

School Administrators of Montana

**SAM Delegate Assembly 2020 Recommendations
Approved by SAM Membership at the SAM Annual
Business Meeting on 10/14/20**

SAM Advocacy Priorities, Positions, and Resolutions



Updated 10/22/20



SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS OF MONTANA
SAM 2020 Advocacy Priorities, Positions, Resolutions
Approved by SAM Membership at the SAM Business Meeting 10-14-20

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SAM Advocacy Priorities by Action Designation - Delegate Assembly 2020

SAM Delegate Assembly 2020 convened virtually on July 30, 2020 following the review of Positions and Resolutions by affiliate caucuses on July 29, 2020. Forty-four delegates approved 41 Positions and 43 Resolutions for recommendation to the SAM membership at the annual meeting scheduled for October 14, 2020, prior to MCEL. Below are the SAM Advocacy Priorities 2020-21, as derived from a summary of Positions and Resolutions with Action designation.

SAM Advocacy Priorities 2020-21

- ✚ Support Adequate and Equitable School Funding
- ✚ Support Recruitment and Retention of Quality Educators
- ✚ Oppose Privatization with Public Funds
- ✚ Support Facility and Technology Infrastructure
- ✚ Support School Based Mental Health Services

POSITIONS with Action Designation

Support Recruitment and Retention of Quality Educators

TEACHER & ADMINISTRATOR RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

SAM affirms that teacher and administrator retention and recruitment are keys to quality education. It supports efforts to support mentoring and to fund incentives for recruitment and retention of staff. Districts are faced with an increasing need to compete with other states for a shrinking pool of qualified candidates. The legislature must address current laws, administrative rules, and funding support to provide districts the flexibility to retain personnel and to compete for new candidates.

PUBLIC SCHOOL EMPLOYEE HEALTH INSURANCE

SAM will seek legislative changes to find a method for relief to health insurance costs.

Oppose Privatization with Public Funds

NON-PUBLIC AND HOME SCHOOL FUNDING (PK-12)

SAM opposes any legislation or initiatives, which would allow for vouchers, tuition tax credits, tax savings accounts, or any other funding plans for any non-public and home PK-12 schools.



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Support Facility and Technology Infrastructure

TECHNOLOGY

SAM believes technology is now and will forever be an integral part of our culture and presents ever changing challenges and opportunities for our students. Schools throughout Montana struggle to finance critical technology infrastructure. Educational services requiring technology are not available to all Montana Students. Therefore SAM will support:

- Administrative, operational and learning process change at the federal, state, district and school levels must be addressed strategically where goals, resources and timing for improvement are managed cohesively.
- Baseline funding for supportive technology infrastructure should be addressed by a variety of methods that include; mechanisms that account for life cycle cost of ownership, technology that is driven by changes in classroom and/or curricular needs, and operational technology related to business function necessary to run a school district (i.e. State reporting, security systems, telecommunications, etc). Districts would be encouraged to fund additional infrastructure and capabilities as demanded by their environments.
- Technology education for administrators, staff, technologists and students is timely, relevant, and compulsory.
- The management of technology requires a baseline of understanding and education. School administrators and leaders need support in specific process and technology implementation management.

Technology planning, implementation and support functions, requiring specialized skills and knowledge, are accomplished by professional staff or contracted consultants according to specific district business models.

RESOLUTIONS with Action Designation

Support Adequate and Equitable School Funding

Resolution #01/03/06/08/09/10/14/16/19-01 – FUNDING

WHEREAS, Montana continues to seek avenues for equitable and adequate revenue distribution for PK-12 education; and

WHEREAS, schools need to set levies, hold elections, hire staff, set academic schedules and make numerous educational decisions in the early spring; and

WHEREAS, the ability to carry over unencumbered funds would eliminate minuscule levy elections conducted by districts to maintain prior year budgeting authority;

BE IT RESOLVED, that SAM supports school funding be on two year cycles corresponding to the off years of the regular legislative session; and



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BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that SAM supports the development of a statewide economic plan to generate and distribute revenue needed to provide adequate and equitable funding levels for PK-12 education; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that SAM supports requiring the legislature to allocate at a minimum the amount budgeted for PK-12 education in the prior session or special session; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that SAM supports legislation to allow districts to carryover unencumbered prior year funds without affecting budget maximums; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that SAM believes that the MTDA (Montana Digital Academy) funding sources shall come from the state legislature and not from the individual district; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that SAM supports funding of state special education allowable costs as a part of the school funding formula, with the additional allocation adjusted to meet the needs of special education cooperatives and inflationary increases applied to this component of the funding formula; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that SAM supports continued funding of full time kindergarten.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that SAM supports additional and continued funding for early childhood education programs.

