

MONTANA ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL BUSINESS OFFICIALS FEBRUARY 2015

MASBO is dedicated to training and supporting the people responsible for business operations in Montana schools. Our goal is to enable members to manage the business in order to support education for Montana children.



MASBO Staff

Denise Williams, Executive Director
406-461-3659 or dwilliams@masbo.com

Marie Roach, Administrative Assistant/
E-rate Specialist
406-461-8804 or mroach@masbo.com

REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN (register at www.masbo.com)

BUDGET WORKSHOPS

Cost is \$80 per workshop – lunch on your own

Tuesday, March 24	Great Falls (Hampton Inn)
Monday, March 30	Miles City (Sleep Inn & Suites)
Tuesday, March 31	Billings (Billings Hotel & Convention Center)
Thursday, April 9	Missoula (Courtyard Marriott)

SPRING REGIONAL WORKSHOPS

Cost is \$90 per workshop – lunch included

Region 1	Tuesday, March 24	Kalispell (Hilton Garden Inn)
Region 2	Wednesday, March 25	Great Falls (Hampton Inn)
Region 3	Thursday, April 2	Sidney (Microtel Inn & Suites)
Region 4	Thursday, March 26	Bozeman (Holiday Inn)
Region 5	Wednesday, April 1	Billings (Billings Hotel & Convention Center)
Region 6	Wednesday, April 1	Miles City (Sleep Inn & Suites)

OTHER TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

MTSBA SCHOOL BUDGETING AND FINANCE SYMPOSIUM

Click here to register: www.mtsba.org
(scroll down the page to find link)

Wednesday, March 25	Bozeman
Thursday, March 26	Great Falls
Monday, March 30	Billings
Tuesday, March 31	Miles City
Wednesday, April 1	Glasgow
Thursday, April 2	Havre
Tuesday, April 7	Missoula
Wednesday, April 8	Whitefish
Monday, April 13	Helena



MONTANA SOCIETY OF CPAs INDUSTRY & FINANCIAL PROFESSIONALS CONFERENCE

March 18 & 19 in Helena

For more information click on this link:
https://www.mscca.org/professional_development/course/0515/industry_financial_professionals_conference

MASBO Board of Directors

President	Mike Arnold, Havre Schools	Region 1 Director	Cindy Foley, West Valley Schools
Vice-President	Tammy Tulberg, Target Range Schools	Region 2 Director	Lucinda Woodland, Cascade Schools
Past President	Jacki Young, Fairview Schools	Region 3 Director	Rhonda Opp, Medicine Lake Schools
Fiscal Agent	Kim Aarstad, East Helena Schools	Region 4 Director	Lorie Carey, Jefferson Co. High School
Ex-Officio, MSUIP	Denise Williams	Region 5 Director	Rita Huck, Huntley Project Schools
Ex-Officio, OPI	Janelle Mickelson	Region 6 Director	Jen Mettler, Baker Schools

DO YOU KNOW AN OUTSTANDING SCHOOL BUSINESS OFFICIAL?

MASBO is accepting nominations for 2015 Outstanding Business Official. Co-workers, teachers, trustees, district administration, other school business officials, OPI employees, and county or state officials may nominate [a current, active MASBO member](#) (past recipients, current officers and directors of MASBO are not eligible during their term of office).

Please submit a letter of nomination and two letters of recommendation that support the nomination. The letter of nomination should include the nominee's name, job title and school district and state the specific reasons the person is nominated, including: 1) contributions to public education in Montana at the school, community, county, state and federal levels, 2) contributions to civic and public organizations, and 3) the nominee's service to students. Nomination materials may be emailed to dwilliams@masbo.com.

NOMINATION DEADLINE IS MARCH 31, 2015.

ACCEPTING NOMINATIONS FOR MASBO VICE-PRESIDENT

The MASBO Board of Directors is now accepting nominations for Vice-President. This office is elected at large for a 2-year term beginning July 1, 2015, and shall automatically succeed to the office of President, also for a 2-year term. The office of President automatically succeeds to the office of Past-President for another 2-year term. The total time commitment for this level of leadership is 6 years.

The Vice-President should be familiar with the MASBO by-laws and policies and procedures, perform the duties of the President in his or her absence, attend all board meetings, attend an Executive Board meeting to develop a budget for the upcoming year, oversee the mentoring program, and perform other duties as delegated by the President.

