

MONTANA ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL BUSINESS OFFICIALS MAY 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

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MASBO SUMMER CONFERENCE & NEW CLERK ACADEMY *GREAT Today, GREATER Tomorrow*

Montana's Public Schools are GREAT!

Governed by Elected Trustees
Responsive to the Needs of Each Community
Excellent, Efficient, Equitable and Empowered
Advancing Student Achievement for Each Child
Trusted through Transparency and Openness

Join us at the 2015 MASBO Summer Conference to celebrate your work to promote, support, enhance and preserve the key characteristics that make Montana's Public schools GREAT, both today and into the future.

New Clerk Academy: June 15 – 17
Summer Conference: June 17 – 19
Grouse Mountain Lodge in Whitefish

To register, click on this link:

<http://www.masbo.com/i4a/ams/conference/conference.cfm?conferenceID=102>

See list of training topics on the next page



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 |

MASBO SUMMER CONFERENCE & NEW CLERK ACADEMY

TRAINING SCHEDULE AT-A-GLANCE

MONDAY, JUNE 15

New Clerk Academy 8:00 – 5:00

TUESDAY, JUNE 16

Software User Group Meetings

 Black Mountain Software 8:30 – 4:00

 Foxye Lady Computers, Inc. 8:30 – 4:00

 Tyler Tech Users Q&A 9:00 – noon

General Fund Budget Calculations I 1:30 – 4:30

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 17

Special Education Funding for Districts & Cooperatives (3 hours)

General Fund Budget Calculations II (2 hours)

Payroll for New Clerks (2 hours)

Cooperative Purchasing

Health Care Today & Tomorrow

HSA's, HRA's & Flexible Spending Accounts

Affordable Care Act (employers with < 50 employees)

Fund Balance & Reserves

MASBO Certification Program

School Safety

Dave's Top 10

MT Quality Education Coalition (MQEC)

THURSDAY, JUNE 18

Getting Ready for the TFS (3 hours)

Unemployment 101 (2 hours)

Building a Safety Culture

E-Grants Basics

School Bond Overview

Activities & Athletics Budgeting

School Nutrition New Professional Standards

School Nutrition Community Eligibility Provision

Infinite Campus: Ad Hoc Reports

Infinite Campus: FRAM

Affordable Care Act (employers with > 50 employees)

Round Table Discussions (3 hours)

PERS Retirement

Teacher & Paraprofessional Safety

TRS for New Clerks

PERS for New Clerks

TRS Wage & Contribution System

Foxye Lady Users Meeting

Black Mountain Software Users Meeting

Infinite Campus: Using Messenger

FRIDAY, JUNE 19

School Law Update

2015 Legislative Update

COMING SOON - - - CONFERENCE BROCHURE AND SESSION DESCRIPTIONS

SUMMER CONFERENCE SUNSHINE FUND

Each year at the summer conference, MASBO holds a silent auction of member-donated items to raise money for the Sunshine Fund. The Sunshine Fund is a great way to help MASBO members who have incurred extensive out-of-pocket medical bills due to an accident or illness. Please consider bringing a theme basket or other item for the silent auction with you to the conference (cash donations are accepted, too). This year's recipient is Steve Timmerman, District Clerk/Business Manager at Power Schools.

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 automatically succeeds to President for a 2-year term, then to the office of Past-President for another 2-year term. The total time commitment for this level of leadership is 6 years.

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 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.

PHOTOS FOR NAME BADGES AND MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY

Bring your smile! Lifetouch National School Studios will again have photographers on hand at the registration table to take a quick picture for your conference name badge and they'll also give MASBO a CD with all the photographs so we can include them in our membership directory. Thanks, Lifetouch!

MARK YOUR CALENDAR - - UPCOMING TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

OPI SCHOOL FINANCE WORKSHOPS

The Office of Public Instruction (OPI) School Finance Division will be hosting free regional school finance workshops in July. See below for dates and locations. Watch for more details, including registration information from OPI.