Designation: Action

Resolution #01/18/20-04 – PERMISSIVE FUNDING FOR HIGH IMPACT COSTS

WHEREAS, Montana school districts continue to experience high impact fixed operating costs, such as pandemic(s), utilities, fuel costs, technology and health insurance, which in recent years have increased dramatically; and

WHEREAS, school districts are required to pay for these costly expenditures through the general fund budget which negatively impacts educational opportunity for students; and

WHEREAS, school districts have little or no way to control such costs or even budget for them without cutting or eliminating educational programs;

BE IT RESOLVED, that SAM supports the creation of separate funds or inclusion into existing funds, outside the General Fund Budget supported through permissive levies, to fund high impact fixed costs and protect the ability of the GFB to support the educational needs of students.

Designation: Action



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Resolution #03/15-01 - SPECIAL EDUCATION FUNDING

WHEREAS, the percentage of state support for earmarked special education general fund expenditures has declined at a rate significantly greater than has the rate of state support for the total general fund budget; and

WHEREAS, the original intent of Congress was to fund special education at the 40% level of the national average for pupil expenditure; and

WHEREAS, the lack of state fiscal support for mandated special education services effectively decreases the amount of general funds available to support general education programming;

BE IT RESOLVED; that SAM urges the legislature and state officials to avoid state appropriations that may suggest discriminatory funding practices between special education and regular education; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that SAM supports legislation to allow school districts to increase their budget caps to provide for the disproportionate costs associated with educating students with special needs; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that SAM supports efforts to fully fund IDEA at its originally intended levels and to allow flexibility in maintenance of effort requirements.

Designation: Action

Resolution #03/06/11/16/17-02 – ADDITIONAL FUNDING FOR MANDATED SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

WHEREAS, the state provides inadequate funding to support the mandated services required of schools for students with disabilities placing a disproportionate financial burden upon local tax-payers;

BE IT RESOLVED, that SAM supports full state and federal funding for mandated special education services for students with disabilities with parallel increases to ANB funding based on the current formula;

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that SAM will prioritize support of legislative action to increase the monetary investment for such mandated special education services by applying additional state funding without reducing payments for the Instructional Services Block Grant, Related Services Block Grant, and the Disproportionate Cost Reimbursement.

Designation: Action

Resolution #14-04 – FUNDING SPECIAL EDUCATION COOPERATIVE INFRASTRUCTURE

WHEREAS, a large majority of school districts, 81%, participate in special education cooperatives owing in a large part to a very sparsely distributed population; and



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WHEREAS, increasing frequency, intensity, and investments of special education services require a robust cooperative infrastructure necessary to assure our students in rural schools equal access to special education services and quality education; and

WHEREAS, school laws of Montana do not adequately address funding the basic entitlement of Cooperatives in order to establish the appropriate infrastructure necessary for rural students to have equal access to special education services and quality education;

BE IT RESOLVED, that SAM supports legislative action ensuring the development of the full educational potential of each person;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that SAM supports legislative action to increase the monetary investment in Cooperative infrastructure including means to recruit and retain highly qualified personnel in rural areas; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that SAM supports legislative action to ensure educational infrastructure is equitably and adequately funded across all Montana administrative units.

Designation: Action

Resolution #15/17-01- SPECIAL EDUCATION FUNDING, CLOSING THE GAP [2019 LEGISLATIVE SESSION HB 638]

WHEREAS, review of recent legislative funding increases for K-12 education will clearly show there has been, and continues to be a significant “gap” between increases in revenue provided general education versus increases provided special education; and

WHEREAS, historically, state and federal legislative increases in funding for special education services have been infrequent and wholly inadequate. This lack of additional revenue places increasing pressure on districts to use local revenue to fund special education services; and

WHEREAS, because districts and cooperatives are receiving inadequate increases in special education revenue, the effect on districts includes reducing services to special education children placing districts at risk of failing to provide FAPE (Free Appropriate Public Education), places special education in the position of “competing” for local funding with general education, sports, and other activities, and places an increasing burden on local tax payers;

BE IT RESOLVED, that SAM will work with their educational partners, the Office of Public Instruction, Governor’s office, and the Congressional delegation to “close the gap” in funding increases for general education versus special education.

