

MINUTES

**MONTANA SENATE
54th LEGISLATURE - REGULAR SESSION**

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Call to Order: By **CHAIRMAN DARYL TOEWS**, on January 27, 1995, at 1:05 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Members Present:

Sen. Daryl Toews, Chairman (R)
Sen. John R. Hertel, Vice Chairman (R)
Sen. C.A. Casey Emerson (R)
Sen. Delwyn Gage (R)
Sen. Loren Jenkins (R)
Sen. Kenneth "Ken" Mesaros (R)
Sen. Steve Doherty (D)
Sen. Gary Forrester (D)
Sen. Barry "Spook" Stang (D)
Sen. Mignon Waterman (D)

Members Excused: N/A

Members Absent: N/A

Staff Present: Eddye McClure, Legislative Council
Janice Soft, Committee Secretary

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

Committee Business Summary:

Hearing: SB 195, HJR 3, SB 101
Executive Action:

HEARING ON SB 195

Opening Statement by Sponsor:

SEN. LARRY BAER, SD 38, Bigfork, opened by saying that ever since the schools brought a lawsuit over the words, "equality" and "educational opportunity", property taxes and school funding have soared, though scores on the national standardized achievement tests have deteriorated. This is unreconcilable when Montana has more school employees per student than any state in the union. **SEN. BAER** then referred to handout "State Aid to Public Schools" which came from the office of Dave Lewis, fiscal analyst. He went on to explain that from the beginning of HB 28 until the

projected end of state equalization in 1997, taxpayers will have paid more than \$750 million. The legislature attempted to equalize education after being ordered to do so by the Supreme Court. Many property taxpayers faced enormous taxes, but HB 28 was replaced with HB 667. The legislature has tried its best under the circumstances and the Supreme Court has no other choice because "equality" is problematic and will continue to be so unless it is changed with **SB 195**. **SEN. BAER** said that we are led to believe that we are approaching an incremental school equalization to accrue in 1997, which is fine...until the next lawsuit which will again start the fiscal plunder, based on exploiting "equality."

SEN. BAER went on to explain that **SB 195** will change "equality" into a "reasonable access to educational opportunities based upon" equity and fairness; not equality. There are no equal schools or equal needs in this state. The original framers of the constitution intended "equity" but became subsequently entrapped by the wrong word, "equality."

SEN. BAER explained that **SB 195** accomplishes two things: (1) Establishes an equitable dispersion of school funding by the state based upon the current equalization program which will not be disrupted by **SB 195** but will be finalized at the same time **SB 195** goes into effect. This will would require a vote of the people. Until then, we will be held hostage by "equality". Under **SB 195**, which will correct the Constitution and protect the public from further lawsuits from the educational establishment, the legislature will fairly fund schools according to their diverse needs. The funding will be based upon fairness to taxpayers, spending based upon enrollment and inflationary factors determined by the legislature. Continued funding for education, upon enactment of **SB 195**, will be under the full discretion of the legislature. Any additional funding desired by each district will be subject to a local mill levy election by voting taxpayers once each year. Permissive levies will no longer be allowed without their consent.

He said that taxpayers in our state were irate and they want to vote on **SB 195** in November, 1996. **SEN. BAER** finished his opening statement by saying that with the passing of **SB 195**, the legislature will have full discretion as to state funding and real local control will be returned to voters in school districts by requiring their vote to approve additional levying when it is necessary. One wrong word, "equality", in the Constitution will no longer be used as a means to exploit them through avaricious lawsuits.

Proponents' Testimony:

Tom Harwood, Galata, MT, said that at the last special session a bill was introduced to amend the constitution. **Mr. Harwood** went on to say that he spoke against that bill because it did not address what was needed; however, he was speaking in favor of **SB**

195 because it more closely represented his position. He recommended that "to provide a basic education" be added to the last sentence in section 1, subsection 3. Also, he recommended that "basic" be defined as courses required of all students, further explaining that not all students are capable of taking all subjects. Also, basic education means that many educational options would not be funded which would simplify the legislature's appropriations because only those items which apply to all students would be funded.

Opponents' Testimony:

Nancy Keenan, State Superintendent of Public Instruction, stated that she strongly opposed SB 195, explaining that very simply, SB 195 takes away the Constitutional right of all children to have a quality education and replaces it with and promotes something called "reasonable access for some of the children of Montana." (Emphasis added). There's not much difference when determining who the "some" will be and that's what concerns her. Ms. Keenan suggested that SEN. BAER read the Constitutional Convention transcripts, from which she read the following: "Guaranteeing the quality of educational opportunity within this state's goal of our Constitution." What does that mean? She answered by saying that basically, we are taking a stand that is from the courts of the land of America, from Brown vs. the Board of Education. Ms. Keenan quoted, "In these days it is doubtful that any child may reasonably be expected to succeed in life if he is denied the opportunity of an education. Such an opportunity, where the state has undertaken to provide, is the right which must be made available to all on equal terms." Ms. Keenan went on to explain that the state of Montana in conjunction with the Fourteenth Amendment of the United States Constitution guarantees equal protection and equal rights to the opportunity of education.

She addressed the following facts given by SEN. BAER and said they were incorrect: (1) Our scores are the lowest in the nation, when in reality Montana schools ranked #1 in SAT, ACT and military testing; (2) We are at the top of per pupil expenditure, when in reality we are 31st, falling from 30th a year ago; (3) Equality is problematic, when in fact the Constitution says that no person shall be denied equal protection by law; therefore, when we talk about equal protection and equality of education, it means all children, including the handicapped and the gifted.

Ms. Keenan stated that 75% of Montana's school districts passed mill levies this year, which is called local control. She asked the committee to defeat SB 195 because it was neither good for children nor Montana's future.

Eric Feaver, Montana Education Association (MEA), addressed the following: (1) WHEREAS #1 -- incorrectly presumes that the legislature improperly and erroneously interpreted and implemented the decision of the state Supreme Court; (2) WHEREAS

#2 -- the primary resource in our state is school children and how can it be unreasonable to tax for their benefit?; (3) WHEREAS #3 -- it is not a fact that economic and sociological disruption has been a result of school funding; (4) WHEREAS #4 -- did teachers steal from the equity provision of the Constitution? In 1983, the average salary for teachers in Montana was 24th in the nation (\$700 below the national average); today Montana teachers are 43rd in the nation (\$9,000 below the national average).

Mr. Feaver's next point in opposing SB 195 was from page 2, declaring that this was not simply an attack on equity, access and opportunity for all, but a constitutional provision for one mill levy election per year. He asked if this was something that should be a part of the Constitution?

Subsection 5, lines 14-16 was his next issue of disagreement, explaining that he was not sure of the meaning. **Mr. Feaver** wondered if it meant that HB 667 as amended by HB 22 and passed by a vote of the people, would be memorialized in concrete in our Constitution. Maybe it meant that hereafter any increases a school district may enjoy were enrollment increases only. Perhaps it meant that schools would be frozen forever where they are positioned in their movement toward equity.

New Section 5 was **Mr. Feaver's** final point of opposition. What will the electorate be voting on should SB 195 pass this legislature? They will be voting on the language FOR or AGAINST clarifying the state's educational goals and duties by guaranteeing reasonable educational access and opportunity to residents and protecting taxpayers by limiting state funding. He wondered if the issues really addressed in SB 195 would specifically be on the ballot when the electorate votes. **Mr. Feaver's** final remarks were, "It's a bad bill and doesn't deserve any votes at all from the legislature."

Don Waldron, Montana Rural Education Association (MREA), asked the committee to read the two court cases, one of which is on the shelf with all the testimony, before taking action. He said that SB 195 needed to be examined more deeply than the testimony heard. **Mr. Waldron** thanked the committee for not supporting SB 195.

Terry Minow, Montana Federation of Teachers (MFT), said that she rose in strong opposition of SB 195. She asked each committee to affirm and respect the Montana Constitution. "Equality" is not one wrong word but belongs in and must remain in our Constitution. Our children, the future of our state, deserve the quality of educational opportunity as guaranteed by the Constitution and **Ms. Minow** asked the committee to respect that.

Ron Stegmann, Superintendent of East Helena Public Schools, read his testimony. EXHIBIT 2

Michael Keedy, Montana School Boards Association (MSBA),

concurred with the other opponents, especially **Eric Feaver**, that **SB 195** was bad legislation. **Mr. Keedy** felt that **SB 195** does the following: (1) Eliminates the concept of an equal educational opportunity from our existing Constitution. If this committee wishes to make educational opportunity for Montana children dependent on the accident of wealth in their local districts, **SB 195** looks like a good idea; however, he didn't think that would be the wish of the committee; (2) Lock into the Constitution for all time very tight statutory restrictions on the funding authority accorded to local school districts through **HB 667** & **HB 28**. These pieces of legislation were an outgrowth of the present Constitution. In short, what **SB 195** gives is the worst of both worlds -- eliminating equality of educational opportunity while constitutionalizing the financial restraints this legislature has composed upon our public schools. **Mr. Keedy** urged opposition to **SB 195**.