- Tuesday, July 7 – Sidney
- Wednesday, July 8 – Billings
- Thursday, July 9 – Helena
- Tuesday, July 14 – Missoula
- Wednesday, July 15 – Great Falls

For more information, contact [Nicole Thuotte](#), (406) 444-4524

ASBO INTERNATIONAL ANNUAL MEETING & EXPO

The Association of School Business Officials International is hosting its premier event for school business leaders, the Annual Meeting & Expo in Grapevine, Texas at the Gaylord Palms Hotel & Convention Center, October 23 - 26.

Conference registration, information and hotel reservations are available at this link:

<http://asbointl.org/meetings/annual-meeting-expo>

MONTANA CONFERENCE OF EDUCATION LEADERSHIP (MCEL)

The 2015 MCEL Conference, "Adapting and Innovating to Advance Student Achievement for Each Child Served in Montana's Public Schools" will be held October 14 - 16 and is co-hosted at the Holiday Inn Grand Montana and Billings Hotel & Convention Center. Registration and conference schedule will be posted to the MCEL website soon. Hotel reservation information can be found at this link: www.mcel.org.

MCEL is organized and delivered by MTSBA, SAM, MREA and MASBO.

A MESSAGE FROM OUR PAST-PRESIDENT . . .



Farewell fellow MASBO members,

June will bring to a close my time on the MASBO Board of Directors. This has been a wonderful experience and I wouldn't trade any one of these days. I will now join the Past Presidents Club. I'm honored to be in such a superb group of past leaders. I've had the privilege of working with some of the finest and talented people in the industry during my years on the Board. Through MASBO I have developed a network of friends I can turn to on a good day and a bad. We all have a friend who understands everything you're saying even when you're using acronyms!

Mark Pepera, ASBO President, recently wrote, "School business officials are an active group. We wear multiple hats and consequently have several balls in the air at any given moment. We are multitaskers to the nth degree. It's important to take the time to consider our own professional development wants and needs. Busy as school business officials are they must find the time to explore and utilize the tools that are available to them."

I whole heartily agree. I have attended county, state and national workshops. I've made friends with Business Officials from Pennsylvania, California, Texas, Alaska, New Zealand and England. Big and little schools, it doesn't matter, we all have the same issues. The only difference is the number of \$0.00's on each line.

If it weren't for MASBO, I would have never seen the Space Needle, watched fish mongers perform in Pikes Place Market, sampled wine at Chateau Ste. Michelle Winery, ate and drank on Bourbon Street in the French Quarter, toured newly built schools at ground zero Hurricane Katrina, visited the New England Holocaust Memorial, walked down the same streets that Paul Revere rode on the Freedom Trail, threw tea bags in the Boston Harbor and visited the homes and schools of the mega rich Vanderbilt family at The Breakers, in Newport, Rhode Island. These are just a few of the interesting places that are included in the annual ASBO Conference. The host communities go out of their way to make the week exciting. They add sightseeing to the many high caliber speakers you will enjoy. If you haven't had an opportunity to attend an ASBO Conference, please put it on your "to do" list. You won't be sorry. The experience is outstanding.

I've tried to lead MASBO by example. I can't ask others to step up and get involved if I'm not doing it myself. New Clerks Academy is one way I've tried to give back to the organization that has helped me so very much. In 2000, I had been on the job for 15 days and attended the summer conference. Betty Brumwell, Kathy Preeshl and Donnie McVee led the New Clerk Training. They showed us what a year in the life of a clerk looked like. I remember the first night back in my room; I lay on the bed, called my husband and said, "what did I get into?" Betty, Kathy and Donnie calmed my fears and promised to always be a phone call away. I left that conference with a huge binder full of forms and instructions. Today, with my favorite side kick, Mike Arnold, we have turned New Clerks Academy green. No more paper and binders. Everything a new clerk may need is stored on a USB drive they can carry home in their pocket. I enjoy teaching, meeting new clerks, and just as the women before me, promising to be there if they need help. I'd like to thank the OPI School Finance staff, Mike Waterman and Debra Silk for their support with the New Clerks program. Training new clerks is the cornerstone to building MASBO stronger.

During my tenure, I've enjoyed working collaboratively with MTSBA, MREA, SAM and MASBO on educational issues. This group of fine individuals always has one purpose in mind, the children of Montana.