Designation: Action



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Resolution #16-07 – ADEQUATE FUNDING FOR MANDATED SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

WHEREAS, IDEA, as federal law, mandates a free appropriate public education for children with disabilities, ages 3-21. (Title I, B, 612, a, 1, A) with provision for State level statutory language to limit services to children with disabilities ages 18-21 (Title 1, B, 612, a, 1, B, ii); and

WHEREAS, most Montana school districts limit attendance to age 19, mandated special education services in the State typically address the needs of children with disabilities ages 3-19; and

WHEREAS, inadequate State funding of mandated special education services negatively impacts the education of all students by effectively decreasing the amount of general funds available to support general education programming;

BE IT RESOLVED, that SAM will prioritize adequate funding of mandated special education services; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that SAM will prioritize support of legislative action for statutory language that includes the special education appropriation in the group of education appropriations subject to the mandatory inflationary increase; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that SAM will prioritize support of legislative action to increase monetary investment in Cooperative infrastructure without reducing payments for the Instructional Services Block Grant, Related Services Block Grant, and the Disproportionate Cost Reimbursement; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that SAM recognizes proposals for new program entitlements for students outside the current age-range of State-funded educational programs may negatively impact funding consideration for mandated special education services; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that SAM will prioritize support of legislative action for inflationary increases for special education and increased monetary investment in Cooperative infrastructure above advocacy efforts for new program entitlements for students outside the current age-range of State funded educational programs.

Designation: Action

Resolution #20-01 SPECIAL EDUCATION FLEXIBILITY FUNDING

WHEREAS, an historic review of Montana and federal legislative funding increases for K-12 education clearly show there has been, and continues to be a significant “gap” between increases in revenue provided general education versus increases provided special education; and

WHEREAS, because LEAs are receiving inadequate increases in special education revenue, the effect on districts includes reducing services to special education children, placing districts at risk of failing to



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provide FAPE (Free Appropriate Public Education), places special education in the position of “competing” for local funding with general education, extra-curricular, and other activities; and

WHEREAS, The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is a federal law ensuring a free and appropriate public education to children with disabilities; and as enacted (1975), is supposed to provide for 40% full funding. The federal allocation, however, has historically never exceed 16% funding for students with disabilities; and

WHEREAS, SB 191, 2013 Montana Legislative Session passed the right of a district to levy in its tuition fund without a vote to pay for any costs of IDEA that are in excess of state and federal funding streams provided to the district (20-5-324; 20-7-401, MCA); and

WHEREAS, SB 191 funds are not available to all school districts or communities based on an insufficient or non-existent tax base, including but not limited to small rural communities, districts that reside within federal lands, and communities dependent on specific revenue streams such as oil, coal, etc.

WHEREAS, SB 307, 2017 Montana Legislative Session, required trustees to adopt a resolution of intent to increase non-voted levies no later than March 31 of each fiscal year (20-9-116, MCA); and

WHEREAS, the trustees of a district must adopt a final budget for the district and determine the amounts to be raised by tax levies for the district not later than August 25 (209-131, MCA); and

WHEREAS, exceptional students with significant needs transfer between districts after March 31 and prior to August 25, districts are financially obligated to meet the needs of those students, nonetheless, without fiscal planning to be in compliance with IDEA; and

WHEREAS, the tuition fund does not provide for reserves; and

WHEREAS, cooperative member districts are prohibited from using tuition funds, under 20-5-324 and 20-7-401, MCA, for assessment fee expenditures.

BE IT RESOLVED, that SAM will work with their educational partners and the Office of Public Instruction to ensure that districts will be enabled to annually reserve tuition funds to overcome potential budgetary shortfalls in the event of a transferring significant needs student into their district.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, LEAs, including cooperative member districts, may budget and utilize tuition funds for the purpose of disbursing it for cooperative assessment fees.