Larry Fasbender, Great Falls Public Schools, prefaced his remarks by saying that Great Falls schools were a recipient of some of the equalization. He agreed with almost everything which had already been said, except for **WHEREAS #4**, explaining that the reference to irresponsible school boards is an antithesis for page 2 because ultimately the funding will be in the hands of the local school districts. **Mr. Fasbender** also said that he didn't think that it was any question but that the people who struggled over the existing constitutional phrases had problems in coming up with clear language for the legislature's direction -- quality, equality, basic education. The transcripts of the Constitutional Convention indicate that all three things were spoken of. The legislature has never been able to define "basic education" because education is constantly changing. The Constitutional Convention recognized that ambiguity and flexibility and gave the legislature full discretion in deciding the funding of education, which is just the opposite of **SEN. BAER'S** contention. He ended by quoting from the court cases referred to by **Ms. Keenan**, ".....neither race nor ? could be used to impair the equal right of children to an education. Neither of these cases mandated some sort of precise quality of education for the entire lifespan of a human being. The fundamental principal established, however, is that every child should have approximately the same opportunity to receive an adequate basic education. What this means in practice will be legislatively defined....."

Loran Frazier, School Administrators of Montana (SAM), said that when he thought of his grandchildren, he wanted them to have a quality rather than reasonable education, and he wanted that for all Montana's children. If taxpayers disagree with what local trustees have done, they can use local control to change the problem, and it won't require a Constitutional amendment. Since **HB 667** was passed, this is the first time the legislators have had control of school budgets.

Ed Caplis, Executive Director of the Montana Senior Citizens

Association, said his organization represented about 6,000 senior citizens who were concerned about the quality of education for their grandchildren and great grandchildren; therefore, he urged the tabling of **SB 195** to support the future of Montana's citizen.

Brad Martin, Executive Director of the Montana Democratic Party, said that this legislature shares no greater bi-partisan duty than to provide high quality equal education for Montana's children. He quoted, "We don't inherit the future from our parents but borrow it from our children." The Constitution as it now stands makes good social and financial sense. If one region chooses to undermine the value of the quality of education, all Montanans will pay. **Mr. Martin** closed by urging opposition to **SB 195**.

Wayne Buchanan, State Board of Public Education, concurred with the other opponents, saying that he urged opposition to **SB 195**.

Questions From Committee Members and Responses:

SEN. CASEY EMERSON asked whether there were any Montana schools which were presently equal. **Ms. Keenan** asked **SEN. EMERSON** to define "equal". **SEN. EMERSON** replied that "equal" was impossible to define and that was his point. **Ms. Keenan** said that the legislature attempted to equalize funding for children by passing several bills which tried to fulfill the court mandate. She went on to say that funding was not equal and that was in violation of the court order of the Montana Supreme Court, which means that there are Montana children who are not getting the quality education guaranteed by the Constitution.

SEN. EMERSON wondered if that would open the opportunity for more lawsuits. **Ms. Keenan** said it would because quality education had not been funded and as long as schools are underfunded, there will be the potential of not providing children an education.

SEN. STEVE DOHERTY said he believed that the language was "quality of educational opportunity", and asked **Ms. Keenan** if Montana students had such. **Ms. Keenan** said that they did as long as it was defined by color, disability or intelligence and not by finances. **SEN. DOHERTY** asked **SEN. BAER** about pages 2-3 of **SB 195**, NEW SECTION 5, and asked if he would object to an amendment to the description of the language, "FOR or AGAINST eliminating the quality of educational opportunity currently guaranteed residents of Montana. **SEN. BAER** replied that equitable opportunity was desired but equal opportunity was impossible, which is the whole gist of **SB 195**. **SEN. DOHERTY** next said that **SB 195** would eliminate "equality of educational opportunity currently guaranteed" and substitute "reasonable access to educational opportunity." If that's what will be done, should the people be told that in the statement which includes FOR or AGAINST? **SEN. BAER's** comment was that he had no objection.

SEN. LOREN JENKINS asked for a definition of "basic education".

Ms. Keenan replied that she couldn't give one because that was the beauty of "a basic education"; the definition changes as technology and communication changes. **SEN. JENKINS** wondered if "basic education" shouldn't be defined, even though it would change over the years, to give future legislators a guideline.

Ms. Keenan replied that an interim committee tried and finally said that it was almost impossible to put into law. In Montana, "basic" is tied to money because districts are given a certain amount with which to provide education.

SEN. MIGNON WATERMAN drew **SEN. BAER's** attention to page 2, line 3 of **SB 195** ".....free quality public elementary and secondary schools," and line 11 "...basic educational needs", and asked for clarification of the difference between "a basic system of quality education" and "basic educational needs." **SEN. BAER** answered by saying that he saw no difference, but he did not have the authority to determine that; the authority belonged to the legislature.

SEN. KEN MESAROS was curious about the language on page 2, line 14, wondering if in the future school districts would support levies as mentioned in line 14. **SEN. BAER** replied that the intent was to have the legislature establish a minimum amount to serve basic educational needs and any amount over that would be at the discretion of the voters. Many prudent and caring school districts who had been providing a good basic education now found that because of **HB 667** mandates, they were forced to ask for more money even though they found it unnecessary.

SEN. DELWYN GAGE said **Michael Keedy's** statement of "concept of equal educational opportunities" implied that equal educational opportunities are not present. **Mr. Keedy** answered by saying that if constitutional phraseology is suitable to the daily needs of people and changes, there has to be a certain fluidity to accommodate those changes. **Mr. Keedy** agreed with **Ms. Keenan** when she said that an equal educational opportunity for us or our parents may not be considered an equal opportunity for today's students, and went on to say that the framers of the 1972 Montana Constitution left changing situations in the hands of future legislators who would give precise periodic definition of equal educational opportunity.

SEN. GAGE said that the Supreme Court ultimately decided that equal opportunity for education hinges on dollars. He wanted to know if students are shortchanged because of that decision. **Ms. Keenan** replied that the courts recognized local control and the expectation that the state would fund equal opportunity. The local districts, therefore, will not have full, but partial, funding responsibility.

SEN. DOHERTY said that **WHEREAS #4** says "irresponsible local school boards" while page 2 says that school districts would be prevented from attempting to submit a levy more than once a year. He asked **SEN. BAER** whether the meaning was that if a levy failed,

another mill levy election could not be held again that year? **SEN. BAER** answered by asking where in our society is an election allowed to be held time after time after time until the outcome is pleasing to all. Schools, however, sometimes have three elections for the same mill levy, and each election costs money. Also, before each election, people are told that if the mill levy isn't passed, the children will suffer. It's appropriate to make a fair and equitable proposition which is supportable. For that reason, he proposed that taxpayers not be bludgeoned with numerous elections, but to be originally presented with something fair and equitable. Parents will support reasonable and sensible mill levies because they want the best for their children.

Closing by Sponsor:

SEN. BAER said that **SB 195** does not reduce funding nor affect **HB 667** for the equalization process. If **SB 195** were to be passed

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by the electors, it would eliminate future lawsuits regarding the word "equality" in our constitution. **SEN. BAER** went on to say that there is no equality because our world is not perfect. **SB 195** returns local control to school funding and reestablishes primary funding duties within the full discretion of the legislature. **SB 195** does not propose any curriculum changes; rather, basic education will be determined by the legislature. The legislature, not a special interest group, should define reasonable educational funding. Local control is not a permissive levy in which local taxpayers have no say in how much money is taken from them locally. **SEN. BAER** urged the committee's consideration of the problematic word, "equality."

HEARING ON HRJ 3

Opening Statement by Sponsor:

REP. DIANA WYATT, HD 43, Great Falls, began by saying that she was bringing **HJR 3** which is a joint resolution urging the Board of Regents and the Board of Public Education to recognize American Sign Language (ASL) as a separate and complete language and to authorize the teaching of American Sign Language as part of public school and university system curricula. ASL represents a major language; in fact, it is the third largest in the United States and the world. It also represents the major cultural component within the society of the deaf.

Proponents' Testimony:

Betty Van Tighem, Montana Association of the Deaf, signed her written testimony which was interpreted by Sandra Van Tighem.
EXHIBIT 3

John Kinna, Superintendent of the School for the Deaf and Blind in Great Falls, spoke in favor of HJR 3. It was Mr. Kinna's hope that the former testimony regarding all children included the deaf and blind children also. He gave his reasons for supporting HJR 3: (1) ASL is growing very rapidly -- at GFSDB 175 adults are enrolled in sign language classes. ASL would accommodate the accreditation standards requiring schools to teach a foreign language. HJR 3 contains no mandatory language but simply asks that ASL be recognized as a foreign language and be adopted by administrative rules. Also, HJR 3 does not add any cost nor does it discredit or support exclusion of any other sign languages. Many deaf children are born to hearing parents who never learn to sign, which is a form of child abuse. Mr. Kinna urged the adoption of HJR 3 because it may be helpful in spotlighting the importance of the language of sign. There seems to be a shortage of qualified interpreters around Montana, not only for school children but for deaf adults also. Teaching ASL in schools could help alleviate the problem.

Richard Crofts, Deputy Commissioner of Higher Education, offered the support of the university system for HJR 3, stating that the state-wide interest in such courses has contributed to the fact that signing is offered on three university campuses.