It all starts with taking a good look at you. As a member of the MASBO, and especially the Board, each person has to make the decision of how much time and energy they are willing to give. I chose to work hard, spending many hours away from my work and family to promote MASBO. I want our organization to be the best it can be. Whether I'm speaking before new clerks, sitting in a meeting with the other educational organizations or standing in the capital waiting my turn to testify, my focus is "what's the best I can do for Montana students and the children back in Fairview?"

I'm leaving the MASBO Board in very capable hands. Mike Arnold and Tammy Tulberg will lead the organization well. They have a great Board of Directors from every corner of the state supporting them. We have chosen well with Denise Williams and Marie Roach representing MASBO. Those two women are a class act and they bring energy and respect to MASBO.

I wish that I had kept track of the miles I've put on vehicles as I crisscrossed this great state in the last fifteen years. Many of those miles were spent with my traveling companions Lora Tauck and Cindy Hecker. I know you all find it hard to believe, I'd pick up Lora in Miles City and we'd still be talking when we got out of the car in Helena! We didn't have to play music to keep us company, because there was always so much to discuss. Many people had the "pleasure" of riding with us on our state crossing road trips. The more the merrier we'd say. Blizzards, rain, hail and black ice didn't stop us. These are the memories I will cherish from being on the MASBO Board.



I hope that you will all join me in Whitefish in June. Take a good look at yourself and realize the information, networking and relaxation you will receive far outweighs the work you've left undone at home.

Take time for you - **YOU'RE WORTH IT!**

I'd like to close by quoting my favorite author. *"Don't cry because it's over, smile because it happened."* - Dr Seuss

Thank you all for your support,
Jacki Young

NEWS FROM THE OFFICE OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

SCHOOL NUTRITION PROGRAMS

Effective July 2015, this rule of the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 (HHFKA) requires annual continuing education and training for all school nutrition personnel who manage and operate the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs. Benefits include providing consistent, national standards for school nutrition professionals and ensuring adequate performance of duties and responsibilities of each position.

For the implementation year only, education hours received three months prior to July 1 can count toward the 2015-16 school year. The OPI School Nutrition Programs will offer annual training opportunities and assistance with record keeping requirements. Other educational opportunities will be provided throughout the school year.

Professional standards also establish hiring requirements for new foodservice directors based on school enrollment. OPI School Nutrition Programs will work with school districts to help them meet the hiring requirements.

For more information, click on this link: [Professional Standards for School Nutrition Professionals](#)

DON'T FORGET TO READ THE OPI SCHOOL FINANCE NEWSLETTER

The OPI School Finance Division Newsletter is alive and well . . . it's just in a different place. Check out the latest news on Elections, QZAB Bonds, Pupil Transportation, workshops, upcoming deadlines, Impact Aid Discretionary Construction Program grants and more. The OPI Summary of Activities is located on the OPI website at this link: http://opi.mt.gov/opi_Summary/index.php. You'll even see important information posted by other divisions of OPI that may pertain to you or someone in your district.

MASBO ENDORSES THESE PROGRAMS

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|  | <p>Montana School Unemployment Insurance Program Theresa LeSueur, Director 406-457-4407 tlesueur@mtsba.org http://mtsba.org/InsuranceServices/tabid/98/Default.aspx</p> |
|  | <p>Montana Schools Property & Liability Insurance Plan Dave Pillatzke, Program Manager 406-457-4531 dpillatzke@paynewest.com http://msplip.com/</p> |
|  | <p>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</p> |
|  | <p>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</p> |
|  | <p>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</p> |



P-CARD NEWS-----

HAVE YOU SENT YOUR ANNUAL AUDIT REPORT TO BMO?

Your master agreement requires you send your annual audit report to the BMO Financial Group. Here's how:

Send an electronic (.pdf) copy to: pcard.Reviews@bmo.com

---OR---

Mail a hard copy to: **BMO Harris Bank
Municipal Underwriting Group
C/O Jordan Ruiz
111 W. Monroe St., Floor 5 E
Chicago, IL 60603**

---and, to make it even easier ---

Add BMO to your distribution list

If you have an email distribution list of people/entities that you send your audited financials to each year, add pcard.Reviews@bmo.com to your list.

