

MINUTES OF THE MEETING  
EDUCATION AND CULTURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE  
MONTANA STATE SENATE

JANUARY 23, 1987

The fifth meeting of the Senate Education and Cultural Resources Committee was called to order by the Chairman, Senator Bob Brown, at 1:05 p.m. in Room 402, State Capitol Building.

ROLL CALL: All committee members were present.

SENATOR BROWN introduced Brian Bailey, a student in the sixth grade at Russell Elementary School, Kalispell. Brian has been a student in the Gifted and Talented program for the past two years and is a consistent "straight A" student. He spoke briefly to the committee, saying he felt, from his experience before the Appropriations sub-committee on Education and the figures he gathered there, that athletics are 895 times more important than education. He explained a program to the committee in which his class participates called "fuzzy problems". The class receives a situation which has many problems and the possibility of many solutions. They then, through priority setting and evaluation, determine the main problem and devise solutions to the problem. After identifying 15-20 solutions they then determine the best solution. He ended by pointing out "what you have here at the legislature is a fuzzy problem".

SENATOR SMITH asked what is offered in the Gifted and Talented program in Kalispell.

GAIL VIDAL, Gifted and Talented Co-ordinator, Kalispell, said a variety of programs are offered such as critical thinking, leadership and management capabilities. These are in addition to the usual accelerated coursework. There are also a variety of after school projects offered.

JOSHUA DENNY, a fourth grade student in the Kalispell Gifted and Talented program, testified he enjoys sports immensely, and participates in them, however, the Gifted and Talented program is exposing him to many different and challenging areas of study.

SENATOR BLAYLOCK suggested the students take the budget problem facing the Montana Legislature and apply the "fuzzy problem" process to it.

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GAIL VIDAL felt it would be a good idea and one which they might very well tackle.

CONSIDERATION OF SENATE BILL 133: SENATOR BISHOP, District 46, sponsor of the bill, said he had agreed to carry the bill for the Montana Association of School Business Officials. He said it is a simple bill which brings elementary out of district tuition payments into line with the time line already established for high school districts. The law currently requires elementary districts to make their first payment as soon as funds are available and the second June 15th. The high school districts pay December 15 and June 15.

PROPOSERS: JOHN CAMPBELL, representing the Montana School Business Officials, said he supported the bill.

JESS LONG, representing School Administrators of Montana, supported the bill as being fairest for the receiving district. He noted tax dollars are in by the end of November and May, therefore there is no reason the payments shouldn't be made.

BOB STOCKTON, Office of Public Instruction, stated support for the bill. He pointed out the tuition is due the year following the year the child was educated so the district is behind already. This bill would greatly expedite matters.

There being no further proponents, no opponents, and no discussion, Senator Bishop closed.

ACTION ON SENATE BILL 133: SENATOR McCALLUM moved SENATE BILL 133 DO PASS. The motion CARRIED unanimously.

CLAUDETTE MORTON, Executive Secretary, Board of Public Education, presented a report to the committee which is a response to Senate Bill 15 of the June, 1986, special session (Exhibit #1).

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

  
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SENATOR BOB BROWN, CHAIRMAN

BB:jdr

ROLL CALL

SENATE EDUCATION AND CULTURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

50th LEGISLATIVE SESSION -- 1987

Date 1/23/87

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NAME	PRESENT	ABSENT	EXCUSED
SENATOR BOB BROWN	✓		
SENATOR CHET BLAYLOCK	✓		
SENATOR GEORGE McCALLUM	✓		
SENATOR ED SMITH	✓		
SENATOR PAT REGAN	✓		
SENATOR JOE MAZUREK	✓		
SENATOR BILL FARRELL	✓		
SENATOR TED NEUMAN	✓		
SENATOR DICK PINSONEAULT	✓		
SENATOR SWEDE HAMMOND	✓		

Each day attach to minutes.

BILL \_\_\_\_\_

VISITORS' REGISTER

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

Please note bill no. (check one)

NAME	REPRESENTING	BILL #	SUPPORT	OPPO
Paula C. Janssen	MT. ASSOC. GIFTED			
Brian Bailey	School District #5			
Jess W. Lesny	S.A.M	133	✓	
Deane Donnelly	School District #5			
Joshua P. Donnelly	Kalispell School District			
Phyllis Cuckles	School District #5			
Gayle J. Vidal	Kalispell School District #5			
Karen Richardson	Evergreen School Dist #50 Somers School Dist #29			
Connie Ample	parent - <sup>Wapiti</sup> Mountain School		pending	
Claudette Maston	Board of Public Education			
Katharine Bragg	-			
John G. Campbell	MSBC	133	✓	
Wade J. [unclear]	OPT	133	✓	
Amychakias	-	133	✓	
Kate [unclear]	is Teacher - observing			
KATHIE HOREJSI	MFT			
Wendy [unclear]	FADE			

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EXHIBIT NO. 7

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BILL NO. RESPONSE TO SB 15  
OF JUNE, 1986 SPECIAL  
SESSION

A REPORT TO THE FIFTIETH LEGISLATURE:  
A RESPONSE TO SENATE BILL 15

By

The Board of Public Education  
January 15, 1987

Ted Hazelbaker, Chairman, Dillon  
Alan Nicholson, Vice-Chairman, Helena  
Arthur Schauer, Libby  
Tom Thompson, Heart Butte

James Graham, Ismay  
Sarah Listerud, Wolf Point  
Bill Thomas, Great Falls

Claudette Morton, Executive Secretary

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BILL NO. S.R

## REPORT TO THE FIFTIETH LEGISLATURE BY THE BOARD OF PUBLIC EDUCATION

I. During the second special session of the Forty-ninth Legislature, Senate Bill 15, sponsored by Senator Ted Neuman, was passed. It required the Board of Public Education "to take steps toward administrative and structural reorganization of the public school system that would result in cost savings at local and state levels and to report" back to the Fiftieth Legislature. This report is in response to that legislation.

