State of Montana spends a large percentage of the general fund on education, yet the state of education is in urgent need. We, as a state, need to improve the communication flow between lawmakers and educators so that changes may be made, structurally and financially, to solve this dilemma. "Shadow an Educator" is an opportunity for lawmakers to visit a school in their district and to follow an educator and observe their everyday experiences and obstacles. This opportunity for open dialogue about demands on school staff and finances may lead to potential solutions on how to restructure and invest in our educational system.

Suggested Procedure:

1. PTA leaders contact a legislator in their district, introduce themselves, invite lawmaker to "Shadow an Educator," and provide contact information for their school.
2. PTA leaders contact the administrator in their school, encourage the administrator to invite a lawmaker to their school, and provide contact information for lawmakers from their district.
3. Contact local media -- newspapers, radio and televisions stations -- to invite them to participate and cover your local representatives' visit.
4. Request a brief summary of the event experience from both lawmakers and educators and forward to Montana PTA's office.



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Legislative Contact Information:

Please ask your lawmakers and schools to submit a letter to the editor of your local newspaper to voice their experiences and opinions about their visit. Also ask them to share their experiences with fellow representatives.

Information regarding the Legislative session may be found at:

<http://leg.mt.gov/css/default.asp>

Representative Name

MT House of Representatives
PO Box 200400
Helena, MT 59620-0400
406-444-4800
406-444-4825 (fax)

Senator Name

Montana Senate
PO Box 200500
Helena, MT 59620-0500
406-444-4800
406-444-4875 (fax)