Designation: Action



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Support Recruitment and Retention of Quality Educators

Resolution #10/16/19-01 – UNIFIED RECRUITMENT & RETENTION

WHEREAS, Montana has significant difficulty in recruiting and retaining highly qualified teachers and related service professionals in general and special education; and

WHEREAS, Montana has historically experienced difficulty in the recruitment and retention of low incidence professional positions, such as speech pathologists, school psychologists, occupational therapists, physical therapists, sign language interpreters and other professional staff necessary for the provision of a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) under the Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA); and

WHEREAS, Montana has historically experienced difficulty in the recruitment and retention of general education professional positions necessary to provide instructional service which meet accreditation standards; and

WHEREAS, school districts currently spend a significant amount of resources including time and money on the recruitment and retention of low incidence personnel; and

WHEREAS, a unified collaborative effort towards statewide recruitment and retention would be more cost effective and efficient; and

WHEREAS, recruitment and retention of highly qualified/low incidence positions is difficult due to the geographic isolation of many communities of Montana; and

WHEREAS, Office of Public Instruction has worked collaboratively with Montana Council of Administrators of Special Education on the recruitment and retention of highly qualified/low incidence personnel; and

WHEREAS, Montana continues to have chronic shortages;

BE IT RESOLVED: That SAM supports the implementation of a unified recruitment and retention program designed to address current personnel shortages in both general and special education.

Designation: Action

Oppose Privatization with Public Funds

Resolution #02/12/14-03 – VOUCHERS, TUITION TAX CREDITS, TAX SAVINGS ACCOUNTS AND CHARTER SCHOOLS (OTHER THAN AS DEFINED IN ARM 10-55-604)



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WHEREAS, vouchers, tuition tax credits and charter schools detract from the goal of comprehensive improvement of public schools, do not enhance public and non-public school competition, and do not significantly impact student achievement levels; and

WHEREAS, voucher programs do not cover the full tuition costs of many schools, thus preventing true choice for many parents and students; and

WHEREAS, the acceptance or use of public funds by private and parochial institutions would threaten the unique mission of these schools by requiring every recipient of public funds to abide by the same laws, rules, and regulations as public schools; and

WHEREAS, non-public schools ultimately determine which students will be admitted and/or removed from their rolls therefore increasing discrimination; and

WHEREAS, vouchers, tuition tax credits and charter schools are prohibitively expensive, require taxpayers to finance the tuition costs of students attending private and parochial schools, and remove funds from public schools;

BE IT RESOLVED, that SAM will oppose the use of vouchers, tuition tax credits, tax savings accounts and charter schools in any form.

Designation: Action

Resolution #12/13/16-03 – SCHOOL PRIVATIZATION WITH PUBLIC FUNDS LEGISLATION

BE IT RESOLVED, that SAM take the following positions with regard to school privatization legislation of any kind by the Legislature; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that SAM work to ensure that elected school boards in member school districts are empowered to innovate and adapt public school offerings to best meet the needs of students and to fully develop the educational potential of each student in the public schools as envisioned by the Constitutional framers in writing Article X, Section 1 of the Montana Constitution; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that SAM work to ensure continued supervision and control of all publicly funded PK-12 education in Montana by existing school boards in current member districts who are subject to popular election to ensure that publicly-funded PK-12 education remains accountable to citizens in each community through oversight by volunteer elected trustees; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that SAM oppose any attempts to fund private PK-12 education, including sectarian and non-sectarian private schools and home schools through public means and that SAM interpret “public means” to include but not necessarily be limited to any appropriation, tax credit, tax deduction, voucher or any other financial incentive or construct mandated or allowed by law or proposed in any bill or initiative. Guidance on SAM’s position and efforts are to be derived from but not limited to the language of Article X, Section 6 (Aid prohibited to sectarian schools) and applicable interpretations of this



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provision by the Montana Supreme Court and other courts interpreting similar language in their respective state constitutions; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that SAM work to ensure that any school choice legislation be limited only to public schools and comply with and afford every student in every public school with all constitutional rights specified in Article X of the Montana Constitution and access to a public education that complies with the definition of the basic system of free quality schools adopted by the Legislature in 20-9-309, MCA;

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that SAM actively and vigorously opposes any legislation failing to meet the standards set forth above and pursue enforcement of the constitutional provisions referenced in this resolution through any lawful means.

Constitutional References:

Section 1. Educational goals and duties. (1) It is the goal of the people to establish a system of education which will develop the full educational potential of each person. Equality of educational opportunity is guaranteed to each person of the state.

