

MINUTES

**MONTANA SENATE
52nd LEGISLATURE - REGULAR SESSION**

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Call to Order: By SENATOR CHET BLAYLOCK, on April 1, 1991, at
3:00 P. M.,

ROLL CALL

Members Present:

Chet Blaylock, Chairman (D)
Harry Fritz, Vice Chairman (D)
Robert Brown (R)
Bill Farrell (R)
H.W. Hammond (R)
Dennis Nathe (R)
Dick Pinsoneault (D)
Mignon Waterman (D)
Bill Yellowtail (D)

Staff Present: Andrea Merrill (Legislative Council).

Please Note: These are summary minutes. Testimony and
discussion are paraphrased and condensed.

HEARING ON SJR 27

Presentation and Opening Statement by Sponsor:

SENATOR DENNIS NATHE presented SJR 27 for the sponsor, Senator
Del Gage, who was unable to attend the meeting.

Senator Nathe said that SJR calls for a continuation of the
interim study that was made the previous two years on the school
equalization bill problems.

Senator Nathe said that many of these problems still exist and
should be studied further.

Proponents:

PAT MELBY

The speaker feels that continuation of the legislative efforts to equalize school funding especially in the area of transportation and capital expenditures is important. He also feels it is important to continue the study of the foundation program itself and how the money is distributed through the schedules. He commented on the fact that there is much work left to be done.

CHIP ERDMAN, Montana Rural Education Association

Mr. Erdman said that MREA has commissioned studies from Northwest Educational Research Laboratories on the Foundation Program. And since that part of this study is also being done by the Legislature, MREA is offering to share data with the Education Committee.

SENATOR CHET BLAYLOCK testified in support of SJR 27.

Senator Blaylock said that he and Senator Gage had discussed SJR 27. He called to the committee's attention Page 2 and said that there are specifics there that he felt should be considered by whoever is on the committee and also the actual costs of equalization should be considered.

Chairman Blaylock said that he hoped that the study of the last two years and the capital outlay could be brought before the Supreme Court so it would be seen that an effort was being made thus avoiding another suit. He stressed the importance of continuing with the study.

He said that data is now available from OPI regarding guaranteed tax base that they were unable to give us in the early part of the study especially on transportation and capital outlay. He pointed out a great need for the study on tuition saying that there has been trouble between Lewis and Clark and Jefferson counties over how to handle tuition when students live in one district and attend school in another. He said that Senator Hammond has experienced the problem in his area. He hopes that the Senate Education Committee will come up with some good recommendations for the Legislature.

Chairman Blaylock commented on that fact that HB 28 had made a great change in the way the schools have been doing things and there is still much work to be done.

There were no opponents to the bill.

EXECUTIVE ACTION ON SJR 27

Motion and Vote:

SENATOR BOB BROWN MOVED DO CONCUR in SJR 27. Vote was unanimous.
MOTION CARRIED.

ADJOURNMENT

Adjournment At: 4:00 P. M.,



SENATOR CHET BLAYLOCK, Chairman



BETSY CLARK, Secretary

CB/bc