Suzette Sherrard, a deaf consumer, signed her written testimony which was interpreted by Sandra Van Tighem. EXHIBIT 4

SEN. TOEWS announced that time had run out for proponents' testimony but if anyone had brought written statements, they could be left with the secretary.

Derald Guilbert, Darwin Younggren and May Morrison left written statements. EXHIBITS 5, 6, 7

Opponents' Testimony: None.

Questions From Committee Members and Responses: None.

Closing by Sponsor:

REP. WYATT closed by saying that she appreciated the support of the committee.

HEARING ON SB 101

Opening Statement by Sponsor:

SEN. LINDA NELSON, SD 49, Sheridan, said that SB 101 would allow trustees of the district to create a technology acquisition fund which would allow the purchase of the needed equipment and the provision of in-service technical training for district

personnel. It would limit the budget to 2 percent of the district's general fund budget and would authorize a permissive levy and guaranteed tax base to finance the technology acquisition fund budget. NEW SECTION 1 establishes the fund with its limitations; NEW SECTION 2 deals with the funding mechanism; Section 3 is existing language and says that the school board is in charge of this fund; Section 5 is also existing and defines the funding for the technology fund; Section 6 establishes eligibility to receive guaranteed tax base aid; Section 7 includes the technology fund formula; NEW SECTION 8 is the codification and NEW SECTION 9 covers the effective date.

Proponents' Testimony:

Harry Erickson, Superintendent of Schools in Belgrade, opened by saying that yesterday's "Billings Gazette" had an article which dealt with the fact that young workers in their 20's and mid-30's are finding it hard to get ahead in today's skill-based economy because they have become guinea pigs. They have discovered that survival strategies handed to them from their parents don't work anymore because the job market is placing a higher-than-ever premium on technical knowledge. **Mr. Erickson** related that in the 1980's, computers were used in schools for drill, practice, some word processing and spread sheet applications while in the 1990's, schools are using computers and technology for hands-on activities which include high-level thinking skills and technology, etc. In order to prepare our students for the real world of work, schools must give them meaningful technological experiences. He also said that most schools have outdated computers for student use but cannot replace them because of over-stretched budgets.

Mr. Erickson continued by saying that technological programs should be updated with operating computers and software wherever possible; old equipment should be replaced with new; staff should be retrained in the use of updated software. Technology changes in Montana schools is happening very slowly due to funding limitations, and if **SB 101** were passed, the result would be adequately prepared Montana students for the technological work force. This would also help to attract high-tech industries to Montana because quality of education and skill of workers is always #1 in attracting new businesses to the state.

Apparently, Montana schools are not doing enough in the area of technological education because when students go on to higher education, they are met with explosive expectations in terms of technological skills. If the students do not have these skills, they either drop out to take substandard jobs or they need more time to become proficient which results in less dollars for the economy and tax base.

Mr. Erickson supported his testimony by using the Belgrade schools as an illustration. He said that the computers and software needed replacing but the high price tag was much more

than the district could possibly afford. The result is that the education offered does not match the expectations of the business, industry and education.

Another area that uses technology is building maintenance with automatic dials on the boilers, etc. This technology is beneficial to education because of the cost savings; however, there is also a cost factor which is impossible to keep up with by current budgeting. The technological fund in SB 101 would cost about \$35 per student per year, or about \$13 per year per taxpayer, which is a small price to pay for the huge dividend that would be reaped by high school graduates. Mr. Erickson ended his testimony by urging support for SB 101.

Jim Foster, Montana Rural Education Association (MREA) read his testimony. EXHIBIT 8

Calvin Moore, Superintendent of Schools in Medicine Lake, supported SB 101 because it allowed for staff training in technology.

Patty Buckley & Karol Gustin, teachers from East Helena schools,

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...they said that they see and read every day that in the business world, technology is a crucial component of education. They went on to say that the students deserve to have the door to technology opened to their future and teachers need and want training. Ms. Buckley and Ms. Gustin ended their testimony by urging support for SB 101 because without it, their school district would not have the financial capability to train the staff.

Wayne Buchanan, Board of Public Education, urged support for SB 101.

Don Waldron, Montana Rural Education Association (MREA),

{Tape: 1; Side: B; Comments: TAPE IS TOO GARBLED TO TRANSCRIBE.}

Lynn Churchill, NSF/NJE Grant; Kirk Miller, Cascade Public Schools; George Bailey, Superintendent of Target Range Schools; Deborah Getz, Target Range; all gave support for SB 101. Mr. Miller and Mr. Bailey gave written testimony. EXHIBITS 9, 10

{Tape: 1; Side: B; Comments: TESTIMONY FOR ABOVE PROPONENTS WAS TOO GARBLED TO TRANSCRIBE.}

The following written Proponents' Testimonies were handed to the secretary:

Eliot Strommen, Board President, Hinsdale Public Schools. EXHIBIT 11

Peggy Cordell, Technology Coordinator, Missoula County Public Schools. EXHIBIT 12

Norman Hagen, Superintendent, Rosebud Public Schools. EXHIBIT 13

Dennis Kimzey, Superintendent, Beaverhead County High School. EXHIBIT 14

Dustin Hill, Superintendent, Scobey Public Schools. EXHIBIT 15

Wayne F. Lersbak, Superintendent, Troy Public Schools. EXHIBIT 16

Joel Voytoski, Superintendent, Chester Public Schools. EXHIBIT 17

Dennis W. Roseleip, Superintendent, Cut Bank Public Schools. EXHIBIT 18

Beth Bergum, Clerk, Winifred Schools. EXHIBIT 19

Chris Hagar, Superintendent, Arlee Public Schools. EXHIBIT 20

Kaye Ebel, Teacher, Missoula. EXHIBIT 21

Ken Halverson, Superintendent, Clinton Public Schools. EXHIBIT 22

James L. Palmer, Superintendent, Brady Public Schools. EXHIBIT 23

Bonnie Lankford, Chairman, Dodson School Board. EXHIBIT 24

Sandra L. Scott, Superintendent, White Sulphur Springs Schools. EXHIBIT 25

Opponents' Testimony:

Tom Harwood, Galata, MT,

{Tape: 1; Side: B; ; Comments: TAPE WAS TOO GARBLED TO TRANSCRIBE.}

Richard Motta, Missoula, stated that schools presently have plenty of funds from which to operate and the technology fund was not needed because existing sources of revenue could be used. He said that what was needed was an opportunity for the taxpayer to realize school increases that are consistent with salary increases. Taxpayers cannot continue to afford levels of increases for schools in excess of the 3 percent increases presently in force. If the state wishes to fund technology, let it fund the entire cost, including the administration and expenditures of the fund. In reality, this is an unfunded mandate.

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Questions From Committee Members and Responses: None.

Closing by Sponsor: SEN. NELSON thanked the committee for hearing SB 101 and asked that the committee give SB 101 its consideration.

ADJOURNMENT

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 3:15 p.m.



SEN. DARYL TOEWS, Chairman



JANICE SOFT, Secretary

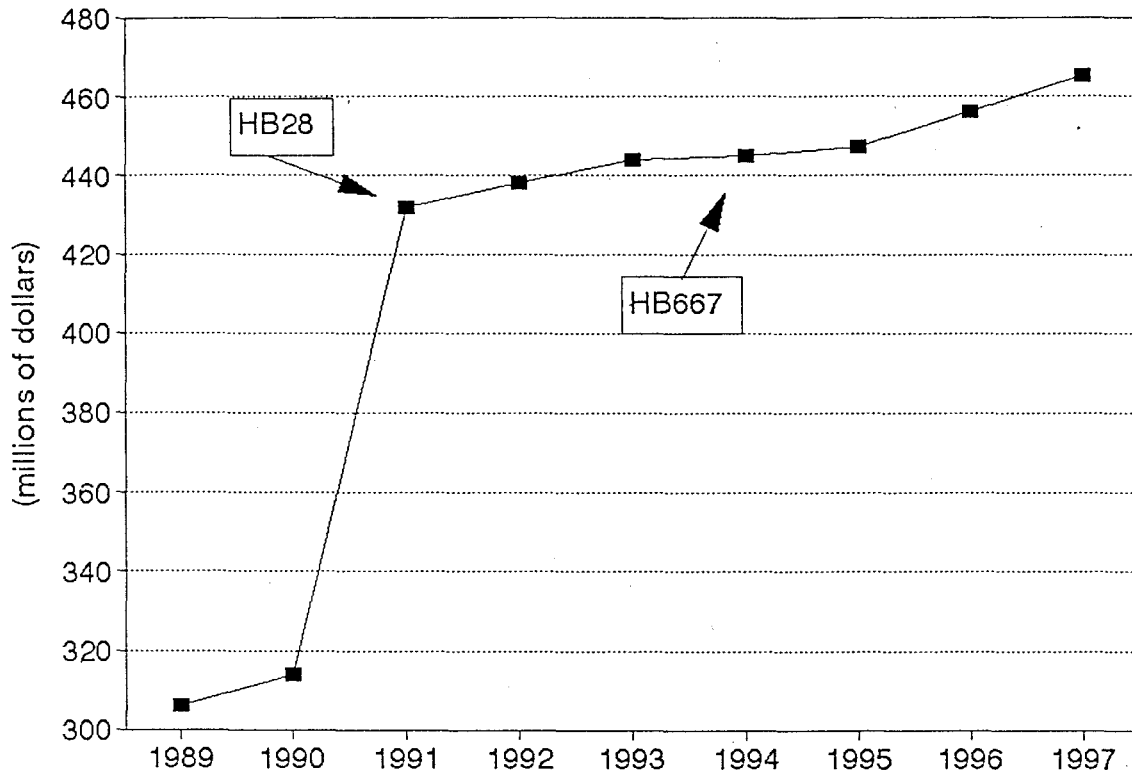
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ROLL CALL