HOW TO CONTACT IASBO CLIENT SERVICES

Program Administrators can contact Client Services at **800-844-6445**, Monday-Friday 6:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. MST. You can also email them at iasbo.requests@bmo.com. Please provide your corporate account number (70XXXX) or a 16-digit card number to help the account representative cross reference your account.

You can also contact Marie Roach at mroach@masbo.com or 406-461-8804 if you need additional assistance with MASBO's Procurement Card Program.

MASBO P-CARD PROGRAM TOTAL PURCHASES FOR 2015: **\$12,816,980!**

MASBO P-Card program purchases for April 2014 – March 2015 is \$12,816,980. That's almost \$2 million more than last year's total purchases of \$10,914,798. Rebate information is coming soon and Ron Everett from Illinois ASBO will be on hand at the summer conference to present the rebate check and individual district awards.



MASBO EXHIBITOR MEMBERS

| | | |
|---|---|--|
| <p>Edie Barnard Edie Barnard Edie.barnard56@gmail.com</p> | <p>D.A. Davidson & Co. Bridget Ekstrom Bekstrom@dadco.com</p> | <p>Fellon Insurance Services Dale Fellon fellonins@msn.com</p> |
| <p>Pine Cove Consulting Brandan Bassett bbassett@pinecc.com</p> | <p>Anderson, Zurmuehlen & Co. Stefeni Freese, CPA sfreese@azworld.com</p> | <p>Infinite Campus Stephanie Sondrol Stephanie.sondrol@infinitecampus.com</p> |
| <p>Stifel Nicolaus Bryan Stelmack yroybal@stifel.com</p> | <p>CHMS, P.C. Doris Leader, CPA doris@chmspc.com</p> | <p>TCPN (The Cooperative Purchasing Network) Derek Anderson danderson@tcpn.org</p> |
| <p>Montana Schools Unified Insurance Program Theresia LeSueur tlesueur@mtsba.com</p> | <p>MSGIA-WCRRP Shawn Bubb sbubb@mstba.org</p> | <p>Black Mountain Software Teresa Van Buren teresav@blackmountainsoftware.com</p> |
| <p>Western States School Program Dave Pillatzke dpillatzke@paynewest.com</p> | <p>United Pension Administration Elizabeth Harris upahelp@msn.com</p> | <p>Horace Mann Keith Jorgensen keith.jorgensen@horacemann.com</p> |
| <p>Tyler Technologies Jeff Melugin Jeff.melugin@tylertech.com</p> | <p>VALIC John Wing John.wing@valic.com</p> | <p>American Fidelity Assurance Company Debbie Braden Debbie.Braden@americanfidelity.com</p> |
| <p>Rudd & Company, PLLC Julie Kostelecky, CPA, CVA jkostelecky@ruddco.com</p> | <p>Wipfli/GHG Kim Dare, CPA kdare@wipfli.com</p> | <p>Todd Watkins Consulting Services Todd Watkins Toddwatkinsconsulting101@gmail.com</p> |
| <p>Klimas Financial Services, Inc. Charles Klimas cklimas@gwnsecurities.com</p> | <p>Ron Foltz CPA firm Ron Foltz, CPA Ron.foltz@ronfoltzcpa.com</p> | <p>Foxie Lady Computers, Inc. David Bardwell foxieladyc@aol.com</p> |
| <p>MT Schools Health & Welfare Plan (MSHWP) Sarah Harne sarah-harne@leavitt.com</p> | <p>RESA4U/Southwest MT School Services Bruce Grubbs bgrubbs@resa4u.org</p> | <p>Aesop Substitute Placement Service Jim O'Halloran jim@ohalloran.cc</p> |