You may nominate someone for Vice-President by doing one of the following:

1. Send an email to Denise at dwilliams@masbo.com, or
2. Nominate the person at your spring regional workshop during the MASBO business meeting, or
3. Nominate the person at the 2015 MASBO summer conference opening business meeting.

Note: Please visit with the person you intend to nominate so that they have a chance to consider the time commitment and discuss it with their family, superintendent and/or board before accepting the nomination.

If more than one person is nominated, there will an election at the summer conference.
Questions? Contact Denise at (406) 442-5599.



MASBO 2015 SALARY SURVEY

Please take a few moments to click on the link below and complete the annual salary and benefits survey. We'll keep it open until **by Monday, March 16**. After that, I'll send a message with a link to the results and will post it on the MASBO website with the survey results from previous years.

<https://fs3.formsite.com/masbo/form27/index.html>

MASBO Summer Conference Theme: GREAT Today, GREATER Tomorrow

The 2015 summer conference theme focuses on the key characteristics that make our public schools so great:

- G**overned by Elected Trustees
- R**esponsive to the Needs of Each Community
- E**xcellent, Efficient, Equitable and Empowered
- A**dvancing Student Achievement for Each Child
- T**rusted through Transparency and Openness

School business officials and other business office staff are instrumental in helping their school district attain and support these characteristics. MASBO's goal is to enable our members, through training and technical support, to manage school business operations in order to support public education for Montana's children. As stated in our Core Organizational Values, MASBO:

- is focused on our membership;
- is committed to absolute integrity and accountability;
- embraces and respects Montana public schools' commitment to meeting the needs and differences of every child, every day;
- embraces change, innovation and new ideas; and
- encourages involvement, collaboration and community.

Join us at the 2015 MASBO Summer Conference to celebrate your work to promote, support, enhance and preserve the key characteristics both today and into the future. The conference will be held at Grouse Mountain Lodge in Whitefish, June 17-19, with New Clerk Academy on June 15-17 (software user group meetings on June 16 for all, including new clerks). See www.masbo.com for more information.

MONTANA CONFERENCE OF EDUCATION LEADERSHIP

Save the date! The Montana Conference of Education Leadership (MCEL) will be held October 14 – 16, 2015 at the Billings Hotel & Convention Center (registration hosts) and Holiday Inn Grand. Stay tuned for more information in the coming months.



P-CARD NEWS-----

APRIL — DECEMBER 2014 PURCHASES REPORT

The annual p-Card rebate is based on total purchases for the period April 1 through March 31. A report showing the district-by-district purchasing activity, by month, for April 2014 through December 2014 (nine months) is posted on the MASBO website at: <http://www.masbo.com/files/MASBO%20P-CARD%20DEC%202014.pdf>. Total purchases as of December 2014 is **\$9,516,775**, an increase of almost \$1 million from total purchases for the full 12-month rebate period last year!

The number of p-Card participants has grown from 81 as of March 31, 2014 to 87 as of December 31, 2014. There are an additional 10 district that have either applied, are in the process of applying or have inquired about the program.

A MESSAGE FROM YOUR MASBO PRESIDENT . . .

Happy New Year to all. Montana's legislative session is in full swing and typical politics are happening on the hill. I hope that everyone realizes that public schools are under attack and that you'll take a few moments to let your local representatives and senators know how important it is for them to support public education in Montana.

During the 2013 Legislative session, the education groups (MASBO, MEA-MFT, MQEC, MREA, MTSBA and SAM) came together to form a broad front to combat the war on public education and this session is no different. We have again come together to get our word out there in the various publications that go out to our legislators and the public we serve. In addition to the Great Work of Montana Public Schools, Vol. II, the Montana Public Education Center (MT-PEC) has issued four Issue Spotlights:

- Governor Bullock's 2017 Biennium K-12 Budget Summary
- School Choice in Montana
- The First Annual Analysis of Media Coverage of the Great Work of Montana's Public Schools
- Early Edge Montana – The Time is Now

These and other issues spring from the Adopted Priorities of the K-12 Vision Group, which is comprised of school business officials, teachers, elected trustees, superintendents and principals from across the state and representing all class sizes.

The above publications and more information on the K-12 Vision Group can be found on the MT-PEC website at www.mt-pec.org.