## II. BACKGROUND OF THE PROBLEM

## A. HISTORICAL STATE PERSPECTIVE

As early as 1895 The Political Code allowed for and encouraged consolidation of schools in Montana. From then until 1964, over fifty state proposals for reorganization and/or consolidation were attempted. Only one substantive one ever passed the Legislature. That was the County Unit Law which passed in 1919. It was not a requirement for consolidation, but rather an incentive plan, and three counties took advantage of it, but as Montana moved into the Depression, and no counties were using it, it was repealed. In 1930, Montana hit its peak in number of school districts. That year there were 2,439. Since that time the number of school districts has been steadily decreasing to the current number of 548.

Of particular interest, historically in more recent times, was the companion piece of legislation to the introduction of the

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Foundation Program which was enacted in 1947. Its statement of purpose reads like the answer to Senate Bill 15, "The purpose of this act is to cause a reduction in the number of school districts in the State of Montana, to simplify and make more efficient the administration of the elementary and secondary public schools of the State..." The proposed legislation would have created a Montana School Reorganization Commission, for a period of two years to "organize, direct and coordinate the work of reorganizing the school districts..., to consult with and advise the County Redistricting Committees, and to report to the State Board of Education." This act also proposed County Redistricting Committees. This proposed legislation was very comprehensive. It detailed the election of the county committees, the methods for changing other laws and trustee representation, and, in essence, included a complete plan for reorganization. In 1947 the citizens of Montana were ready for a new funding formula for public education, but they were not ready to reorganize the schools.

In the early 1970's, the Superintendent of Public Instruction, Delores Colburg, advocated reorganization of the public schools. With the assistance of her deputy, Bud Scar, a proposal was made to reorganize the 166 high school districts into 49 administrative units and then look at a similar reorganization of the elementary districts. It received little public support.

The most recent attempt was a legislative interim study done in 1982 out of which came Senator Chet Blaylock's bill to consolidate small high schools of under 100. It was met with heavy

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opposition by the rural communities of Montana, and there was not much support from the education community. It, too, was defeated.

Because the education community realizes now that the state is facing difficult financial times, they have been very cooperative in the Board of Public Education's current study. Individuals and groups have done independent and cooperative research and developed many creative approaches for the Board to examine as part of a response to Senate Bill 15.

B. WHAT OTHER STATES HAVE DONE :

Several other states were contacted regarding how districts were organized and nine provided some material for Montana to study.

Idaho began a consolidation effort in the late forties, but it took until 1961 to get down to their present 116 districts for their 44 counties. Twenty percent of the districts are countywide. Additional funds are provided for districts with under four teachers which are designated "remote but necessary." The latest effort toward further consolidation, in 1983, was met with considerable opposition, according to the State Superintendent Jerry Evans, in a phone interview, so except for a current proposal for cooperative buying by school districts, there is no further movement toward administrative reorganization.

Iowa currently has 436 local school districts which range in size from 100 students to 30,000. Their latest reorganizational efforts took place in the 1960's, and because of the strong feeling

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for local control, rather than consolidation, intermediate districts or area educational agencies were put in place. There are currently fifteen of these which provide service to the entire state. Services included are cooperative buying, special education, and educational services in the form of curriculum and evaluation programs.

Kansas also had its major reorganization in the sixties when the number of local school districts was reduced from over 1000 to 310. Planning units were set up to make recommendations for reorganization consistent with current district lines rather than strict adherence to county boundaries. A proposed new district was to have an expected enrollment of at least 400 students in grades 1 through 12, or at least be 200 square miles and have a \$2,000,000 valuation. This plan worked rather well. Currently, there are 305 local school districts in Kansas.

Nebraska had 992 local school districts in 1984-85 and so passed reorganization legislation, which was signed by Governor Kerrey in the spring of 1985. However, a group called the Nebraska School Improvement Association initiated a petition drive, got the issue on the November ballot and voted it down. At this time, the citizens of Nebraska have spoken and the 992 local school districts remain.

Nevada consolidated its local school districts in 1956 into sixteen county districts plus Carson City. There is an elected County Board of Trustees, who hire the superintendent. In recent years, according to the Nevada Department of Education, further

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consolidation has been recommended to the Legislature, but no action has been taken on the recommendations.

North Dakota at one time had 2400 local school districts and these have been reduced to approximately 270. This has been done over a long period of time and not necessarily by any one reform movement, according to Wayne Sanstead, State Superintendent.

South Dakota currently has 194 local school districts with a major consolidation effort having taken place in the 1960's. Since almost half of the districts have less than 100 students in the four grades of high school, Governor Bill Janklow is trying a "carrot and stick" approach to reorganization. The stick is that if a high school enrollment falls below 35, it loses its state aid. The carrot is an appropriation for use by the parents of students in high schools of less than 45 students. The appropriation is to be used for tuition if the parents wish to send their child to an adjacent school district. The transportation cost will be born by the parents. Still, it is an opportunity for parents to determine where their children should go to high school.

Texas still has 1079 local school districts, but they, like Iowa, have gone to educational service centers which provide special education, cooperative buying (in fact, Texas has cooperative statewide purchasing of school buses), curriculum and testing services. The state agency funds the Educational Service Centers.