1/27/95

SEN:1995
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CS-09

STATE AID TO PUBLIC SCHOOLS



	DIRECT(1) STATE AID	BASE GTB	RETIREMNT GTB(2)	DEBT SVS GTB	TRANS	SPECIAL EDUC (3)	TOTAL
1989	263.032	0.000	8.376	0.000	6.156	28.311	305.875
1990	270.719	0.000	2.774	0.000	6.458	33.837	313.788
1991	347.047	30.782	13.600	0.000	6.244	34.329	432.002
1992	347.866	30.905	15.214	0.000	10.300	33.842	438.127
1993	354.651	30.355	15.606	0.000	9.608	33.785	444.005
1994	271.760	111.490	17.085	1.000	10.132	33.429	444.896
1995	267.313	116.839	17.844	1.000	10.599	33.889	447.484
1996	272.113	118.213	20.148	1.500	10.600	33.861	456.435
1997	275.828	121.551	21.366	2.000	10.700	33.861	465.306

(1) FOUNDATION PROGRAM PRIOR TO FY94

(2) LOTTERY ALLOCATIONS PRIOR TO FY91

(3) INCLUDES CONTINGENCY

THE EAST HELENA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

SCHOOL DISTRICT No. 9 • P.O. Box 1280 • EAST HELENA, MT 59635

"Success For All Students"

SUPERINTENDENT 406/227-6631

CLERK 406/227-6631

RADLEY SCHOOL 406/227-5851

MAIN STREET SCHOOL 406/227-5033

EASTGATE SCHOOL 406/227-8478

Written Testimony for the Senate Education Committee on SB 195

As I read the text of SB 195 I was at first astonished and finally completely bewildered. I could not imagine how any legislators of this great state could put their signature on the bill. This bill contains allegations against hundreds of good, honest, citizens who have done their very best to serve their schools, communities, and, most importantly, the children of this state. To label the local school boards irresponsible is indeed irresponsible in my opinion. I know that this committee has at least one former school board member who gave many hours of unpaid service.

In thirty years as a teacher, principal and superintendent I have observed and worked with a few hundred school board members. I have never, never, seen one trustee that I would consider irresponsible, even though I may at times have disagreed with their position on some issue.

Webster defines irresponsible as "untrustworthy" and "unreliable". What a terrible thing to say about local school boards. East Helena has school board members who have negotiated for many months each year. I wouldn't tell them that they were irresponsible.

The bill refers to ambiguous and vague language currently contained in the constitution. "Equality" is one of those bad words. I'm a mathematician, I have a Master's Degree in Mathematics. If there is one thing I do know it is what equality means. Equality means sameness in amount, size, number, value, degree, rank, etc. There is nothing ambiguous about that. But, consider what the signers of this bill would replace "equal" with, "reasonable access". Now "reasonable" is certainly a word over which we wouldn't disagree! Every senator and representative in this legislature makes a "reasonable" decision when they cast a vote. But for some reason they don't all vote the same way.

This bill is not worthy of additional comments. I close by saying that it is my reasonable conclusion that the intent of this bill is to eliminate equal opportunity for the students of Montana.

Thank you.

Ronald F. Stegmann
Superintendent

SENATE EDUCATION

EXHIBIT NO. 2

DATE 1/27/95

BILL NO. SB 195

Mr. Chairman and Members of Senate Education & Cultural Resources Committee

I'm Betty Van Tighem of Great Falls representing Montana Association of the Deaf. I am here to ask you all on the Senate Education & Cultural Resources Committee to support American Sign Language (ASL) as a separate language and complete language and that it can be taught in both public schools and university system.

ASL has been used widely over 150 years in America. Since the early 1960's it is proven a language in its own right with grammatical rules and syntax, but yet, the public does not take any steps to recognize ASL as a language.

In order to meet the language standards ASL is a set of symbols, not sounds--they are visible actions of the hands called 'signs.' A sign is made of four elements:

hand_shape--refers to the shape of the hand--curved, flat, fingers together, fingers separated.

palm_orientation--refers to the way the palm is facing --palm facing up or down, face each other.

location--refers to where the hands are located when a sign is made.

movement--refers to the movement of the whole hand-- hand move up or down, toward the body or away from the body.

ASL is used by the deaf to communicate, also to share their experiences, ideas, feelings. Facial expressions and body language play vital role for effective communication. Show feelings without talking--tired, afraid, shy, excited, angry. Gestures--read a book, make a phone call, ride a bike, wash hands, wash floor, wash walls.

ASL is a communication mode used by the deaf and hard of hearing adults and children. Lipreading and speaking require artistic skills--not everyone has the type of talent. To lipread is a lot of guesswork and only 30% of the conversation is understandable. ASL presents a more visual and conceptually accurate message. The deaf and hard of hearing can really feel at ease when they sign.

Both high schools in Great Falls and the University of Montana at Missoula offer ASL for credit. There are numerous sign language classes in the community. AAUW chapter in Great Falls offers sign language classes for children to take after school. We strongly urge that ASL be one of the foreign languages along with Spanish, German, French to offer for credit in high schools and universities and that the students have the opportunity to choose and learn. It's more sense in taking ASL for credit than Spanish, French as it is more practical. ASL is a beautiful language..it is often used in performances in the hearing communities. Oregon just passed the bill last week. Miss America who is deaf will sign the national anthem at the Super Bowl next Sunday.

Mr. Chairman and members of the Education & Cultural Resources Committee

My name is Suzette Sherrard, a deaf consumer living in Great Falls.

There is only one language that prelingually deaf children in America can and do learn as a native language--without formal instruction, in a relatively short time--that is American Sign Language.

Our focus on this paper has been upon the deaf as an ASL--using community, out of the English-using mainstream. We believe that this focus is necessary, in order to develop reasonable, realistic solutions to the educational problems of prelingually deaf children. Most deaf persons, including deaf children are not--and realistically cannot be fully participating and benefitting members of the hearing community. There is no way at present to make deaf people hear. Deaf children should be accepted for what they are--deaf--and what they realistically can become: productive members of a linguistic--cultural minority group, with as much contact as possible with the hearing society. Only when there is such acceptance can educators begin to tackle the real problems of deaf children in a hearing society.

The fact indicates that American Sign Language is the only true native language of deaf children of deaf parents in America, and the only true first language of most deaf children of hearing parents. Educators of the deaf have recently been more willing to admit that it is much easier for prelingually deaf children to learn and use a manual/ visual language than an auditory/vocal one. It might be more realistic and successful if procedures similar to the ones used in bilingual education programs for minority children were followed in teaching to deaf children. Ideally, in the earliest years, deaf children should learn ASL. Once ASL is established as a means of communication, teachers can then use it as a medium of instruction for all subjects, including English--which can be taught along with speech, speechreading, and reading.

Such a program would require that more teachers be fluent in ASL which would in turn require the biases against ASL be discarded. A first step, then, would be to train more teachers of the deaf to use ASL and understand its structure, and to improve the attitudes of all persons--deaf and hearing, teacher and student--toward ASL.

In the meantime, efforts to use any manual/visual language should be encouraged. Once deaf children are considered in the same light as other non-English speaking minority children, with their own language, culture and social conventions, their educational lot and their relations with the hearing world are bound to improve.

on behalf of deaf and hard of hearing children and adults, I urge you very strongly to vote to support HJR 3. Thank you.

My name is Derald Guilbert. I am a deaf consumer and I live in Great Falls.

The adoption of this resolution should be a very encouraging sign to Montana students who take the courses in American Sign Language in the public schools and colleges or universities in this state.

Hearing students who take this course, find it worthwhile and interesting because when they encounter the deaf people, they are able to communicate with them in sign language. Some of them become interpreters after constant association with the deaf and then pursuing advanced training in interpreting.

In colleges and universities, students who study any kind of education, special education or the education of the deaf, are often required the state certification, they are qualified as professionals to work with the deaf.

In addition to the two statements I have mentioned, there are many more good reasons for this resolution to be recommended to pass.

Thank you.

Chairman and members of Education and Culture Committee:

I am Darwin Younggren of Great Falls. I am a deaf consumer. I come here to ask you to consider the resolution and recognize American Sign Language and authorize the teaching of American Sign Language in public schools, community colleges and universities.

I firmly believe American Sign Language is very important in the deaf child's learning and communication. It helps him to express his or her feelings, thoughts and actions, etc.

American Sign Language should be in the curriculum in public education in order to help the hearing to understand the deaf better and help to overcome communication barriers.

Sign language is not detrimental to the speech efforts of a deaf or hard of hearing child. he will pick up the signs from the others in order to improve communication among themselves.