As key participants of a public school district's leadership team, I hope that you as our MASBO membership understand the importance of our collaboration and compromise with the other MT-PEC partners during the 2015 legislative session. As your MASBO board, please know we do have your best interest at heart. MASBO has evolved in the last few years from just being in the background with little input to being one of the recognized organizations with something significant to offer. We strive to operate in a way that shows our commitment to public education and the success of our students.

Again, please let your voice be heard. Contact your local legislators and tell them how important public education is to Montana and your local school. Click on this link for various methods of communicating with your legislator and tips on how to write your message: <http://leg.mt.gov/css/About-the-Legislature/Lawmaking-Process/contact-legislators.asp>.

Please don't hesitate to contact any of our MASBO board with questions or concerns you have; that is what we are here for.

Sincerely,
Mike Arnold
MASBO President



MASBO ENDORSES THESE PROGRAMS



Montana School Unemployment Insurance Program
Theresa LeSueur, Director
406-457-4407
tlesueur@mtsba.org
<http://mtsba.org/InsuranceServices/tabid/98/Default.aspx>



Montana Schools Property & Liability Insurance Plan
Dave Pillatzke, Program Manager
406-457-4531
dpillatzke@paynewest.com
<http://msplip.com/>



Montana Schools Group Insurance Authority
Workers Compensation Insurance
Shawn Bubb, Director of Insurance Services
406-457-4500
sbubb@mtsba.org
<http://msgia.org/Home.aspx>



Healthcare Reform
Section 125 Services
Health Savings Account Services
Debbie Braden, Fringe Benefit Consultant
866-576-0201, ext. 26
Debbie.Braden@americanfidelity.com
<http://www.americanfidelity.com/home.aspx>



Health, Dental, Vision, Life and Long-Term
Disability Benefits
Eric L. Schindler, Chief Executive Officer
406-457-4510
eschindler@ms-sf.org
www.mustbenefits.org

FLEXIBLE SPENDING ACCOUNT TIP (submitted by Debbie Braden, American Fidelity Assurance Co.)

Employees that participate in a Section 125 Flexible Spending Account (FSA) are eligible to claim mileage to and from all doctor's appointments. In order to claim medical mileage the participant must document the total mileage round trip for each doctor visit. Medical mileage is listed under 'Transportation expenses for person to receive medical care' on our eligible expenses list. It reads "Eligible expense if travel is primarily for, and essential to, medical care. Includes car and rental car expenses; bus, taxi, train, plane, and ferry fares; parking and tolls; and ambulance services. The standard medical travel mileage rate is 24¢ per mile for 2013, 23.5¢ per mile for 2014 and 23¢ per mile for 2015." Mileage can be reimbursed for doctor visits, dental visits, eye exams, etc.

PAYROLL REMINDERS and TIPS

Federal copies of 2014 Form W-2 are due to the Social Security Administration by March 2, 2015, (March 31, 2015 if filing electronically).

(<http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-prior/iw2w3--2014.pdf>)

IRS copies of 2014 Form 1099 (with Form 1096 transmittal) are due to the Internal Revenue Service by March 2, 2015 (March 31, 2015 if filing electronically).

(<http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-prior/i1099msc--2014.pdf>)

Send state copies of 2014 Form W-2 and Form 1099 with form MW-3 to the State of Montana by March 2, 2015

https://revenue.mt.gov/home/businesses/wage_withholding

Looking for information about Employment Posters?

Go to <http://wsd.dli.mt.gov/service/posters.asp>

e-News for Payroll Professionals

Sign-up for e-News for Payroll Providers to receive information about:

- Recent legislative changes affecting federal payroll reporting,
- IRS news releases and special announcements pertaining to the payroll industry,
- New employment tax procedures
- Other information specifically affecting federal payroll tax returns.

<http://www.irs.gov/Businesses/Small-Businesses-&Self-Employed/e-News-for-Payroll-Providers>

Links to Useful Publications on the IRS website

[2015 Pub 15](#), Circular E, Employer's Tax Guide

[2015 Pub 15-A](#), Employer's Supplemental Tax Guide (Supplement to Circular E, Employer's Tax Guide, Publication 15)

[2015 Pub 15-B](#), Employer's Tax Guide to Fringe Benefits

[2014 Form W-9](#), Request for Taxpayer Identification Number and Certification

[2014 Inst W-9](#), Instructions for the Requestor of Form W-9, Request for Taxpayer Identification Number and Certification

[2015 Form W-4](#) Employee's Withholding Allowance Certificate

IRS announces 2015 pension plan limitations

<http://www.irs.gov/uac/Newsroom/IRS-Announces-2015-Pension-Plan-Limitations-1>

IRS to Parents: Don't Miss Out on These Tax Savers

(from IRS Tax Tip 2015-14, February 6, 2015)

<http://www.irs.gov/uac/IRS-to-Parents-Dont-Miss-Out-on-These-Tax-Savers>

MASBO CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

MASBO offers a voluntary program of professional certification to provide a recognized standard of competence for school district business managers, district clerks, and specialists eligible for active MASBO membership.