Wyoming consolidated to forty-nine county districts approximately fifteen years ago. Their school district sizes vary from 151 students to 13,800. They have shared with the Montana

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Board of Public Education their "Manual for the County School Planning Committees" and their "Guide for Planning School District Organization in Wyoming." Both of these documents are on file at the Helena office and may prove helpful to developing a process if Montana decides to reorganize its school districts.

Overall, any consideration for reorganization of school districts has been based on a few premises. First, that students are entitled to a comprehensive education and that this costs money. Many experts believe that unless a four year high school has a student enrollment of at least 275 or can offer at least three sections of any one subject at any one grade level, it cannot serve all the students effectively. Secondly, any sort of reorganization should include unified school districts, that is districts which are kindergarten through the twelfth grade inclusively. This decision is also one based on educational concerns. Curriculum should be coordinated kindergarten through twelfth grade, and it can best be done when the program is under the same administration.

While much has been written and researched about the need for high schools to be of some minimum size in order to offer a comprehensive program the same does not hold true for elementary schools. In fact, a recent study of the performance of students from small country elementary schools when they attend high school by Brigham Young University showed that the high school performance of students from rural independent districts is equal to that of their peers. The Board recognizes the importance of children to have a normal home environment in order to function effectively in

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their school work and, therefore, sees the continuing need for the small rural school where the alternative would be unsettling the family or extended bus rides for young students. However, transportation is a different matter for high school students. In 1970, a study was done which compared student achievement with bus riding time. For students attending high school there was no significant effect on their academic performance even when they rode the bus as much as ninety minutes one way. Another study had been done earlier with elementary students, and it did show a detrimental effect of long bus rides on achievement.

#### C. HOW MONTANA FITS NATIONALLY

Currently Montana is tenth in the nation with its 548 school districts. Still, that number may be somewhat misleading. It includes two non-operating elementary school districts. Subtracting those two, it still does not represent 546 separate boards and administrators. Three hundred eight school districts are combined elementary and secondary districts with one administration, so for practical purposes the 546 can be further reduced by approximately 154. Of the remaining 392, 198 of those districts are small rural schools, most with three member boards, where the administration is a function of the board and the county superintendent of schools. This leaves only 194 school districts which are either K-12, K-8 or 9-12 with separate boards and administrators. Still, the 548 places Montana at tenth in the nation in number of administrative units while being forty-third in the nation on number of public school students.

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Academically, Montana does not have to take a back seat to any state. According to the 1980 census, 74.4% of Montanans were high school graduates, and 10,016 students received their high school diplomas in 1985. That is a graduation rate of 83.1 percent. Last year fifty-two percent of Montana's graduates took the ACT test and earned a composite score of 19.8 or 1.0 higher than the national composite score and 0.3 points higher than the 19.5 average composite score earned by students in the Mountain/Plains region (Colorado, Idaho, Kansas, Montana, Nebraska, North and South Dakota, Utah and Wyoming).

### III. BACKGROUND OF THE BOARD'S DELIBERATIONS ON THIS ISSUE

Senate Bill 15 became effective upon passage. The Board met soon after, on July 13 and 14, 1986, and instructed the Executive Secretary to begin background studies and to place it on the agenda of the September Board meeting, which was the next one to be held. At the September meeting the sponsor of the bill, Senator Neuman, met with the Board to determine the scope of the areas to be studied. At the Board's October meeting, several expert witnesses were called to present to the Board. (See Appendix A for a complete list of witnesses and the areas they addressed.) The next meeting of the Board was December 4 and 5, and more expert witnesses testified, (See Expert Witness List, Appendix B.). Though the Board discussed several of the issues presented, they moved to hear public comment on them at the January meeting, before making their response to the Legislature. (See Appendix C for a complete list of those people who provided comment at the Board's January meeting.) During

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the time that the Board dealt with these issues, forty-one letters were received from concerned citizens. (See Appendix D for a complete list of citizens' written comments.) Overall, the Board discussed or examined material on at least fifteen issues which would be possibilities for appropriate responses to Senate Bill 15. What follows in this report is a more specific explanation of some of these issues, that is, of the issues the Board felt were most pertinent. These issues are grouped into four areas, although there is some overlapping.

The first category the board determined it would examine was that of correcting inequities in the present system through Board of Public Education policy changes.

Within this category the first issue is transportation. The Montana Association of School Administrators presented a proposal to the Board of Public Education which asked that the Board utilize the provisions of 20-10-111 M.C.A., Subsection d to "prescribe criteria for the establishment of transportation service areas for school bus purposes by the county transportation committee which shall allow for the establishment of such areas without regard to the district boundary line within the county...." The proposal went on to suggest that as part of the criteria for approval the "most economical routing for provision of bus services for the elementary and secondary students in the county" be used. The Office of Public Instruction would carry out the Board's rules and collect data and information on compliance. A final recommendation in this area was that since the county will control the transportation services to be

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provided by the school districts, the funding for transportation should be on a county-wide basis. The Choteau County Transportation Committee went on to suggest that co-operative purchasing of school buses be instituted, that bus routes not be allowed to overlap and that residency requirements for individual transportation contracts be tightened. It is difficult to say at this time what the potential savings for the state in the area of transportation would be if the Board were to develop such criteria, but certainly elimination of duplicate routes and sharing of cost on a county-wide basis would produce some savings each year. Over a period of time, the savings could be significant.