American Sign Language, properly used, is a language of grace, beauty and power. Those do not understand ^{signs} for they cannot sign. Enemies of sign language -- they are enemies of the true welfare of the deaf,

For the last 20-30 years, American Sign Language has been a growing and important body of scientific and educational inquiry and research through public awareness. Also there has been growing public interest in learning American Sign Language, thus contributing to a broader understanding of the social and cultural aspects of Deafness and to breaking down the communication barriers between hearing people and deaf people.

Over 20 states have recognized American Sign Language and implemented it in public schools and other educational systems. Recently Canada has enacted a law to recognize American Sign Language as an official language throughout all provinces.

Lastly, I like all of you to copy from me, three signs, "I Love You". You see how beautiful and simple it is. Thank you.



P.O. Box 7206
Great Falls, MT 59406

President

Mary Morrison,
CSC

Vice president

Faith Timm

Secretary

Melody Domphe

Treasurer

Judy Kraft

Board members

Ron Jones, RSC

Sharon McCue

Jan Nelson,

IC, TC, RSC

January 25, 1995

Daryl Toews, Chair
Senate District #48
Committee on Education and Cultural Resources
House Station
Helena, MT. 59601-1706

Dear Mr. Daryl Toews,

As current president of the Montana Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf and The Deaf/Hard and Hearing Specialist at The University of Montana it is with great pleasure that I write this letter of support for House Joint Resolution #3. This resolution introduced by Diana Wyatt would recognize American Sign Language (ASL) as a separate and complete language and would authorize the teaching of American Sign Language as part of the Public School and University Curriculum.

This type of legislation has already been adopted by a number of states across the country. The acceptance of ASL as a foreign language began in the mid 1980's following intensive linguistic research conducted at Gallaudet University. Education, such as proposed in House Joint Resolution #3 would teach the unique social, cultural, and linguistic heritage of the deaf community. This education would provide a mechanism for greater understanding of the social and cultural aspects of deafness. Education is a critical component to achieving of true equality and access. The proposed adoption of ASL as a foreign language in harmony with national legislation such as the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) provide for civil rights of Montana citizens who are deaf. The ADA was the first step towards equality and the passage of Joint Resolution #3 would be the second step for Montanans whose native language is American Sign Language.

Sincerely,


Mary Morrison

MONTANA RURAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

P.O. BOX 5418
HELENA, MONTANA 59604
(406) 443-2629
FAX (406) 442-8839

SENATE EDUCATION

EXHIBIT NO. 8

DATE 1/27/95

BILL NO. SB 101

TESTIMONY FOR SB 101

Chairman Toews, members of the committee, for the record my name is Jim Foster. I represent the Montana Rural Education Association. The association has a membership of 160 plus school districts.

There were 4 major issues that the MREA investigated as we pursued this legislation: The necessity for technology education, how to provide for funding, how to provide for equity and a limit on expenditures. SB 101 addresses all of MREA's initial concerns.

1. Technology has become an integral component in society, business, government and public schools. The public schools certainly have a responsibility to students and society to provide the education which will enable all students to become technologically literate.

2. The permissive levy requirement allows the trustees to determine the sufficiency of technology of education in their school district and to financially develop a program to acquire the technology and staff development necessary to carry their school's program to fruition. The permissive levy by the trustees of each school district allows for all schools in this state regardless of high or low wealth, regardless of restricting financial constraints currently confronting schools to move forward in technology education.

3. The guaranteed tax base ratio maintains the integrity of equity in the development of the technology acquisition fund. High wealth districts will have to fund their technology acquisition program with local district taxes and low wealth districts will be assisted by the guaranteed tax base ratio.

4. SB 101 limits the technology acquisition fund to a maximum of 2% of the school district's total general fund budget.

The Montana Rural Education Association most assuredly supports SB 101 and requests a "do pass" vote from the Senate Education Committee.

Statement to the 54th Legislature on SB 101

January 27, 1995

1:00 PM

Room 402 State Capitol

Senate Education Committee Members: Daryl Towes, Chair, John Hertel, C.A. Emerson, Del Gage-Conrad, Loren Jenkins-Chinook, Ken Mesaros-Cascade, Steve Doherty-Gt. Falls, Gary Forester-Laurel, Barry Stang, Mignon Waterman.

STATEMENT:

Committee Members:

I speak in support of SB 101 for two reasons. First I am a supporter of providing excellent learning opportunities for the children of our state, and secondly because I believe in the local control issues that all of you hear so much about.

The establishment of a Technology Acquisition Fund is a positive step in providing better opportunities for our students and communities.

- Students must have the opportunity to begin training on equipment that they will be using in the job market. That will include computers, satellites, interactive audio/video, networks, bulletin boards, world wide communication.
- Preparing students with critical thinking and problem solving skills requires that they be able to utilize and learn about the tools of the 21st century. These tools are expensive.
- Teachers must have training not only on how to use the tools themselves, but to develop skills in choosing the correct tool for the application, and the best method of teaching that to students. This requires inservice training for staff members.
- Benefits of having technology in the schools are endless. At our school we have concentrated a great deal on developing a plan that addresses the teaching/learning environment that students must be exposed to to give them a chance at success in the future, and we believe this cannot be accomplished without the tools that technology provides.
- The community benefits from coursework offerings that are applicable to their lives (EMT training, Ag related classes over ITV networks, adult education courses on technology use, etc.). The connectability to the university system gives access to higher education for the community. World wide capabilities give the entire community access to fulfilling their need for information in our information driven society.
- The Technology Acquisition fund allows the local school district to plan -- make wise and useful purchases of equipment that will address the needs of that school district. In Cascade we have a plan, the next component is to develop the funding necessary to begin carrying out that plan. SB 101 provides the tool to fund part of the plan.

The Technology Acquisition Fund leaves the power to make decisions with the local district and promotes local control

- The local school trustees will be able to decide on whether the technology fund is necessary in their specific district.
- Once established the fund allows the district a regular source of funding to plan for purchase of equipment and inservice training of staff.
- Equity of funding is increased because all schools at the local level will be able to decide that they want these opportunities for their students and have a mechanism to provide the tools through the use of the fund. If the fund is not available as is the current situation, those schools who wish to provide the opportunities to their students but can't financially provide them, would not be able to offer equal opportunity for their students.

I ask for your support of SB 101 which establishes a Technology Acquisition Fund for the benefit of the children of Montana. Preparing them to use the tools of tomorrow, will prepare Montana children to compete for high-tech jobs. This investment in their future must be considered.



Kirk J. Miller
Superintendent
Cascade Public Schools

M
A
S
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SENATE EDUCATION

EXHIBIT NO. 10DATE 1/27/95BILL NO. SB 101**MONTANA ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS**

One South Montana Avenue • Helena, Montana 59601 • (406)442-2510 • (406)442-2518 Fax

Senate Education Committee Members
Daryl Toews, Chairman

Dear Toews,

I would like to record my association support of SB 101 Technology and In-Service Training. This bill would allow districts to levy up 2% of their total general fund budget to fund technology acquisition and in-service training. We support the bill for the following reasons:

1. Local control of what technology is purchased
2. In-service training
3. A regular source of funding
4. Less pressure on the general fund

I look forward to providing additional testimony tomorrow.

George Bailey (left)

Darwin Johnson, Trustee
Eliot Strommen, Trustee
Thomas See, Trustee
Lorri Palm, Trustee
Samuel Ohlson, Trustee



Mark Westerburg, Supt.
Darlene Jones, Clerk

HINSDALE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

PHONE (406) 364-2314

DISTRICT 7a-7C
P.O. Box 398

HINSDALE, MONTANA 59241

January 24, 1995

SENATE EDUCATION

EXHIBIT NO. 11

DATE 1/27/95

BILL NO. 56101

*Janet
Palm
#42*
Dear Senate Education Committee:

As the chairman of the Hinsdale School Board, I am extremely pleased to see you are addressing the need of school districts to plan for technological expenses. My school has been very much into technology for our students. We do not view technology as frills or extras but as essentials. Technology allows us access to places which are far off and more creative ways to teach our curriculum. Students today must have computer instruction which is up to date and valuable.

However, as a district we are currently struggling to meet the basic needs of classroom instruction and day to day operations. This fund would allow us to develop long range plans because of a constant funding source and support from the state level. In the current bill the only addition I would like to see, is that schools could use unspent general fund money to place into this account and not assess the mills if they were in a position to do so. I believe this would force schools to spend more efficiently if they knew that the unspent revenue could be placed into a technology account.

In Hinsdale we have been fortunate to be part of a fiber optic grant that will bring state of the art resources to us. However, this is only done with a high price tag. We will be spending \$8,000 per year on line charges for the fiber optics, plus construction cost of a fiber optic studio, and other minor costs which will total nearly \$20,000. This does not even include the cost of maintaining, upgrading, and software for our computers. As the technology continues to expand we are losing ground in keeping up financially.