All MASBO members who are in active membership status and who meet the standards and qualifications established by the MASBO Board of Directors may, upon application, be certified for a period of four years. Available certification includes those for Business Specialists, District Clerk/Business Manager (Standard) and Montana Registered School Business Official (MRSBO). One of the criteria for obtaining MRSBO Certification is successful completion of three separate tests. Applicants pursuing the MRSBO may hold a Professional Level I, Professional Level II or Professional Level III Certificate while in the testing process.

Interested? Click on this link to learn more: <http://www.masbo.com/i4a/pages/index.cfm?pageid=3311> about the MASBO Certification Program.

2015 REGULAR SCHOOL ELECTION DAY IS MAY 5, 2015

UPCOMING ELECTION TASKS/DEADLINES

February 24: Last day to request a mail ballot election.

March 6: Deadline for sending a mail ballot election plan, timetable and sample instructions to the Secretary of State's office. Submit one plan per election.

March 26: Candidates for trustee must file their Nomination Petition and Oath of Candidacy with election administrator.

March 26: Trustees must pass a resolution calling for a polling place election. File a copy of the resolution with the county election official by March 31.

ELECTION HANDBOOK AND CALENDARS

Click on the following links to access the updated resources related to the 2015 Election cycle:

2015 Election Handbook: <http://www.opi.mt.gov/pdf/SchoolFinance/ElecHB/15ElectionManual.pdf>

2015 Election Calendar: <http://www.opi.mt.gov/pdf/SchoolFinance/ElecHB/15ElectionCalendar.pdf>

2015 Mail Ballot Election Dates:

<http://www.opi.mt.gov/pdf/SchoolFinance/ElecHB/MailBallot/MailBallotDates.pdf>

School Election Resources, including sample forms and documents:

http://www.opi.mt.gov/Finance&Grants/schoolfinance/Index.html#p7GPc1_7

ASBO INT'L MERITORIOUS BUDGET AWARD

Congratulations to **BOZEMAN SCHOOLS** for achieving the Pathway to the Meritorious Budget Award from the Association of School Business Officials International!

Recognizing the same budget presentation standards as the Meritorious Budget Award, the *Pathway* to the MBA is an introductory program that allows school districts to ease into full MBA compliance. The *Pathway* to the MBA is designed specifically for first- and second-time *Pathway* applicants who have not previously applied for the MBA. Applicants complete only *two of the four* MBA Criteria Checklist sections (the *Introductory* section is mandatory; the second is chosen from the *Organizational*, *Financial*, or *Informational* sections). - See more at: <http://www.asbointl.org/learning-career-development/awards-scholarships/meritorious-budget-award-pathway-to-the-mba/about-the-budget-programs#sthash.xpwTNCg7.dpuf>.



2015 LEGISLATIVE SESSION NEWS

HB27 Increase K-12 BASE aid, entitlements, and payments <http://leg.mt.gov/bills/2015/billpdf/HB0027.pdf>
This bill includes inflationary adjustments to the basic and per-ANB entitlements and Quality Educator, Indian Education for All, Achievement Gap and Data for Achievement components of the general fund funding formula. The inflationary adjustments are 2.33% in FY2016 and 1.79% in FY2017. The bill also authorizes the natural resource development payment (a.k.a. NRD payment) which offsets increases in the BASE property tax levy. The bill has passed in the House Appropriations Committee and was concurred in executive action by Senate Finance & Claims Feb. 12.

HB31 Revise school finance laws <http://leg.mt.gov/bills/2015/billpdf/HB0031.pdf>
Consists mainly of "clean up" language to clarify (but not change) the calculation of guaranteed tax base aid (GTB). Also allows use of the bus depreciation fund to purchase communications systems and safety devices for school buses. This bill passed in both houses and transmitted to the Governor. Effective July 1, 2015.