The second issue which the Board can directly address in policy changes is that of penalties for schools which do not meet the Accreditation Standards. The Board of Public Education "adopts Standards of Accreditation and establishes the accreditation status of each school each year..." 20-2-121 M.C.A. Currently there is a history of some schools which consistently have difficulty meeting specific standards. This is particularly true of some schools funded at the high school rate for seventh and eighth grades. At present, there are 198 schools which receive seventh and eighth grade funding at the high school rate. The difference between the elementary Foundation Program funding schedule and the high school Foundation schedule funding, especially in small schools, is close to twice per ANB. Schools which are consistently found to not offer a full program as required in the Accreditation Standards for seventh and eighth grade funding, junior high or middle school,

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would receive about only half of the Foundation monies they currently do. Last year 25 schools were on advice or probation for not meeting some aspect of these standards. Additionally, there are schools which receive regular accreditation but do have one or more deviations in this area. The Board could decide not to give them accreditation status for seventh and eighth grade funding at high school rates.

The third issue in the area of programs which the Board of Public Education could implement is one of an examination of data collection from the schools. The Office of Public Instruction is the source for all information and data collection from local school districts. The Board is aware that there is a need for uniform and accurate data collection from the public schools. Appropriate and consistent data collection would identify major areas of expenditure and be of assistance in analyzing potential cost savings in a variety of areas. The Board could study what data is currently collected by the Office of Public Instruction, how accurate it is, and how long it takes for processing. It then could determine what data should be collected and when.

The second area which the Board of Public Education examined in response to the Legislature has to do with correcting inequities in the present system by legislative action. During the last biennium, the Board followed and worked closely with the Interim Education Subcommittee of the Joint Appropriations and Finance Committee. It was a four member committee chaired by Representative Gene Donaldson. Three of their issues which are currently being

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drafted into bill form seem to address the concerns of Senate Bill 15. Therefore, the Board has been studying them with the possibility of endorsing them as possible appropriate responses to Senate Bill 15.

The first is the issue of Average Number Belonging. (This is Issue 3 in the subcommittee's report.) It suggests that "the aggregate of all the regularly enrolled full-time pupils attending accredited public schools within the same school district and not over three miles from an incorporated city limit shall be the geographical basis for calculating the average number belonging to be used in determining the foundation program for such schools. All K-8 students in the same school system form the aggregate ANB basis for determining the school foundation funding." According to the Legislative Fiscal Analyst, in that same report, 23 schools would have funding changed if this legislation passed, for a savings to the state of \$1,576,479.

The second issue in this series is that of School District Taxable Valuation. (It is Issue 4 in the subcommittee's report.) It proposes to amend current legislation to say that "a new school district may not be created unless the taxable property of the territory proposed to be included in the new district is \$1 million or more and the taxable value of the property of each remaining district is \$2 million or more." This proposed legislation would not save any money currently, but it would hold future expenditures at lower rates. According to that same report, "most of the schools with taxable property values under \$1,000,000 are very small or have

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P.L. 874 funds. Small schools under 100 cost more per ANB than schools over 100 ANB. Although there is not nearly as large a variance in the average cost of elementary schools as there is with high schools, there is still more cost incurred."

The third and final issue in this second part is one of Isolation Status. (It is the Subcommittee's Issue 2.) They propose that "isolation status criteria shall be defined in law and the law shall be modified so that one-half of the foundation program shall be financed by a tax levied on the property of the district for high schools under 100 ANB which do not have isolation status. The isolation status criteria reads: A school cannot be considered as isolated if it is within 20 road miles of another school with room to accommodate the pupils and if 50 percent or more of the pupils can, on average, be transported to the closest school within a period of one hour or less. The Superintendent of Public Instruction may recommend that the Board of Public Education grant isolated status to schools not meeting the criteria for isolation status and the board may grant isolation status if the board determines it is in the public interest." While this proposal does not represent a large amount of state dollars, it would result in some cost savings. Currently 63 elementary schools receive isolation status, and, therefore, a \$16,126.40 payment from the Foundation Program per school, per year. Of that number 43 schools appear not to meet the isolation criteria. If those schools were not given isolation status they would receive only half of that amount, or \$8,063.20 from the Foundation Program, or a savings to

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the state of \$346,717.60. At the high school level it is not possible to calculate, at this time, the savings but currently any high school from 1-24 ANB received \$91,876 from the Foundation Program and at 25 ANB \$3828 per ANB. A school of 100 receives only \$2,262.48 per ANB or a difference of \$1,565.52 per ANB from the Foundation Program per year. In an earlier study of the small high school issue the savings was figured at close to \$2,000,000 if high schools of less than 100 were not given funding unless they received isolation status. Before leaving consideration of this issue, it is important to remember the transportation study which showed no significant impact on academic achievement for high school students with bus riding time of up to ninety minutes one-way. Therefore additional savings could be realized if the definition for isolated were changed for high schools to even 25 miles.

The third area which the Board of Public Education has been studying, and the one which has the most interest in response to Senate Bill 15, is administrative reorganization of public school districts. Implementing these issues would require legislation.

The first issue in this area is consolidation of small high schools and it has many similarities to the preceding last issue; that of isolation status. Beginning with an interim legislative study in 1982, the concept of consolidation of non-isolated high schools of less than 100 was put forth. Senator Blaylock carried a bill to this effect in 1983, which was defeated. However, he plans to reintroduce this measure at the current fiftieth legislative session. The proposed legislation would guarantee that high schools

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under 100 ANB, which have been approved as "isolated", would receive the same schedule benefits that now exist. A "non-isolated" district would be permitted the same foundation program amount as its size warrants, but such a district would be required to pay part of its own foundation program amount. The state and county equalization would be fixed at the same rate per ANB as for a district with 100 ANB (e.g. \$2262.48/ANB in 1986-87); the district would be required to pay the balance with local revenue. Currently there are 77 high schools with less than 100 ANB. Some, such as Whitewater and Winnett, are truly isolated. Still, if even 32 of the schools were consolidated (see attached table), \$1,822,075 a year would be saved on the school Foundation Program.