Section 6. Aid prohibited to sectarian schools. (1) The legislature, counties, cities, towns, school districts, and public corporations shall not make any direct or indirect appropriation or payment from any public fund or monies, or any grant of lands or other property for any sectarian purpose or to aid any church, school, academy, seminary, college, university, or other literary or scientific institution, controlled in whole or in part by any church, sect, or denomination.

Section 8. School district trustees. The supervision and control of schools in each school district shall be vested in a board of trustees to be elected as provided by law.

Designation: Action

Support Facility and Technology Infrastructure

Resolution #13/15-01 – CAPITAL FACILITY NEEDS [2019 Legislative Session HB 247, HB 652]

BE IT RESOLVED, that SAM pursue continued and expanded state funding for capital facility needs in districts across the state of Montana to match and leverage local support for maintaining quality, safe, healthy, and educationally appropriate school facilities that meet the needs of 21st Century learning. The resolution should include support for technology costs within the definition of capital facility needs. The resolution should encourage energy efficiency, quality materials, and the general concept of sustainability. In addition, we encourage state support to match local building reserves so that school districts will be able to maintain facilities.

We encourage state support maintaining local control, and ensuring full funding for programs such as the state Facility Guaranteed Mill per ANB funding, as well as new initiatives that might be developed in the future.

We believe that this resolution is important to the needs of students in districts across the state of Montana.



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Designation: Action

Resolution #16/17/19-08 – ANB ALLOCATION FOR TECHNOLOGY HARDWARE UPGRADES

WHEREAS, every school district in Montana strives to provide a quality education for every student that culminates in college and career readiness; and

WHEREAS, every school district in Montana is united in the belief that all students deserve to be successful; and

WHEREAS, every school district in Montana is striving to provide 21st Century learning opportunities and needed skills; and

WHEREAS, every school district in Montana is funded through a variety of sources, but primarily by the average number of students in attendance or ANB, and

WHEREAS, technology touches all aspects of education including the business operations, curriculum resources and assessments. Together these have become a significant burden on technology budgets; and

WHEREAS, schools are having difficulties in funding for technology and funding is not equitable across the state for upgrading, maintaining, and supporting technology hardware in schools; and

WHEREAS, a basic allocation per student, (e.g. Data Achievement (MCA 20-9-325)), would bring a constant revenue that school districts would support refreshing technology hardware on at least a five year cycle (industry standard). A basic annual allocation of \$50 per student over a five year span would generate \$250; which may not cover the complete cost of hardware for a student, but enough that a district can do more effective and efficient planning; and

BE IT RESOLVED, that the SAM hereby requests that the 2021 Montana Legislature increase the state's funding for technology by appropriating \$50 per student each year for technology hardware.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that SAM supports an increase in funding beyond the services already allocated to support schools.

Designation: Action

Resolution #16/17/20-09 – SUPPORT OF ADEQUATE BANDWIDTH FOR SCHOOLS

WHEREAS, blended classrooms that integrate technology and rich media resources have become essential in the 21st Century classroom; and

WHEREAS, U.S. Department of Education and State Education Technology Directors Association recommendations require 1Mbps per student to ensure a media rich learning environment; and



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WHEREAS, many rural schools in the state cannot meet basic bandwidth requirements for state mandated online testing; and

WHEREAS, Montana represents one of the largest sectors of entrepreneurial activity in the country, demonstrating that our students will need access to digital resources to compete globally in careers and college upon graduation; and

WHEREAS, decisions on appropriate bandwidth speeds and service are best made by the administration and trustees of local school districts;

BE IT RESOLVED, the legislators will work with the Governor's office, Education Super Highway, META, and SAM ensure a minimum of 1mbs per student for all Montana public education students.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, SAM and the State of Montana will explore supporting PK-20 connectivity consortiums to allow schools to tie into the State University systems for connectivity to University classrooms and other educational resources.