HB84 Generally revise election laws <http://leg.mt.gov/bills/2015/billpdf/HB0084.pdf>
This is a comprehensive bill that streamlines the due dates and deadlines for the election process at all levels. It has passed both houses. Effective date is the day after the date of the 2015 statewide general election.

Here's some ways this bill affects school district elections:

- Candidates for trustee no longer have to collect signatures for their petition. They just have to file the form at least 40 days before election day.
- The resolution for calling an election would be changed to 70 days prior to election day to be consistent with the requirements for running a mail ballot election. If you're running a mail ballot election, this will change nothing. If you're running a polling place election, your trustees would have to adopt the resolution calling for the election about a month (30 days) earlier than you do now. So, next year, they would need to call for their May election by Feb. 24 (i.e., at their Feb. meeting, rather than March).
- The resolution calling for an election would be transmitted to the county election administrator within 3 days after it is adopted (down from 5 days in current law).
- Notice of the election would be done between 10 days and 40 days prior to the election by publishing once in a newspaper of general circulation, posting in 3 public places in the district and posting on the district's website, if the district has a website, for the 10 days prior to the election (you have to do all three). Currently, the posting period is between 20 – 30 days prior to election day.
- Ballots would be certified at least 30 days prior to election day.
- Trustees can declare election by acclamation and cancel trustee election 30 days prior to election day.
- Absentee ballots must be available at least 20 days prior to election day. (Current law is 25 days).
- Ballots for a mail ballot election must be mailed no sooner than 20 days and no later than 15 days prior to election day. (Current law is no sooner than 25 days).
- Late voter registration applies. The voter must register with the county, then obtain a form from the county which they would bring to the school election so they can obtain a ballot.
- Community college elections would no longer have to be conducted by the school districts. The county would do them.

HB87 Eliminate the requirement for a third official school enrollment count
<http://leg.mt.gov/bills/2015/billpdf/HB0087.pdf>
Eliminates the December enrollment count. This bill has passed in House Education and House Appropriations Committees and is now waiting to be scheduled for a hearing in the Senate.

HB114 Revise tax increment finance district remittance laws for schools
<http://leg.mt.gov/bills/2015/billpdf/HB0114.pdf>
Requires any tax increment monies remitted to school districts must be used to reduce property taxes within 3 years of receipt. This bill is scheduled to be heard in House Taxation on Feb. 19.

HB157 Extend school district leasing authority <http://leg.mt.gov/bills/2015/billpdf/HB0157.pdf>
Increases the period for leasing personal property to 7 years and for real property to 15 years. This bill, as amended, has passed in the both houses. Effective on passage and approval.

HB162 Revise laws related to the Montana Digital Academy (MTDA) <http://leg.mt.gov/bills/2015/billpdf/HB0162.pdf>
This bill has passed in the House and will be heard in Senate Education & Cultural Resources on Feb. 13. Amendments may be offered to make it more workable for school districts and MTDA.

HB185 Revise driver license fee allocations to increase traffic education account funding <http://leg.mt.gov/bills/2015/billpdf/HB0185.pdf>
This bill proposes to increase the percentage of revenues from driver's license fees going into the state traffic education account. OPI then distributes all of the money in the state traffic education account to district that conduct an approved traffic education program. This bill was heard in the House Appropriations Committee on Feb. 10.

HB201 Lower state property tax mills <http://leg.mt.gov/bills/2015/billpdf/HB0201.pdf>
Lowers the required state equalization mills from 40 mills to 35 mills in tax year 2015 (FY2016). Other existing state general fund revenue would be required to supplant the loss in equalized state support for schools to maintain statutory funding levels for K-12 BASE aid. This bill passed in House Taxation and after passing 2nd reading, was referred to House Appropriations where it was heard on Feb. 10.

HB356 Revise funding for career and vocational/technical education <http://leg.mt.gov/bills/2015/billpdf/HB0356.pdf>
This bill increases the distributions to districts for career and vocational/technical education for the 2017 biennium and establishes requirements related to increases in state funding. This bill was heard in House Appropriations on Feb. 5.

HB368 Sunset voter approved property tax levies after a certain period of time <http://leg.mt.gov/bills/2015/billpdf/HB0368.pdf>
Limits the duration of voter-approved property tax levies to six years. This impacts the general fund, technology fund, building reserve fund (debt service fund is specifically exempted in this bill), and applies to mills imposed in mill levy elections after September 30, 2015. The bill is in conflict with 20-9-353, MCA (general fund over-BASE levy), 20-9-533, MCA (technology fund levy), and 20-9-502, MCA (building reserve levy). The bill was tabled in the House Taxation on Feb. 13.