The second issue studied by the Board is the concept of educational service cooperatives. These are working in Iowa and Texas, and testimony was heard on this issue and, specifically, cooperative teaching and cooperative buying. It has been proposed to the Board that legislation requiring creation of educational service cooperatives be presented to the Fiftieth Legislature. Briefly, the legislation as now proposed would require the Superintendent of Public Instruction to divide the state into twenty Educational Service Cooperatives. The services provided could include not only all special education and support services, but also purchasing, in-service, gifted and talented education, counseling, traffic education/safety, accounting services, drug/alcohol programs, curriculum planning and development, health services, data processing and vocational programs. Participants in

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**Table  
Consolidations of High Schools Under 100 ANB**

<u>School - Miles</u>	<u>ANB</u>	<u>Foundation Savings</u>	<u>School - Miles</u>	<u>ANB</u>	<u>Foundation Savings</u>
1. Willow Creek (5)	28		10. Reedpoint (17)	16	
Three Forks	123	\$ 59,603	Columbus	149	\$ 67,925
2. Wilsal (9)	41		11. Belfry	36	
Clyde Park	61	102,668	Bridger (7-11)	99	
3. Moore (9)	52		Fromberg	85	166,309
Hobson	60	108,873	12. Flaxville (11)	23	
4. Dutton (10)	45		Scobey	95	57,234
Power	42		13. Broadview (14)	35	
Brady (11)	35		Lavina	29	42,355
Conrad	272	101,185	14. Plevna (13)	29	
5. Geyser (15)	47		Baker	219	68,532
Stanford	58	106,536	15. Hinsdale (13)	34	
6. Culbertson (13-15)	64		Saco	39	55,338
Bainville	49		16. St. Regis (14)	48	
Froid	36	168,302	Superior	136	145,206
7. Nashua	75		17. Rosebud (12)	44	
Frazer (21)	36	95,261	Forsyth	220	91,657
8. Box Elder (10)	85		18. Alberton (15)	60	
Big Sandy	109	88,422	Frenchtown	218	166,324
9. Roberts (13)	41		19. Judith Gap (17)	22	
Joliet	100	73,170	Harlowtown	115	57,175
Total School Foundation Program Savings					<u>\$1,822,075</u> *****

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the Cooperatives would not be limited to school districts alone but could include municipal and county governments as well. It is difficult to project a specific amount of savings if this legislation were enacted. It is felt, and examples show, that savings will result from cooperative purchasing and more effective utilization of specialists.

The third issue in this section was one of administrative reorganization. The Board found this to be an extremely complicated and emotional topic. The Board has reviewed two specific administrative reorganization models.

a. A group of district superintendents have researched current district boundaries, highway and transportation problems, and proposed reorganizing of existing school districts into 77 administrative units. The proposed administrative units would have two years to consider reorganization and then in the third year of funding would receive Foundation Program money based on an aggregate of all students in the new administrative unit. This proposal allows school districts within the new administrative unit a two year period to make local decisions regarding the best educational and economic utilization of resources for their particular unit.

Potential savings would be realized by reorganization and cutting of duplicative services in the area of administration, particularly in the area of superintendents and clerks. In administrative functions a savings would be realized from payroll, budgeting and purchasing. Additional savings could be realized by the new district in non-duplicative transportation routes and better utilization of

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specialists. Considerable savings would be realized by the state in the third year when the Foundation Program funds would be paid to districts on a new aggregate basis. As an example of cost savings, the authors of this concept site five new administrative districts which would consolidate 20 old high school districts, to show a savings to the Foundation Program of \$1,326,000 per year.

b. The Board has studied reorganizing the school districts of Montana along county lines. In this proposal all counties would be one administrative unit with the following additional stand alone districts: Billings, Bozeman, Great Falls, Havre, Helena, Kalispell and Missoula. Some consideration should be given to geographic isolation such as in Lincoln County, where it might be more practical to have two administrative units. Also, further reduction could result in some areas by the combining of smaller counties. The county model for administrative units is suggested by a variety of researchers both in and out of Montana. It would equalize the tax base in a county, which is an advantage. It would remove any districts which have non-operating schools, since they would be combined with an operating district. In this model all elementary districts which feed into a high school would become a part of that high school district. Counties will have one year to reorganize and at the beginning of the second year of the biennium schools will be funded on an aggregate basis. Like the preceding plan (in a), savings will be substantial to the state in the second year when the Foundation Program is paid on an aggregate. Savings will also be realized through consolidation of

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administrative functions, better coordinated transportation, and utilization of specialists.

c. During the Board's examination of the reorganization issue there has been some discussion regarding the need for further study of the whole issue. There is concern, on the one hand, that any reorganization attempt involves many aspects and far reaching ramifications, some of which are not known at this time. On the other hand, the record of Montana studies in reorganization or any aspect of education, for that matter, is not a good one. Reports are issued from studies but seldom is a part of the study translated into practical legislation or policy. Still, together, the Board of Public Education and the Legislature could study the options of redistricting models and determine which is the most appropriate model for Montana schools. This model would take effect the 1989-1990 school year. A cooperative study of this nature would delay some of the cost savings and would obviously cost some additional dollars, but in the long run it might be the most cost effective proposal.

d. If legislation for administrative reorganization is not implemented immediately school districts should still be encouraged to consolidate. Any school districts which consolidate administratively will receive the bonus payments and transportation bonus payments as outlined in 20-6-401 MCA. Their efforts will be considered when mandatory administrative redistricting takes effect. In the long run there would be money saved in the Foundation Program through this means. In the next two years there

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would be some additional costs incurred to encourage school districts to consolidate. It is almost impossible to estimate these costs or the long term savings without some data on how many schools might take advantage of this proposal.