Designation: Action

Resolution #16/20-11 – REMOVING THE LIMIT DURATION ON TECHNOLOGY LEVY FUNDING

WHEREAS, technology is an ever evolving and necessary tool in every Montana classroom; and

WHEREAS, school districts rely on technology levies to fund the network, student and staff devices, curricular and operational software purchases, as well as training, repairs and support; and

WHEREAS, in many budget years, the general fund has to cover a significant number of those costs; and

WHEREAS, General Fund budgets in many districts are limited to the base budget given local taxpayer's avoidance of operational levies that allow districts to adopt maximum budgets, leaving District's basic operational resources too tight to meet the needs of 21st Century classrooms;

WHEREAS, limiting a technology levy's duration to 10 years, as well as District's risking a previously approved perpetual technology levy may restrict a district's ability to ensure ongoing technological integrity;

BE IT RESOLVED, section 6 will strike the 10 year maximum limitation and section 8 will be deleted from MCA 20-9-533.

Designation: Action



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Resolution #19/20-01 – ALLOWING THE USE OF VIDEO EVIDENCE TO ENFORCE SCHOOL BUS STOP ARM VIOLATIONS

WHEREAS, Montana law requires drivers overtaking a school bus from either direction to stop while the school bus is operating visual flashing red signals as specified in [61-9-402 MCA](#), and the driver may not proceed until the children have entered the school bus or have alighted and reached the side of the highway or street, and until the school bus ceases operation of its visual flashing red signal; and

WHEREAS, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) notes stop arm laws are particularly challenging to enforce because violations occur randomly, as opposed to at certain times or locations, and typically must be witnessed by a law enforcement officer in order for a ticket to be issued; and

WHEREAS, Montana school buses travel millions of miles per year on roads, highways, and streets not heavily monitored by law enforcement at all times; and

WHEREAS, Montana schools leverage technology in many ways to ensure our students safety while they are in the schools' care;

BE IT RESOLVED, that SAM will support legislative action authorizing the use of stop arm camera technology to substantiate the reporting of stop arm violations. The implementation of such technology will remain at the discretion of local trustees, not mandatory, and the cost of implementation can come from any applicable fund allowed by law including but not limited to Transportation, Bus Depreciation, and/or School Safety funds.

Designation: Action

Support School Based Mental Health Services

Resolution #99/02/06/07/16/17-08 – SCHOOL BASED MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

WHEREAS, disruptive, dangerous, and aggressive behaviors to self and others are occurring at increasing rates in our school communities due to a variety of factors; and

WHEREAS, economic conditions of families and society where adequate mental health services are not provided, families are not eligible for adequate insurance coverage, or determined ineligible for mental health services under existing state guidelines obligate school districts to provide greater attention and resources to students with mental health needs; and

WHEREAS, mental health services remain unfunded within communities and school districts, school districts are using educational resources to provide minimal health services to students with identified needs; and



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WHEREAS, there has been a history of inadequate state funding for mental health programs for students with mental health needs in community and school based programs; and

WHEREAS, there exists a significant need for comprehensive services, including community and interagency coordination to meet the needs of children with mental health needs within the school setting; and

WHEREAS, there exists a significant need for a continuum of services including community support, outpatient day and residential treatment, and acute care services with transition support between schools and mental health agencies to meet the mental health needs of children within the state;

BE IT RESOLVED, that SAM supports new state funding for Montana residential/educational services for children with mental health needs; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that SAM urges the State of Montana continue to support and provide funding for school based mental health services; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that SAM supports new state funding for a continuum of mental health services for students in addition to existing state and federal programs without reducing dollars from the state education general fund.

Designation: Action



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Summary of SAM Delegate Assembly 2020 Actions

SAM Delegate Assembly 2020 convened virtually on July 30, 2020 following the review of Positions and Resolutions by affiliate caucuses on July 29, 2020. Forty-four delegates approved 41 Positions and 43 Resolutions for recommendation to the SAM membership at the annual meeting scheduled for October 14, 2020, prior to MCEL. Below is a summary of major and new actions on those Positions and Resolutions.

POSITIONS

TECHNOLOGY

Delegates approved adding the word “technologists” to the statement -- Technology education for administrators, staff, **technologists** and students is timely, relevant, and compulsory.

STUDENT DATA PRIVACY

Delegates approved this new position under STUDENT ISSUES with Designation of Support. Addresses 20-7-1326 MCA (HB 745 2019 Legislative Session) suggesting supports for implementing Montana online personal information protection.

EMERGENCY SITUATIONS

Delegates approved this new position under LOCAL CONTROL ISSUES with Designation of Support. Addresses language to recognize local control during emergency situations, such as a pandemic.