HB373 Revise school bonding limit laws <http://leg.mt.gov/bills/2015/billpdf/HB0373.pdf>
Increases the debit limit for elementary, K-12 and high school districts. This bill was passed by executive action in the House Education Committee on Feb. 11

HB423 Revise education funding laws related to oil and natural gas production taxes <http://leg.mt.gov/bills/2015/billpdf/HB0423.pdf>
The bill raises the limit on the amount of oil and natural gas production taxes retained by a school district from 130% to 150% of its maximum general fund budget. This bill was heard in House Education on Feb. 11

HB433 Providing a tuition tax credit for K-12 education <http://leg.mt.gov/bills/2015/billpdf/HB0433.pdf>
Creates a credit against taxes for a payment of tuition and fees by a taxpayer to a qualified education provider for an eligible student to attend an elementary or secondary education program offered by a qualified education provider. This bill is scheduled to be heard in House Education on Feb. 20.

HB451 Revise funding for students with disabilities <http://leg.mt.gov/bills/2015/billpdf/HB0451.pdf>
Revises the definition of "pupil" for purposes of ANB calculations to include a student with disabilities who has not yet reached 22 years of age by September 10 of the school year. This bill is scheduled to be heard in House Education on Feb. 16.

SB12 Provide ANB funding for 19 year olds <http://leg.mt.gov/bills/2015/billpdf/SB0012.pdf>

Changes the definition of “pupil” for purposes of counting ANB to include students 19 years of age or older. The bill was heard in on January 21 in Senate Education & Cultural Resources Committee.

SB14 Raise the legal dropout age to 18 years old or upon graduation

<http://leg.mt.gov/bills/2015/billpdf/SB0014.pdf>

Raises the age of compulsory enrollment and attendance to the earliest of a child’s 18th birthday, the date of completion of high school graduation requirements, or the date of satisfying the requirements for equivalency of completion of secondary education as provided in 20-7-131, MCA. The bill was heard in on January 21 in Senate Education & Cultural Resources Committee.

SB107 Revise K-12 school district expansion laws <http://leg.mt.gov/bills/2015/billpdf/SB0107.pdf>

This bill would allow an existing elementary district that is not part of a unified school system or governed by a joint board with a high school district to create a high school solely for the purposes of expanding an elementary district to a K-12 district only if the elementary district’s ANB is at 1,000. The bill passed in Senate Education as amended on Feb. 6, passed on the Senate floor on Feb. 11 and referred to Senate Finance & Claims, where it is scheduled to be heard on Feb. 17.

SB128 Establish decennial school funding study <http://leg.mt.gov/bills/2015/billpdf/SB0128.pdf>

Establishes a school funding interim commission that would be formed at least once every 10 years to conduct a study of the educational needs and costs related to the basic system of free quality public education pursuant to 20-9-309, MCA. This bill has passed in the Senate and is scheduled to be heard in House Education on Feb. 16.

SB213 Provide for school safety <http://leg.mt.gov/bills/2015/billpdf/SB0213.pdf>

Extends to June 30, 2019 a school district’s ability to transfer funds from any budgeted or non-budgeted fund to the building reserve fund for expenditure for safety and security improvements, after the trustees adopt a school safety plan or emergency operations plan and has certified the plan to OPI. The bill was passed in the Senate Education & Cultural Resources Committee and is scheduled for 2nd reading on the Senate floor on Feb. 14.

SB250 Expand school transportation funding for academic summer school

<http://leg.mt.gov/bills/2015/billpdf/SB0250.pdf>

Extends pupil transportation reimbursements to cover transportation of students to and from school for the delivery of instruction at any time during the calendar year, including summer school programs. This provision would be effective for school years beginning after June 30, 2015. This bill was heard in Senate Education & Cultural Resources on Feb. 11.

SB252 Revise K-12 funding laws related to oil and natural gas production taxes

<http://leg.mt.gov/bills/2015/billpdf/SB0252.pdf>

Removes the requirement that school districts receiving oil and natural gas production tax revenue budget a portion of that revenue in the district general fund. This bill will be heard in Senate Education & Cultural Resources on Feb. 11

SB260 Revise education funding laws related to oil and gas production taxes

<http://leg.mt.gov/bills/2015/billpdf/SB0260.pdf>

Retains the concentric circles distribution of oil and natural gas production taxes, but allocates up to 50% (rather than 100%) of any amount exceeding the limitations of the originating district. Effective date would be October 1, 2015 and sunsets June 30, 2024.