The fourth and final area which the Board considered in response to Senate Bill 15 are two proposals from the Superintendent of Public Instruction. These include restructuring the Foundation Program and an Education Building and Insurance Program. However, since Senate Bill 15 requires the Superintendent to respond to the Legislature as well, this report will not attempt to explain these programs in detail.

IV. The Board of Public Education makes the following proposals in response to Senate Bill 15, believing that these are appropriate for the difficult times that Montana is facing and that they are educationally sound:

The Board will make an effort to correct inequities in the present system through Board of Public Education policy changes by placing the following issues on its agenda: A. Transportation, B. Penalties For Schools Not Meeting Accreditation Standards, and C. Data Collection From The Schools.

The Board endorses the following legislation which would correct inequities in the present system by legislative action: A. Average Number Belonging (Legislative Sub-committee Issue 3), with an amendment allowing for a phase out period for schools currently receiving this funding; B. School District Taxable Valuation

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(Legislative Sub-committee Issue 4). In addition, the Board supports legislation which would call for a moratorium creating any new school districts or allowing reopening of currently closed districts.

The Board of Public Education understands the value of Educational Cooperatives but cannot at this time support the proposed legislation to require the establishment of twenty educational service cooperatives.

On face value, the reorganization and consolidation proposals presented for Board consideration seem to be more cost effective than the current system. However, in the diverse testimony presented to the Board the following issues remain unclear and unresolved: 1) the cost savings, for example: transportation, duplicative administrative costs, teacher salaries, and increased insurance costs; 2) the quality of education resulting from reorganization; and 3) the impact of school reorganization on the state's socio-economic and socio-political systems.

Therefore, the Board of Public Education endorses the following concept:

Legislation which will create and empower a State Commission on School Reorganization, appointed by the Governor, with technical assistance by the Office of Public Instruction and reporting to the Board of Public Education. The Commission will develop criteria for reorganization, including a plan to aggregate the ANB in 1989. The Legislation will also call for Local Reorganization Committees, which will be set up

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following criteria established by the State Commission and the law. The Legislative Council will recodify Title 20 accordingly, to take affect in 1989.

It should also be noted that the Board of Public Education remains on record of not endorsing any form of forced school consolidation.

At the Board's meeting the Superintendent of Public Instruction withdrew his Foundation Program proposal. The Board urges the Legislature to not take into consideration the use of payments from P.L. 81-874 (Impact Aid) in any state foundation program equalization plan. However, should the Legislature have a differeing opinion and in order to determine the proper and most effective use of impact aid funds, the Board of Public Education recommends that the Legislature consider use of P.L. 81-874 funds only after consultation with locally affected schools and the U.S. Department of Education to ensure that Montana continues to receive the maximum amount of P.L. 81-874 funds provided by law.

The Board urges passage of a plan which will provide a building and insurance program from the general coal tax fund.

The Board of Public Education will work with the Fiftieth Legislature to assure the passage of legislation endorsed in the above areas. It is the belief of the Board that the proposed legislation and policy changes endorsed herein, do indeed, provide a thoughtful, yet pro-active response to Senate Bill 15.

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APPENDIX A

Testimony Before The Board Of Public Education  
October 21, 1986  
Great Falls, Montana

EXPERT WITNESS

SUBJECT

Claudette Morton  
Executive Secretary  
Board of Public Education

Historical perspective on some of  
the issues, as well as a review  
of what other states have done

Lynn Sayer  
Purchasing Supervisor  
Great Falls Public Schools

Cooperative Purchasing

William Larson  
Music Supervisor  
Great Falls Public Schools

Cooperative Teaching

James Poor  
Art Supervisor  
Great Falls Public Schools

Cooperative Teaching

Karen Sexton, Principal  
Helena Public Schools

Administration of Two Schools

Cal Spangler  
Superintendent  
Shepherd Public Schools

Cooperative Superintendents

Don Bidwell, President  
Montana Assoc. of County  
Superintendents of Schools

Administrative Role Changes

Gary Rafter  
Superintendent  
Hobson Public Schools

Administrative Reorganization

George Bailey  
Superintendent  
Plevna Public Schools

Consolidation of School Districts

Richard Hughes  
Superintendent  
Moore Public Schools

Consolidation of School Districts

Ray Shackelford  
Deputy Superintendent  
Office of Public Instruction

Administrative Cost Studies,  
Understanding the Fiscal Picture,  
Inequities of Present System,  
Development of Different Revenue  
Structure and Refinement for  
Bonded Insurance Program

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APPENDIX B

Testimony Before The Board Of Public Education  
December 5, 1986  
Helena, Montana

EXPERT WITNESS

SUBJECT

James Foster, Superintendent  
Chester Public Schools  
and  
Wally Vinnedge, Superintendent  
Somers Public Schools

Proposal for Creating Educational  
Service Cooperatives

Jerry Weast, Superintendent  
Great Falls Public Schools  
and  
Jacob Block, Superintendent  
Missoula Elementary Schools  
and  
Gary Rafter, Superintendent  
Hobson Public Schools

Proposal for Administrative Re-  
districting

Claudette Morton  
Executive Secretary  
Board of Public Education

Legislative Finance Committee Sub-  
committee on Education Report,  
County-wide Redistricting Model,  
School Administrator's of Montana  
Transportation Plan, and a Study  
Proposal

Bill Anderson  
Deputy Superintendent  
and  
Ray Shackelford  
Deputy Superintendent  
Office of Public Instruction

Education Building and Insurance  
Program Proposal and Restructured  
Foundation Program

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BILL NO.