2015 LEGISLATIVE SESSION UPDATE — May 14, 2015

| BILL NUMBER | DESCRIPTION | STATUS |
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| BILLS SIGNED BY THE GOVERNOR | | |
| HB27 Increase K-12 BASE aid, entitlements, and payments | 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 K-12 funding payment) which offsets increases in the BASE property tax levy. | Signed by Governor on Feb. 27. Effective July 1, 2015 (for FY2016 budgets). |
| HB31 Revise school finance laws | 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. | Signed by Governor on Feb. 13. Effective July 1, 2015 |
| HB47 Appropriate money for youth crisis diversion pilot projects | Appropriates \$1.2 million from the state general fund to DPHHS for the 2016-2017 biennium for grants to up to six licensed children’s mental health providers for the development of mental health crisis diversion pilot projects for youth and requires a report. | Signed by Governor on April 9. Effective July 1, 2015 |
| HB84 Generally revise election laws | <p>This is a comprehensive bill that streamlines the due dates and deadlines for the election process at all levels. Here’s some ways this bill affects school district elections:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 was 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 must adopt the resolution calling for the election about a month (30 days) earlier than you do now. So, in 2016, the trustees must call for their May election by Feb. 24 (i.e., at their Feb. meeting, rather than March). • The resolution calling for an election must 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 must 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 must 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. • 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 no longer have to be conducted by the school districts. The county will do them. | Signed by Governor on Feb. 25. Effective the day after the 2015 statewide general election. |

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| HB87 Eliminate the requirement for a third official school enrollment count | Eliminates the December enrollment count. <i>[Note: this bill affects FY2016 General Fund Budgets, and as such, OPI will recalculate ANB for FY2016 based on the October 2014 and February 2015 enrollment counts only.]</i> | Signed by Governor on Apr. 1. Effective on passage and approval. Applies to school budgets for school years beginning on or after July 1, 2015. |
| HB157 Extend school district leasing authority | Increases the period for leasing personal property to 7 years and for real property to 15 years. | Signed by Governor on Feb. 27. Effective on passage and approval. |
| HB162 Revise laws related to the Montana Digital Academy (MTDA) | The bill prohibits a school district from charging a fee to a student who enrolls in a MTDA class that the district requires for graduation. It provides funding for the MTDA through any supplemental fee established by the MTDA that is required to pay for the prorated costs of course delivery that exceed the amount appropriated to the MTDA by the legislature. The fee, which would be paid by the school districts, must be established by the governing board of the MTDA by rule and must be commensurate with the costs of operating the MTDA that exceed the appropriation provided by the legislature. | Signed by Governor on March 30. Effective July 1, 2015. |
| HB284 Generally revise laws related to bullying | Creates the Bully-Free Montana Act, provides definitions, prohibits bullying of student and clarifies redress. | Signed by Governor on April 21. |
| SB141 Repeal termination of reemployment provision for certain TRS retired members | Repeals the termination of a provision allowing certain retired teachers, specialists and administrators under the Teachers Retirement System to be reemployed in certain circumstances without being subject to the standard limitations. | Signed by Governor on April 2. Effective on passage and approval. |
| BILLS IN ENROLLING PROCESS OR TRANSMITTED TO THE GOVERNOR | | |
| HB114 Revise tax increment finance district remittance laws for schools | Requires any tax increment monies remitted to school districts must be used to reduce property taxes. | Signed by Governor on May 5. |
| HB123 Generally revise public records laws. | Reorganizes Montana's public records laws, updating definitions, clarifying access to public information, providing safety and security exceptions, providing a procedure for public information requests and allowing fees, including special fees for certain information. Coordinated with several other bills. | Signed by Governor on April 29 |
| HB322 Create education savings accounts for children with disabilities | Creates a Montana special needs education savings account program to be used on behalf of the student for payment for tuition, fees, textbooks, software or other instructional materials or services to a qualified school (defined as a nonpublic school serving any combination of grades K-12), providing responsibilities for parents and OPI. | Vetoed by Governor on April 30. |
| HB356 Revise funding for career and vocational/technical education | Increases the distributions to districts for career and vocational/technical education for the 2017 biennium and establishes requirements related to increases in state funding. Appropriates \$1 million in each year of the biennium. | Signed by Governor on April 29. Effective July 1, 2015. |
| HB373 Revise school bonding limit laws | Increases the debit limit for elementary, K-12 and high school districts. | Signed by Governor on April 27. Effective on passage and approval. |
| HB423 Revise education funding laws related to oil and natural gas production taxes | The bill amends the limit on the amount of oil and natural gas production taxes retained by a school district. | Vetoed by Governor on May 5. Veto Override Vote Mail Poll in Progress as of May 12. |