RESOLUTIONS

Resolution #01/18/20-04 – PERMISSIVE FUNDING FOR HIGH IMPACT COSTS

Language revision -- WHEREAS, Montana school districts continue to experience high impact fixed operating costs, such as **pandemic(s)**, utilities, fuel costs, technology and health insurance, which in recent years have increased dramatically.

Resolution #16/17/20-09 – SUPPORT OF ADEQUATE BANDWIDTH FOR SCHOOLS

Delegates approved change of Designation from Support to Action.

Resolution #16/20-11 – REMOVING THE LIMIT DURATION ON TECHNOLOGY LEVY FUNDING

Delegates approved change of Designation from Support to Action.

Resolution #19/20-01 – ALLOWING THE USE OF VIDEO EVIDENCE TO ENFORCE SCHOOL BUS STOP ARM VIOLATIONS

Delegates approved change of Designation from Support to Action.

Resolution #20-01 SPECIAL EDUCATION FLEXIBILITY FUNDING

Delegates approved this new resolution with Support designation.



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Minutes of SAM Virtual Delegate Assembly 2020

The meeting was called to order by SAM Delegate Assembly Steering Committee Chairman Rick Duncan at 9:00 AM. A roll call commenced certifying 44 delegates present. (A copy of the sign in sheet is attached to these minutes). Following opening remarks by the SAM Delegate Steering Committee Chair, Rick Duncan, introductions and a review of the rules and procedures were provided.

Delegate Assembly then commenced with consideration of School Administrators of Montana Position Statements (attached).

The SAM Delegate Assembly Steering Committee made the motion on each position. Each position motion received a second.

The following **SAM Positions** were carried as presented by vote by the Delegate Assembly with the appropriate action identified:

Title	Second	Vote
CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT	Jack Eggensperger, MACSS	Motion passed
CULTURAL STUDIES	Matt Lewis, MAEMSP	Motion passed
FOCUS ON THE WHOLE CHILD	Stacy Lemelin MAEMSP	Motion passed
SAFE, SECURE, RESPECTFUL, DRUG FREE, AND HEALTHY SCHOOLS	Marlin Lewis, MAEMSP	Motion passed
SCHOOL ATTENDANCE	Shelly Weight, MASSP	Motion passed
ACCREDITATION STANDARDS	Shelley Andres, MAEMSP	Motion passed
CONTINUITY OF LEADERSHIP	Darin Hannum, MASS	Motion passed
COOPERATION IN EDUCATION PROGRAMS	Nikki Trahan, MAEMSP	Motion passed
DEVELOPMENT OF CURRICULUM	Godfrey Saunders, MASS	Motion passed
EDUCATION OF COMMUNITIES AND LEGISLATORS	Stacy Lemelin, MAEMSP	Motion passed
LICENSURE	Scott Kinney, MASS	Motion passed



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MONTANA DIGITAL ACADEMY	Alex Ator, MASS	Discussion: Rich Lawrence stated that META would like to see a language change requiring Montana Digital Academy compliant with the guidelines of HB 745. Kirk suggested that this be included in the new position statement, STUDENT DATA PRIVACY. Motion passed
MONTANA HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATION	Matt Lewis, MAEMSP	Motion passed
NON-PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND HOME SCHOOLS	Jack Eggensperger, MACSS	Motion passed
SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT	Stacy Lemelin, MAEMSP	Motion passed
SPECIAL EDUCATION ADMINISTRATIVE RULE MAKING	Lisa Von Bergen, MCASE	Motion passed
STUDENT CAREER PREPARATION	Pam Birkeland, MACSS	Discussion: Carol Phillips, META, stated that she believes not all districts are using the same student career preparation programs and there seems to be a disconnect. Motion passed
STUDENT DATA WAREHOUSE	Matt Lewis, MAEMSP	Discussion: META commented that they feel OPI should be compliant with the guidelines of HB745. Motion passed
TEACHER & ADMINISTRATOR RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION	Shelley Andres, MAEMSP	Motion passed
TEACHER EDUCATION	Kim Ray, MAEMSP	Scott Kinney, MASS, made a motion to change the designation to ACTION. Dan Schmidt, MASS, seconded the motion. Alex Ator, MASS, stated that MASS feels the designation of Action may encourage higher education institutions to place more emphasis on technology pedagogy in their teacher preparation programs. Godfrey Saunders, MASS, suggested having a discussion with the higher education institutions before changing the designation. Paul Furthmyre, MASSP, feels that this may not be where SAM wants to spend their time during the session even though he agrees with the concept and would like to see more SPED training in teacher preparation programs. Scott