APPENDIX C

Testimony Before The Board of Public Education  
January 12, 1987  
Helena, Montana

WITNESS

SUBJECT

Chip Erdman, "Local Control"

Spoke as Opponent to: Isolation Status, Consolidation of Small High Schools, Administrative Reorganization into 77 units or county model  
Spoke as Proponent to: Administrative Reorganization Further Study, Administrative Reorganization Voluntary Consolidation

Eric Feaver, Montana  
Education Association

Spoke as Opponent to: Consolidation of Small High Schools, Foundation Program Change Special Education Cooperatives  
Spoke as Proponent to: Transportation, Penalties for Schools Not Meeting Accreditation Standards, Data Collection from Schools, Average Number Belonging, School District Taxable Valuation, Administrative Reorganization with Further Study, Administrative Reorganization Volunteer Consolidation.

Trudi Peterson, Judith Gap

Spoke as Opponent to: Consolidation of Small Schools, Administrative Reorganization into 77 units

Mike Lowe, Supt.  
Saco School

Spoke As Opponent to Foundation Program Change  
Spoke As Proponent to: Average Number Belonging, School District Taxable Valuation

NE School Administrator

Spoke As Opponent to: Consolidation of Small High Schools, Administrative Reorganization-77 units, Administrative Reorganization County Model, Foundation Program Change  
Spoke as Proponent to: Average

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"Local Control" Member	Number Belonging, School District Taxable Valuation, Administrative Reorganization with Further Study, Administrative Reorganization Volunteer Consolidation Spoke as Opponent to Administrative Reorganization into 77 units or county model Spoke as Proponent of Administrative Reorganization with Further Study
Jim Koke, Superintendent East Helena	Spoke as Opponent to Consolidation of Small High Schools Spoke as Proponent to Administrative Reorganization with Further Study
Bruce Moerer Montana School Boards Assoc.	Spoke as Opponent to: Isolation Status, Administrative Reorganization Using either 77 units or county model, Consolidation of Small High Schools, Special Education Cooperatives Spoke as Proponent to: Transportation and Penalties for Schools Not Meeting Accreditation Standards with concerns about effect on students, Data Collection, Average Number Belonging with amendment to close loopholes allow phase in, School District Taxable Valuation, Administrative Reorganization with Further Study, Administrative Reorganization Volunteer Consolidation
Donald Waldron, Superintendent Hellgate Elementary, Missoula	Spoke as Opponent to: Administrative Reorganization in either 77 units or county model, Consolidation of Small High Schools Spoke as Proponent to: Administrative Consolidation with Further Study
Laura LaHay, Educational Service Cooperatives, Dillon	Spoke as Proponent to: Education Service Coop Proposal
Joe McCracken, Hellgate Elementary Missoula	Spoke as Opponent to any consolidation of elementary schools



Steve Gaub, Superintendent  
Outlook

Spoke As Opponent to Isolation  
Status, Consolidation of Small  
High Schools, Administrative  
Reorganization in either 77 units  
or county model

Bob Barnes, Superintendent  
Nashua

Spoke as Opponent to Isolation  
Status, Consolidation of Small  
High Schools, Administrative  
Reorganization into either 77  
units or county model

Larry LaCounte, Superintendent  
Lodge Grass

Spoke on Concerns of losing Impact  
Aid Funds

Rod Svec, Superintendent  
Hardin

Spoke as Opponent to: Isolation  
Status, Consolidation of Small  
High Schools, Administrative  
Reorganization into either 77  
units or county model, Foundation  
Program Change  
Spoke as Proponent to: Data  
Collection, Average Number  
Belonging, School District Taxable  
Valuation, Administrative  
Reorganization with Further Study,  
Building and Insurance Bonding  
Program

President, MASA

Spoke as Opponent to: Isolation  
Status, Consolidation of Small  
High Schools, Foundation Program  
Change  
Spoke as Proponent to:  
Transportation, Average Number  
Belonging, School District Taxable  
Valuation, Administrative  
Reorganization with Further Study,  
Building and Insurance Bonding  
Program

Calvin Moore, Medicine Lake

Spoke as Opponent to:  
Administrative Reorganization in  
either 77 units or county model  
Spoke as Proponent to:  
Administrative Reorganization with  
Further Study and Volunteer  
Consolidation

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Linda Carlson, Custer  
Member "Local Control"

Spoke as Opponent to:  
Transportation, Isolation Status,  
Consolidation of Small High  
Schools, Administrative  
Reorganization into either 77  
units or county model  
Spoke as Proponent to:  
Administrative Reorganization with  
Further Study

Chris Mattocks, Superintendent  
Cut Bank

Spoke as Proponent to  
Administrative Reorganization with  
Further Study

Craig Brewington, Superintendent  
Fort Benton

Spoke As Opponent to: Isolation  
Status, Consolidation of Small  
High Schools, Administrative  
Reorganization of either 77 units  
or county model  
Spoke as Proponent to  
Administrative Reorganization with  
Further Study

Randy Johnson, Asst. Supt.  
Browning

Spoke to ACT scores being up to  
4 points with additional dollars

Ivan Small, Superintendent  
Pryor

Spoke as Opponent to:  
Administrative Reorganization of  
either 77 units or county model,  
Foundation Program Change  
Spoke as Proponent to:  
Administrative Reorganization with  
Further Study