This bill would provide us with a permissible mill level which would bring about \$20,000 in a budget item for us. As I have stated previously this would not cover all our cost but would establish a solid base to make plans from. This would also hold districts accountable to their constituents, because these type of expenses can be easily documented and critiqued. It is with the greatest sense of concern that I urge you to approve this bill and bring it to the entire senate to vote on and support. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely yours,

Eliot Strommen
Board President Hinsdale Public Schools

SENATE EDUCATION
EXHIBIT NO. 12
DATE 1/27/95
BILL NO. SB 101

To: Senate Education Members (Daryl Toews, Chair)
From: Peggy Cordell, Technology Coordinator, Missoula County Public Schools
Re: SB 101
Date: January 24, 1995

I am writing to express my support and enthusiasm for SB 101, which is scheduled for a hearing on January 27, 1995 at 1:00. SB 101 provides the necessary and appropriate vehicle for school districts to acquire technology that will enhance the curriculum. School boards across the state recognize the importance of providing the resources that will support education, but have also been under fire from voters to "hold the line" with their budgetary planning.

The planning and acquisition to support technology in the curriculum is not an inexpensive endeavor. Any plan for technology acquisition in education under our current budgetary constraints would come at the expense of other programs or needs (textbooks, special education, gifted, etc.). SB 101 provides an avenue for school districts to pursue technology acquisition that would provide the necessary funding and keep other essential educational programs intact.

If we as an educational community, try to meet the challenges of the ambitious "Goals 2000", then we will need to embrace educational technology as a tool with which to address the various issues associated with improving student achievement. SB 101 sparks a hope that we may be able to meet those challenges.

Thanks in advance for supporting SB 101.

ROSEBUD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

School District No. 12
P.O. Box 38
ROSEBUD, MONTANA 59347
Phone 347-5353

SENATE EDUCATION

EXHIBIT NO. 13

DATE 1/27/95

BILL NO. SB 101

January 25, 1995

Senate Education Committee
State Capitol
Helena, MT

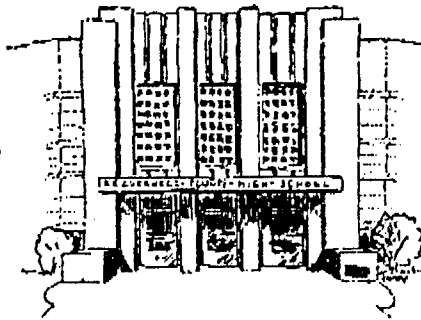
To Whom It May Concern:

I urge you to look favorably upon SB 101. The passage of this bill will put in place a mechanism allowing districts to plan and implement a technology curriculum that may not otherwise be possible. Technology in schools is expensive, and the general fund budget is often earmarked for other expenditures that cannot be cut. This leaves very little, if any, money left over for technology. This hampers the overall development of a segment of the curriculum that is extremely important in education today, and will undoubtedly be more important tomorrow as our country shifts from a manufacturing economy to one based on service industries, and the use and processing of information. It is vital that students exit our schools trained in the use and application of technology. Right now many of them are not getting the training they need and must pursue it in further educational settings. Passing this bill will allow public schools to open up opportunities for students on a much wider scale.

Sincerely,



Norman Hagen
Superintendent



SENATE EDUCATION

EXHIBIT NO. 14

DATE 1/27/95

BILL NO. SB 101

BEAVERHEAD COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL

DILLON MONTANA

59723

104 NORTH PACIFIC

PHONE 406/683-2361

January 25, 1995

Senator Daryl Towes, Chairman
c/o Senate Education Committee
Montana Legislature
State Capitol Building
Helena, Montana 59620

Dear Senator Towes:

As Supt. of Beaverhead County High School, Dillon, Montana, I would like to go on record as supporting Senate Bill 101, Technology Funding and In-Service Training Fund. As you and your committee realize, Technology Education is an absolute educational tool for schools, albeit expensive. S.B. 101 would allow, via a permissive levy (2% of the general fund budget), realization to stay on the "cutting edge" of this viable educational tool. Please support this much needed bill.

Thank you and continued best wishes the remainder of the Legislative session.

Don't hesitate to call my office if questions.

Sincerely,

Dennis Kimzey
Dennis Kimzey, Supt.
B.C.H.S.

cc: John Hertel
C.A. Emerson
Delwyn Gage
Loren Jenkins
Ken Mesaros
Steve Doherty
Gary Forester
Barry "Spook" Stang
Mignon Waterman

SCOBAY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

- TELEPHONE 406-487-2202
- FAX NO. (406) 487-2204

SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 1

205 2nd Ave. E.
P.O. Box 10
Scobay, Montana 59263

SENATE EDUCATION

EXHIBIT NO. 15DATE 1/27/95BILL NO. SB 101

CLIFF HAGFELDT
Chairman, Board of Trustees

KAREN L. SCHAEFER
Board Clerk/Business Manager

DUSTIN B. HILL
Superintendent

GEORGE RIDER
High School Principal

DEANNA R. GILMORE
Elementary Principal

ELAJR T. WAHL
NIKKI GRENDA
Counselors

LARRY HENDERSON
Activities Director

IRENE NESGODA
Administrative Bkdp./Sec.

WANITA BENSON
Attendance/Records Clerk
H.S./Elem. Secretary

January 25, 1995

The Honorable Daryl Toews, Chairman
Senate Education Committee
State Capitol
Helena, MT 59604

Fax: 1-900-225-1600

Dear Chairman Daryl Toews:

I am writing this letter in support of Senate Bill 101 which covers Technology Funding and In-Service Training Fund.

Technology funding is an area where we are beginning to realize that we must make a long-term commitment if we are to keep up to the needs of our students. This bill will allow us to keep our technology up-to-date so that our students will be able to compete globally with others in the job market.

I thank you in advance for your support.

Sincerely,

Dustin Hill
Superintendent

FULLY ACCREDITED BY NORTHWEST ASSOCIATION OF SECONDARY & HIGHER EDUCATION

WAYNE F. LERSBAK, ED.D.
SUPERINTENDENTMARY R. BROWN
CLERK(406) 295-4606
FAX (406) 295-4802**TROY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

DISTRICT NO. 1, LINCOLN COUNTY

P.O. DRAWER 0

TROY, MONTANA 59935

JOHN C. KONZEN
HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPAL
(406) 295-4520WILLIAM ACKLEY
ELEMENTARY PRINCIPAL
(406) 295-4321

SENATE EDUCATION

EXHIBIT NO. 16DATE 1/27/95BILL NO. SB101

January 26, 1995

The Hon. Steve Doherty
Senate Education Committee

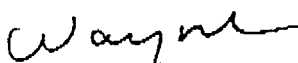
Senator Doherty:

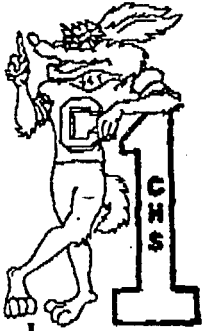
Troy Public Schools supports the passage of SB 101 - Technology
Funding and In-Service Training Fund.Troy Public Schools have spent over \$400,000 the past five years
towards technology hardware, software and in-service training.
We are considered one of the leading edge districts in technology
advancement in the State of Montana.Ninety-three percent of the total monies obligated toward
technology was monies the district appreciated from Impact Aid,
Metal Mines and Grants.SB 101 - allowing districts to permissive levy up to 2% of the
general fund budget would provide Troy Public Schools \$48,000
each year to continue the positive effort into the 21st Century.SB 101 "most importantly" would provide the required impetus for
those school districts needing the resource "shove" into computer
assisted learning.

Your support is appreciated.

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE!

Sincerely,

Wayne F Lersbak Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools
Troy Public Schools
295-4606



CHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

BOX 550
CHESTER, MONTANA 59522

SENATE EDUCATION

EXHIBIT NO. 17

DATE 1/27/95

BILL NO. SB 101

(406) 759-5108
High School

(406) 759-5477
Elementary

(406) 759-5867
FAX

TO: Senator Loren Jenkins, Education and Cultural Resources
FROM: Joel Voytoski, *JV* Superintendent
RE: SB 101
DATE: January 26, 1995

I am writing this memo to request your support for SB 101. As you are well aware, new monies for education is not a popular concept with the legislature at the present time. However, state support for technology in our public schools should be viewed as an investment which may actually save the state money "down the road".

Through a technology acquisition fund, schools can begin making long-range plans to share resources via technology. For example, there are currently 12 Hi-Line area schools who have joined together with Montana State University - Northern to apply for a grant which would fund two-way interactive television to all the sites involved in the grant. This will allow us to share teachers and courses. The "catch" is that, even if the grant is funded, each school will have expenses to get up and running. The technology acquisition fund could offset some of these expenses. The result would be a ITV network that allows us to expand course offerings, share the expertise of teachers across the Hi-Line, and offer teacher in-service training and community access to college coursework at greatly reduced costs.

The economic potential that technology offers our rural area should not be overlooked. The ITV network I described in the previous paragraph will keep people in their local communities. In addition, if our schools can offer adequate and appropriate technology training to the children enrolled in our public schools, we are providing them with the skills they need to make a living and stay in the State of Montana! This can happen if we can find a way to bring technology to our schools. It cannot be done through our general fund budgets. We need an additional revenue source to make this work!

Please take a long look at SB 101. The relatively minor short-term expense is nothing compared to the long-term implications and savings both for our schools and the state. Please call me at 759-5108 if you would like to discuss this further. This bill deserves your support.