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| SB128 Establish decennial school funding study | 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. | Signed by Governor on April 29. Effective on passage and approval. |
| SB157 Generally revise tax reappraisal laws | Revises property tax laws by changing the reappraisal cycle from a six-year cycle to a two-year cycle; adjusting the rates at which the market value of property is taxed to maintain taxable value neutrality between residential, agricultural, commercial, and timber properties on a statewide basis; extending the base period of the data for the valuation of forest land; and revises the property tax assistance programs to allow for more incremental assistance based on income. The changes in taxable value under this bill create a guaranteed tax base aid (GTB) savings beginning in FY 2016. This bill is effective on passage and approval and applies retroactively to TY 2015. | Signed by Governor on April 29. Effective on passage and approval and applies retroactively to tax years beginning after December 31, 2014, and to the reappraisal cycle beginning January 1, 2015. |
| SB213 Provide for school safety | 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. | Signed by Governor on April 27. Effective on passage and approval. |
| SB249 Generally revise energy performance contracting laws | Establishes criteria for the Dept. of Environmental Quality to use in administration of the energy performance contract program, criteria for qualified energy service providers, and criteria for governmental entities to use in the administration and funding of energy performance contracts. | Signed by Governor on April 28. Applicable to contracts entered into on or after passage and approval. |
| SB252 Revise K-12 funding laws related to oil and natural gas production taxes | Amends the requirement that school districts receiving oil and natural gas production tax revenue budget a portion of that revenue in the district general fund. | Signed by Governor on May 5. Effective on passage and approval. |
| SJ10 Resolution requesting performance audit of data collection by OPI | This is a joint resolution of the Senate and House to request that the Legislative Audit Committee prioritize a performance audit of the school data collection systems and procedures of the Office of Public Instruction. | Filed with Secretary of State on April 27. |

STATUS OF BILL IN PROGRESS AND BILLS TO WATCH

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| HB2 General Appropriations Act | Section E contains the OPI Budget and Early Edge. Does not include an inflationary increase for special education allowable costs. | Signed by Governor and returned with Governor's Line-item Veto on May 5. Veto Override Vote Mail Ballot Poll in Progress as of May 12. |
| SB260 Revise education funding laws related to oil and gas production taxes | Amends the concentric circles distribution of oil and natural gas production taxes. | Signed by Governor on May 5. Effective on passage and approval, except for county school oil & natural gas impact fund is effective July 1, 2016. Terminates June 30, 2019. |