John McNeill, Superintendent  
Savage

Spoke as Opponent to: Isolation  
Status, Consolidation of Small  
High Schools, Administrative  
Reorganization of either 77 units  
or county model  
Spoke as Proponent to:  
Administrative Reorganization with  
Further Study

Ed White, Superintendent  
St. Regis

Spoke as Opponent to:  
Administrative Reorganization into  
either 77 units or county model  
Spoke as Proponent to:  
Administrative Reorganization with  
Further Study

Larry Stollfuss, County Supt.  
Chouteau County, Fort Benton  
and President, MASA

Spoke as Opponent to Administrative  
Reorganization using county model  
Spoke as Proponent to  
Administrative Reorganization with  
Further Study

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Robert Smith, Superintendent  
Powell County High School,  
Deer Lodge

Spoke as Proponent to Special  
Education Cooperatives

Veryl Kostezcko, President  
Montana Federation of Teachers

Spoke as Proponent to  
Administrative Reorganization with  
Further Study

Phyllis Taylor, Moore

Spoke as Opponent to: Isolation  
Status, Consolidation of Small  
High Schools, Administrative  
Reorganization into either 77  
units or county model  
Spoke as Proponent to:  
Transportation, Administrative  
Reorganization with Further Study

Parent, Judith Gap

Spoke as Opponent to:  
Consolidation of Small Schools,  
Administrative Reorganization into  
either 77 units or county model,  
Isolation Status

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APPENDIX D

<u>NAME</u>	<u>STATUS</u>	<u>ISSUE</u>	<u>PRO</u>	<u>CON</u>
Bernard Rosling J-I Public Schools	Superintendent Joplin	"Shopping List" Consolidation		X
Connie Elam	Student-Brady	Consolidation		X
Jackie Johnson	Student-Brady	Consolidation		X
Bonita L. White	Parent-Augusta	Consolidation		X
Loretta Coffman	Parent-Dutton	Consolidation		X
Barbara J. Young	Augusta	Consolidation		X
Janice/Jeff Farkell	Parent-Brady	Consolidation	X	
Kurt Hilyard	Superintendent Brady	Consolidation		X
Jeanne Hargett	School Board Chairman-Hamilton	Consolidation	X	
Jeremy Willey	Student-Brady	Consolidation		X
Richard/Cleo Lamma Michelle Lamma Tyner Linda/Teena Lamma Richelle Lamma Robinson Roger Champine Keeli Rae Lamma Amber Tyner	Parent/Grand- parents/Students, Brady	Consolidation		X
Mr. & Mrs. R. Thaut	Parents-Brady	Consolidation		X
Audrey Rouns	Brady PTA	Consolidation		X
Wendy Secora	Brady PTA			
Gladys Thaut	Brady PTA			
Lila McQueen	Parent	Consolidation		X
Wendy Secora	Parent	Consolidation		X
Rick Ripley	Supt.-Augusta	Consolidation		X
Tom Tyrammer	Teacher-Brady	Consolidation		X
Richard Hughes	Supt.-Moore	Consolidation		X
Amalia Armstrong	Brady	Consolidation		X
Gary Gollehon	Parent-Brady	Consolidation		X
Shirley Bergstrom	Parent-Brady	Consolidation	X	
Robert/Maxine Gollehon	Conrad	Consolidation		X
Mr. & Mrs. A. Thorson	Parent-Brady	Consolidation		X
Mrs. Argyle Bishop	Parent-Brady	Consolidation		X
Richard A. Wilson	Supt.-Dutton	Consolidation		X
Janice Keith	Teacher-Brady	Consolidation		X
Milton Buidiel	Dutton	Consolidation		X
Robert Morris	Taxpayer-Brady	Consolidation		X
George Bailey	Supt.-Plevna	Non-pertinent		
Doris Nelson	School Board Chairman-Joplin	Consolidation, Program Elimina- tion, Cooperative Administration/ Teaching		X

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<u>NAME</u>	<u>STATUS</u>	<u>ISSUE</u>	<u>PRO</u>	<u>CON</u>
Marty/Gayleen Malone	Livingston	Consolidation		X
Ruby Bouma	Conrad	Consolidation		X
Anders Jensen	Board of Trustees	Consolidation		X
Rick Marriage				
Gary Linder				
Phillip Baker				
Petition-14 sig.	Taxpayers, Polson	77 unit Reorgan.		X
Loretta Noonan	Parent-Judith Gap	Consolidation		X
Shirley Gipe	Board of Trustees	77 unit Reorgan.		X
James Bailey	Polson			
James Wilson				
Donna Day	Parent-Polson	77 unit Reorgan.		X
Julie Enman	Supt. Granite County Schools	Educ. Serv. Coop	X	
Don Waldron	Supt. Hellgate	77 unit Reorgan.		X
Rodney/Betty Nelson	Parents-Glen	Ed. Serv. Coop	X	
Choteau Co. Transportation Committee		Transportation	X	
Jacob Block	Supt., Missoula Elem School Dist	Penalites for Schools Not Meeting Accred. Standards	X	

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# STANDING COMMITTEE REPORT

January 23, 1987

MR. PRESIDENT

We, your committee on **EDUCATION AND CULTURAL RESOURCES**

having had under consideration **SENATE BILL** No. **133**

**first** reading copy ( **white** )  
color

**REVISE TUITION PAYMENTS FOR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICTS**

Respectfully report as follows: That **SENATE BILL** No. **133**

DO PASS

DO NOT PASS

**SENATOR BOB BROWN,**

Chairman.