HOW TO LOOK UP HEARING INFORMATION

If you’re interested in what bills will be heard by a committee on a particular day or date range, go to this link:

[http://laws.leg.mt.gov/legprd/law0240w\\$cmte.startup?P_SESS=20151](http://laws.leg.mt.gov/legprd/law0240w$cmte.startup?P_SESS=20151) From the drop down box, choose the committee, input the date range below, and click on Find.

Scroll down to the bottom of the page and you can click on “House Agenda(s)” and “Senate Agenda(s)” to see the list of bills that will be heard on the House and Senate floor.



PUPIL TRANSPORTATION NEWS

FIRST SEMESTER TRANSPORTATION CLAIM FORMS (TR-5 and TR-6)

By **February 15, 2015**, school districts must electronically submit first semester transportation claim forms TR-6 Bus Route Reimbursement and TR-5 Individual Transportation Contract Reimbursements to the OPI online Pupil Transportation Program. In addition, a hard copy of each claim form must be signed by the board chair and submitted to the county superintendent. A copy of the signed claim form must be maintained at the district.

By **February 22, 2015**, the county superintendent must electronically authorize each district's TR-5 and TR-6 for the first semester.

Questions? Contact Donell Rosenthal, OPI Pupil Transportation Director at (406) 444-3024

MOTOR VEHICLE DIVISION LIFTS WAIVER ON DRIVING RECORD FEES EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2015

The Department of Justice, Motor Vehicle Division has determined that it can no longer waive its driving record request fees for school districts. Effective January 1, 2015, school districts will be required to pay the applicable fees shown in Section 4 of Form 34-100, Release of Driving Records (<https://media.dojmt.gov/wp-content/uploads/34-0100-and-34-0100A.pdf>).

Background: Effective August 8, 2014, the Bus Driver Certification Requirements for Reimbursement (see Administrative Rule 10.7.111 at <http://www.opi.mt.gov/pdf/ARM/10-7-111pro-arm.pdf>) were changed to clarify the process for obtaining bus driver certification. One of the requirements for reimbursement calls for school bus drivers to be "qualified" as provided in 20-10-103, MCA (<http://leg.mt.gov/bills/mca/20/10/20-10-103.htm>) and ARM 10.64.201 (<http://www.opi.mt.gov/pdf/ARM/10-64-201pro-arm.pdf>). One of the qualifications is proof of a safe driving record, which may not have evidence of any of the following:

- a. More than one moving traffic violation within any 12-month period of the preceding 36 months;
- b. Any conviction for driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs within the preceding 36 months; or
- c. A conviction resulting in mandatory revocation or suspension of a driver's license in the previous five years.

To obtain a copy of a driving record, complete Form 34-100 Release of Driving Record and mail, along with a warrant for the applicable fees, to: Motor Vehicle Division, P.O. Box 201430, Helena, MT 59620-1430. Section 4 of the form shows the fees, so check the applicable boxes for what you want. The fee for the record itself is \$4.00. If you want the record faxed back to you, provide your fax number and add the \$3.00 fax fee (for a total of \$7.00 on your warrant). If you'd rather have the record mailed to you, you can either pay an additional \$3.00 mailing fee, or you can include a self-addressed stamped envelope, in which case the mailing fee would be waived. The MVD will do its best to return requests for driving records as quickly as possible.

Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching

Do you know a great Montana science or math teacher, teaching in grades 7-12, with 5 or more years of professional teaching experience? Would that person mind receiving a \$10,000 award from the National Science Foundation, along with an expenses-paid trip to DC to meet with other awardees and attend math and science professional development opportunities?

If your answer is yes to the questions above, please consider taking a few minutes to nominate that person for the 2015 Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching (PAEMST). To nominate a teacher for the award go to the following website and fill out the short form.

<http://www.paemst.org/controllers/nomination.cfc?method=nominate>

To see a detailed description of the PAEMST award, click on the "About the Awards" tab.

Questions? Contact Marco Ferro, Montana Professional Teaching Foundation, 406.447.1462, mferro@mea-mft.org

Please share this important nomination information with your staff and colleagues. Thanks!

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