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| SB410 Provide for tax credits for contributions to public and private schools | As amended, will create two new tax credits, one for contributing to a new educational improvement special revenue account or distribution to school districts for new programs, and one for making donations to organizations that would give scholarships to students in private schools. Tax credits are first available for tax year 2015 and will sunset after tax year 2021. | Transmitted to Governor on April 28. No action (veto or signing) taken during 10-day waiting period. |
| HJ23 Interim study of Montana's election process | Calls for an interim study of Montana's election process, including elector eligibility and qualifications, the absentee ballot process, provisional ballots, voter registration, using electronic means for registering to vote and voting, and enforcement and prosecution of complaints of violations of the state's election laws. | Failed 3 rd reading in Senate on April 24. |
| BILLS RELATED TO PRIVATIZATION - UNCONSTITUTIONAL | | |
| HB377 Revise laws related to K-12 accreditation standards | Limits the constitutional authority of the board of public education to consider and adopt school accreditation standards; creates an accreditation standards review council; and repeals Montana's common core standards. | Died in standing committee April 28. |
| HB433 Providing a tuition tax credit for K-12 education | 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. | Died in standing committee April 28. |
| HB511 Provide tax credits for contributions to scholarship organizations | Allow tax credits for individual and corporate taxpayers for contributions to education improvement organizations and student scholarship organizations. | Heard in House Taxation on March 6; tabled on March 13. Missed transmittal deadline. |
| HB595 Provide tax credit for higher education expenses | Provides for a tax credit of up to \$1,000 for qualified higher education expenses paid by the taxpayer for themselves, their spouse or their dependents, including tuition, fees and other related expenses to enroll or attend a college, university, vocational school or other postsecondary education institution eligible to participate in a student aid program run by the U.S. Dept. of Education. The education institution does not have to be in Montana. | Heard in House Education on March 16. Missed transmittal deadline. |
| HB596 Establish public charter schools. | Establishes public charter schools as a means of providing additional educational opportunities. Provides for autonomy of public charter schools through exemption from Title 20, MCA. Establishes a public charter school commission and charter authorizers for overseeing public charter schools. Provides for performance measures, exempts public charter school teachers from state certification requirements, provides funding, etc. | Died in standing committee April 28. |
| SB328 Provide for higher education seeded savings accounts | Establishes the "best bet savings account program" which allows parent of newborns in Montana to elect to start a higher education savings account. The state opens and administers the account and matches parental contributions to the account up to \$200. The program is funded with lottery revenues. The savings account may only be used for "qualified higher education expenses" at a public or private educational institution. | Died in standing committee April 28. |
| BILLS THAT ARE PROBABLY DEAD | | |
| HB3 Supplemental appropriations | Appropriates money to various state agencies for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2015, include \$9 million to public schools districts for direct state aid payments and \$400,000 in block grant payments. | Missed transmittal deadline. [Amended into HB2] |
| HB5 Provide for infrastructure development | Creates the "Build Montana Act". Includes appropriations for schools about \$31 million (\$12 million in special revenue funds and \$19 million in G.O. bonds) for all 53 applications for the Quality Schools Grant Program. | Missed transmittal deadline. |
| HB15 Provide for school facility grant program | Appropriation to Dept. of Commerce for financial assistance to public school facility projects through the Quality Schools Facility Grant Program (\$5,881,000 for 8 projects), emergency grants and planning grants. | Missed transmittal deadline. |
| HB185 Revise driver license fee allocations to increase traffic education acct. funding | 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 districts that conduct an approved traffic education program. | Missed transmittal deadline. |

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| HB201 Lower state property tax mills | 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. | Missed transmittal deadline. |
| HB213 Revise business equipment tax laws | As amended, reduces the taxable value on class 8 property by increasing the exemption amount from \$100,000 to \$500,000. The bill reimburses local governments, schools, etc. for the loss in taxable value. The reimbursement for lost FY2016 revenue would be reimbursed to school districts as a one-time block grant payment of \$2.8 million in FY2017. Ongoing block grant payments of \$4.4 million would begin in FY2017 per 20-9-630, MCA. | Missed transmittal deadline. |
| HB368 Sunset voter approved property tax levies after a certain period of time | 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). | Revived and amended to exclude levies passed under 20-9-353, 20-9-533, and 20-9-502. Passed in House on March 25. |
| HB451 Revise funding for students with disabilities | 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. | Probably dead. |
| HB475 Revise statutory reimbursement schedule for school transportation funding | Changes the funding formula for state and county transportation reimbursement payments to be based on a school district’s current year ANB and the statewide average price of regular diesel fuel per gallon. Changed distribution of the payments to 50% by Sept. 1, 25% by March 31 and 25% by June 1. | Heard in House Education on Feb. 16, tabled on Feb. 18. Probably dead – missed transmittal deadline. |
| SB12 Provide ANB funding for 19 year olds | Changes the definition of “pupil” for purposes of counting ANB to include students 19 years of age or older. | Tabled in House Education on April 8. |
| SB14 Raise the legal dropout age to 18 years old or upon graduation | 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. | Probably dead - - missed transmittal deadline. |
| SB107 Revise K-12 school district expansion laws | 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. | Passed the Senate and heard in House Education on March 27. Failed on 3 rd reading in House. |
| SB250 Expand school transportation funding for academic summer school | 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. | Heard in Senate Education on Feb. 11. Dead – missed transmittal deadline. |

HOW TO LOOK UP BILL INFORMATION

For more information on the bills considered in the 2015 Legislative Session, click on this link:

[http://laws.leg.mt.gov/legprd/law0203w\\$.startup?P_SESS=20151](http://laws.leg.mt.gov/legprd/law0203w$.startup?P_SESS=20151) Select the bill you’re interested in and click on Find.

Here you will see the history of action taken on the bill and links to the bill text (and previous versions, if applicable) and fiscal notes.