Cut Bank Public Schools

SCHOOL DISTRICT 15 - GLACIER COUNTY

COMMITTED TO
EDUCATIONAL
EXCELLENCE

101 Third Avenue SE
Cut Bank, Montana 59427
(406) 873-2229
FAX (406) 873-4691

SENATE EDUCATION

EXHIBIT NO. 18

DATE 1/27/95

BILL NO. SB101

*See Rose
442*

January 26, 1995

Memo to: Senate Education Committee Members
Senators: Toews, Hartel, Emerson, Gage, Jenkins,
Mesaros, Doherty, Forrester, Stang, and
Waterman

From: Dennis W. Roseleip, Superintendent
Cut Bank Public Schools

RE: SB101 Technology Funding

This memo is to express my support for Senate Bill 101 regarding Technology Funding and the In-Service Training Fund. This bill will:

- 1) Provide for local control of what technology is purchased
- 2) Provide for In-Service training
- 3) Provide a regular source of funding
- 4) Provide for less pressure on the general fund for technology/training purposes

Thanks.

SENATE EDUCATION

EXHIBIT NO. 19

DATE 1/27/95

BILL NO. SB101

RE: SENATE BILL 101
EDUCATION COMMITTEE
ATTENTION: JOHN HERTEL

FROM: BETH BERGUM, CLERK, WINIFRED SCHOOLS

As a clerk of a local school district and as one involved in education for a number of years, I strongly support Senate Bill 101.

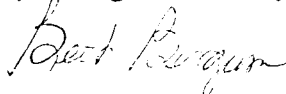
Schools must provide a strong background in technology education for our students to meet the demands of the work place in the 21st Century. This is extremely important for all students, but perhaps, even more vital for students entering a vocation field rather than pursuing a college education.

Schools the size of Winifred are at a distinct disadvantage in the ability to purchase and to keep current computers and other items so necessary to this field. All schools are making a sincere attempt to keep up, but as these items become obsolete in such a short time, it places a burden on the general fund budgets.

For many years, schools have purchased buses through a bus depreciation fund. This has worked very well, the interest earnings on purchases often covers the increase in cost of the bus. Establishing the same type of fund for purchase of technological equipment would give schools the opportunity to update material for this important educational field. It would also leave the general fund budget available for other necessary school costs.

Given the restraints of the present school budgets, this should be considered a vital addition to the school program.

Thank you for the support you and the Education Committee give to the passage and implementation of this bill.



Beth Bergum, Clerk
Winifred School District No. 115
Winifred, MT 59489



JOINT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 8

Box 37 • Arlee, Montana 59821-0037

Arlee Schools (406) 726-3216 • FAX (406) 726-3940

Accessible
Responsive —
Learning
Environment for
Excellence

SENATE EDUCATION

EXHIBIT NO. 20

DATE 1/27/95

BILL NO. SB 101



Primary reasons for Arlee Schools support of SB101

- > Significant improvement in student writing skills
- > Vocational students are more competitive in finding and keeping jobs in the working world
- > In education, students' ability to process and use information in problem solving is becoming increasingly important
- > Repairs are having an increasing impact on budgets
- > Computers are not the only technology impacting schools

1. Arlee High School has had to upgrade computers in our business education program to enable our students to use the current programs being used in the world of business.

- a. (FY94 spent \$11,600; FY95 spent \$16,670)
- b. The older computers being used in student writing lab

2. In other subjects Arlee High School has introduced computers

- a. English 12 computers
- b. Mathematics 10 computers
- c. Vocational Ag 4 computers
- d. Students in vocational programs are learning project design and drafting using computers which improves construction techniques and saves time to increase productivity.

3. In grades 7 & 8 computers have gradually been introduced

- a. English 12 computers
- b. Mathematics 6 computers
- c. Science 6 computers
- d. Developing computer lab using equipment obtained through the Property and Supply Bureau (i.e., state surplus)

4. Arlee Elementary School has writing-to-read and writing-to-write student labs.

- a. Equipment has been in place for five years
- b. Repairs during that time: server, 3 monitors, 9 keyboards.
- c. Costs for repairs covered by repair contract with IBM
 - (1) Cost \$10,000 per year
 - (2) This year we dropped that maintenance contract
- d. There has been a 20% improvement in student writing using our writing assessment validated by statistical methods

5. Libraries in Arlee Schools are automating to allow students to more effectively locate information needed for classes

6. Other schools have also seen significant improvement in student writing skills: Evergreen Schools (Kalispell), Bigfork Schools (Bigfork)

Thankyou for the opportunity to present this information to you. I would be happy to discuss any questions or concerns you might have now or in the future.

Sincerely,

Chris Hagar, Superintendent

Mr. Chairman & members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify for Senate Bill 101. My name is Kaye Ebel and am a 1st grade teacher at Target Range school in Missoula.

Upon noticing a disparity of technology that is available to students in Missoula County, we chose to explore the divergent computer technology that's being utilized in schools in our geographical area. Our initial concern is the deviation that exists between various elementary schools and feeder schools that flow into the high schools.

SENATE EDUCATION

EXHIBIT NO. 21

DATE 1/27/95

BILL NO. SB101

All of us know that equality of education is guaranteed by our state constitution. We chose one school as a model because it represents the issue that we would like to address. We feel that students transferring to or going to higher levels of education do not have the opportunity to grow with technology.

Senate Bill 101 will not only even out the abilities of various school districts to purchase technology but to also provide a yearly source of money to maintain technology and to provide much needed teacher inservice.

In A recent survey asking educators the reason for not utilizing technology to its fullest the biggest response was the lack of equipment and inservice.

A successful technology program is one that has goals. Our school developed a 5 year plan. SB 101 would also allow schools to develop long range plans knowing they had a consistent money source for the plans.

Technology in our schools provides the motivation students need to become life long learners. The amount of information and capabilities is endless. My first grade students use the computer daily to access information about a current topic, enhance skills, write and illustrate stories, graph data or to have an online conversation with a famous scientist, astronaut or author. Soon with the availability of the World Wide Web students will be able to take electronic field trips any where in the world.

The book Education, Technology, and Paradigms of Change for the 21st Century, written by David D. Thornburg states that "Our survival as a nation depends on our capacity to think in the future and act in the present. Then, and only then, will we be able to prepare children for their future, not for our past." (Thornburg, 1991)

KEN HALVerson, SUPERINTENDENT
(406) 825-7844
KATHY ZUEGLER, DISTRICT CLERK
(406) 825-3113
FAX (406) 825-3114

CLINTON ELEMENTARY
DISTRICT #32
19075 E. MULLAN ROAD
P.O. BOX 250
CLINTON, MONTANA 59825-250

JEFF WEBBER, CHAIRMAN
(406) 258-0608
KAY JAMES, VICE-CHAIRMAN
(406) 258-0601

January 25, 1995

Mr. Daryl Toews, Chairman
Senate Education Committee
State Capitol
Helena, MT. 59601

SENATE EDUCATION

EXHIBIT NO. 22

DATE 1/27/95

BILL NO. SB 101

Dear Daryl,

Whether you administer a school in Lustre, Opheim, or Clinton, monies for technology needs are our number one priority. We face the same frustration individuals face when attempting to purchase a personal computer for their home. What to buy? Will it be out-dated within a year's time?

This much I do know Daryl. We have to equip our public schools with adequate tools to prepare our students for the world of work each will enter. And, to accomplish this mandate, we are hobbled with ever shrinking state funding!! These funds are shrinking not because the state is ignoring our pleas, but by the fact that maintenance and inflation costs are increasing more rapidly.

Presently in my school, we have a wonderful computer lab equipped with 30 IBM clone computers. We are able to schedule three of our eight grade levels into this lab each week on a daily basis. These computers were purchased last year with a windfall of tax protest dollars that had been unavailable for several years. Next year, our staff salary and benefit requirements will consume 85% of our general fund budget. The remaining 15% will not cover maintenance and supply needs.

How are we to move toward further staff training and software purchases in order to open the computer room doors to the balance of our enrollment? The only light appearing on the horizon is SB 101!!

On behalf of the 250 students of Clinton Elementary School, I urge you and the members of the Senate Ed. Committee to pass this bill on to the full Senate for consideration. Our kids cannot wait for another "windfall".

Respectfully,
Ken Halverson
Ken Halverson

cc: Spook Stang

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Kurt Dyer
Chairman

Rosalie Preputin
Dave Forsman
Toni Bishop
Joel Rouns

Brady Public Schools**P.O. Box 166****Brady, Montana 59416**

Phone 406-753-2522
FAX 753-2523

SUPERINTENDENT
Jim Palmer

BUSINESS MANAGER/
DISTRICT CLERK
Gloria Hicks

SENATE EDUCATION

EXHIBIT NO. 23DATE 1/27/95BILL NO. 58101

January 27, 1995

Honorable Delwyn Gage
Montana Senate
Helena, Montana

Dear Senator Gage:

On behalf of the Board of Trustees of the Brady School, I am writing in support of Senate Bill 101.

As everyone is aware, technology is becoming a reality that schools must face. Research I have read lately states that 78% of our graduates will be required to have computer literacy to enter the job market.

The problem schools face is financing the technological equipment and software.

Senate Bill 101 would allow schools to maintain the needed technological level for students to be competitive in post education and the job market.

Respectfully yours,



James L. Palmer
Superintendent

Principal
William J. Taylor

Business Manager / Clerk
Patti Wilke

DODSON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
DISTRICT NO. 2-A (C)

Box 278
Dodson, Montana 59524
(406) 383-4361
FAX 406-383-4489

SENATE EDUCATION

EXHIBIT NO. 24

DATE 1/27/95

BILL NO. 56101

Superintendent
Nellie Sherman

January 27, 1995

Senate Education Committee
State of MT Legislature 1995
Helena, MT 59620

Dear Committee Members:

Dodson School District 2-A & C, Trustees and Administration strongly support SB 101, Technology Funding and In-service Training Fund.

Schools are expected to provide equipment and education in the technical areas, and teachers are often not well trained to provide these services.

Our methods of teaching are changing because of technology. In rural Montana, technology and in-service training could offer tremendous opportunities for students and community members and eventually may decrease the costs of education by schools sharing teachers and other cooperative teaching methods.

The burden on the local taxpayers has increased tremendously. Dodson Schools receives much less from state funding than two years ago--in fact, \$108,167.45 less state funding, while local mills have increased 81.32 mills just to reach the 80% required budget.

The GTB funds do not compensate for low mill values. Dodson School mills are 45.2 mills more than any other Phillips County School because of low mill values.

We urge you to strongly support SB 101 so that the poorer districts do not have to tax the local taxpayers for needed technology. Thank you.

Yours truly,

Bonnie Lankford

Bonnie Lankford, Chairman
Dodson School Board District 2-A & C
P.O. Box 278
Dodson, MT 59524

Nellie Sherman

Nellie Sherman, Supt.
District 2-A & C
P.O. Box 278
Dodson, MT 59524

White Sulphur Springs Schools

Meagher County, District 8
Box C, White Sulphur Springs, Montana 59645
High School Telephone 547-3351 Fax (406) 547-3922

EXHIBIT NO. 25

DATE 1/27/95

BILL NO. SB 101

Elementary Telephone 547-3751

TO: Senate Education Committee
Daryl Toews, Chairperson
John Hertel
C. A. Emerson
Delwyn Gage
Loren Jenkins

Steve Doherty
Gary Forester
Barry Stang
Mignon Waterman
Ken Mesaros

FROM: White Sulphur Springs School Board
White Sulphur Springs School Student Body
White sulphur Springs High School Graduates
Sandra L. Scott, Supt.

DATE: January 27, 1995

RE: Senate Bill 101 - Technology Fund & In-Service Training

PLEASE SUPPORT THE PASSAGE OF SENATE BILL 101 - WHICH PROVIDES SCHOOL DISTRICTS WITH A FUNDING MECHANISM TO PROVIDE STUDENTS WITH THE TECHNOLOGY NECESSARY TO ALLOW THEM TO LEARN, WORK AND COMPETE IN THE NEXT CENTURY.

With decreasing state financial support of K-12 schools, it is becoming increasingly difficult for schools to purchase, maintain, update, and provide training for the technologies necessary for students/young adults to be successful in post secondary education and careers.

In December 1994, the W.S.S. School Board commissioned a graduate survey. Graduates overwhelmingly responded that after math and English, computers and technology were the most important classes they took while in school. In addition, computer and other technologically based skills were ranked third as the most important skills a high school student should learn in order to be successful in work and school.

Technology is not a frill. Montana students must be computer and technology literate in order to be truly educated. The state of Montana must provide a means to equalize technology between the haves and have-nots or face the consequence of perpetuating a monumental technology-knowledge gap. Furthermore, Montana needs to re-train educators to retrieve and use information to be used in 1) developing creative and innovative ways of thinking and communicating, 2) providing team-building opportunities to include students from other regions to reduce isolationism and the cultural vacuum created by Montana's far flung schools, and 3) utilizing problem-solving skills to solve real life situations.

VOTE "YES" ON SENATE BILL 101

DATE - Jan 27, 1995

SENATE COMMITTEE ON SB 101

BILLS BEING HEARD TODAY: _____

< ■ > PLEASE PRINT < ■ >

Check One

Name	Representing	Bill No.	Support	Oppose
Loran Frazier	5 Am		X	
Sharon L Dale	Benson Dist #14		X	
John McNeil	Savage Public Schools	101	X	
Harry D. Erickson	Bellevue Schols	101	X	
Mary Vagner	Grata Co Pub. Schls	101	X	
Chris Hagan	Arlee Public Schools	101	X	
Calvin Moore	Medicine Lake Schols	101	✓	
Deborah Getz	Target Range Dist #23	101	✓	
Kaye Ebel	Target Range Missoula	101	✓	
Greg Bailey	Cons. MASS Target Range	101	✓	
Kirk J. Miller	Cascade Public Schols	101	✓	
Mary Lynn Reitz	Great Falls Public Schols	101	✓	
RICHARD MOTTA	SELF	101		✓
Elen INGRAMM	PARENT	101		X

Matthew Keedy VISITOR REGISTER
MSBA

101 X

PLEASE LEAVE PREPARED STATEMENT WITH COMMITTEE SECRETARY

DATE 01-27-95

SENATE COMMITTEE ON Education

BILLS BEING HEARD TODAY: SB-101 - SB195

HJR 3

< ■ > PLEASE PRINT < ■ >

Check One

Name	Representing	Bill No.	Support	Oppose
Kyuss Kuntz	SRSI	HJR3	X	
John Sample	AMAA	HJR3	X	
Lynn Churchill	NSF/NIE Grant	SB101	X	
Tom HARWOOD	SELF	SB195	X	
Gail Gray	O.P.O.	SB101	X	
Lynda Brannon	MASBO	SB101	X	
CARL KNUDSEN	SACO SCHOOLS	SB101	X	
TOM HARWOOD	SELF	SB101	X <i>if passed</i>	
RICHARD CROFTS	OCHE	HJR3	✓	
CRAIG BREWINGTON	myself, kids' grandchildren	SB195		X
Larry Isenberg	HJPS	SB195		X
Ric Flou	H.P.S.	SB195		X
Benjamin Blum				X
Donna Ingon	SAAM	SB195		X

Michael Kelly VISITOR REGISTER *MSBA* SB195 X

PLEASE LEAVE PREPARED STATEMENT WITH COMMITTEE SECRETARY

DATE 1/27/95

SENATE COMMITTEE ON Education

BILLS BEING HEARD TODAY: SB 195, HJR 3, SB101

< ■ > PLEASE PRINT < ■ >

Check One

Name	Representing	Bill No.	Support	Oppose
Cary Hegreberg	MT Wood Prod. Asso.	SB101	X	
Wayne Buchanan	B.T.E.	SB195		X
Don Pociot	MTAP	HJR3	X	
Darwin Youngman	Deaf Community	HJR3	X	
Gene P. Wolf	Great Falls Club of Deaf	HJR3	X	
Betty Van Dusen	MT Assn of the Deaf	HJR3	✓	
Donald Hamilton	Great Falls Club of Deaf	HJR3	X	
Guzette A. Sherrard	Great Falls, MT	HJR3	X	
Gandra Van Dusen	"	"	X	
Charles Youngman	"	"	X	
Larry D. Williams	"	"	X	
Don Waldron	MREA	SB101 HJR3	X X	
Don Waldron	MREA	SB195		X
ERIC FEAVER	MEA	SB195		X

Michael Keedy

VISITOR REGISTER

MSBA

HJR3
SB101 X

PLEASE LEAVE PREPARED STATEMENT WITH COMMITTEE SECRETARY

Larry Gursky

MT Science Teachers

DATE 1/27/95

SENATE COMMITTEE ON Education

BILLS BEING HEARD TODAY: SB 195, HJR 3, SB 101

< ■ > PLEASE PRINT < ■ >

Check One

Name	Representing	Bill No.	Support	Oppose
Patty Buckley	School Dist #9	101	✓	
Betty Beninger	School Dist. #9	101	✓	
Karol Gustin	School Dist. #9	101	✓	

VISITOR REGISTER

PLEASE LEAVE PREPARED STATEMENT WITH COMMITTEE SECRETARY

DATE 1/27/95

SENATE COMMITTEE ON Education

BILLS BEING HEARD TODAY: SB 195 HR 3 SB 101

< ■ > PLEASE PRINT < ■ >

Check One

Name	Representing	Bill No.	Support	Oppose
Terry Minow	MFT	SB 195		X
Terry Minow	MFT	HR 3	X	
DONALD STOGNAN	E. Helena Schools	SB 101	X	
"	"	SB 195		X
GREGG GROEPPER	OFFICE OF PUBLIC INST	SB 101	X	
BRAD MARTIN	MT Democratic Party	SB 195		✓
Dennis Coulter	Winifred Schools	SB 101	X	
John Hebrnes	Seeley Lake Elem	SB 101	X	
John Hebrnes	Seeley Lake Elem	HR 3	X	

VISITOR REGISTER

PLEASE LEAVE PREPARED STATEMENT WITH COMMITTEE SECRETARY