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		<p>Kinney stated that he would like the teacher education programs to be much more agile to better fit current education situations. Kirk stated that the appropriate venue to address this discussion is not through legislation but with the Board of Regents, Montana Council of Deans of Education, and Board of Public Education. Lisa Von Bergen, MCASE, stated that she would also like to see a focus on both RTI and behavioral-social-emotional education in the programs.</p> <p>The amendment failed.</p> <p>The original motion passed.</p>
PUBLIC SCHOOL EMPLOYEE HEALTH INSURANCE	Laurie Barron, MASS	Motion passed
REGIONAL SERVICE AGENCY STRUCTURE AND GOVERNANCE DEFINED IN LAW	Nikki Trahan, MAEMSP	Motion passed
SUPPORT OF TRAINING FOR FEDERAL E-RATE REIMBURSEMENT	Stacy Lemelin, MAEMSP	Motion passed
CENSORSHIP	Everett Holm, META	Motion passed
COLLECTIVE BARGAINING	Scott Kinney, MASS	Motion passed
COUNTY SUPERINTENDENTS	Jack Eggenesperger, MACSS	Motion passed
LEAD TEACHER/COMMITTEE OF TEACHERS	Shelley Andres, MAEMSP	Motion passed
PROFESSIONAL RELATIONS	Shelly Weight, MASSP	Motion passed
SCHOOL BOARD RELATIONS	Shelley Andres, MAEMSP	Motion passed
FEDERAL PROGRAMS	Marlin Lewis, MAEMSP	Motion passed
FUNDING OF PK-12	Pam Birkeland, MACSS	Motion passed



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NON-PUBLIC AND HOME SCHOOL FUNDING (PK-12)	Jack Eggensperger, MACSS	Motion passed
RETIREMENT SYSTEM	Shelley Andres, MAEMSP	Motion passed
TAXES	Pam Birkeland, MACSS	Motion passed
TECHNOLOGY	Everett Holm, META	Discussion: Rich Lawrence, META, made a motion to add “technologists” to the position statement; Carol Phillips, META, seconded the motion. The motion passed. The motion passed as amended.
UNFUNDED MANDATES	Shelley Andres, MAEMSP	Motion passed
CERTIFIED TAXABLE VALUATION	Pam Birkeland, MACSS	Motion passed
K-12 VISION GROUP	Pam Birkeland, MACSS	Discussion: Carol Phillips, META, suggested including principals and technologists on the K-12 Vision Group. The suggestion is noted by the Assembly. Motion passed
New Proposed Positions	New Proposed Positions	New Proposed Positions
STUDENT DATA PRIVACY	Rich Lawrence, META	Rich Lawrence, META, made a motion to include “not”; Carol Phillips, META, seconded the motion. The amendment passed. Carol Phillips, META, made a motion to include “funded mandate” in the position. Tamra Covington, MCASE, stated that the OPI took over the AIMS database which removed the ability for districts to have input. Alex Ator, MASSP, stated that there is already language for all unfunded mandates in the SAM Advocacy package. Carol Phillips withdrew the motion.



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		<p>Carol Phillips, META, made a motion to change the designation to ACTION; Mindy Obert, META, seconded the motion.</p> <p>The amendment failed.</p> <p>The motion passed as amended.</p>
EMERGENCY SITUATIONS	Matt Lewis, MAEMSP	<p>Matt Lewis, MAEMSP, stated that the idea behind this position statement is to keep local control intact.</p> <p>Motion passed.</p>

The **SAM Resolutions** (attached) were considered in order of presentation, discussed by the delegates, and voted upon as indicated.

The SAM Delegate Assembly Steering Committee made the motion on each resolution. Each resolution motion received a second.

The following **SAM resolutions** were carried as presented by vote of the Delegate Assembly with the appropriate action identified; proposed changes to current resolutions were considered first, then newly proposed resolutions:

RESOLUTION NUMBER	TITLE	SECOND	VOTE
#99/03/08/10-01	REQUIRED ATTENDANCE	Sheri Heavrin, MASSP	Motion passed
#99/12-02	FINGERPRINTING, BACKGROUND AND REFERENCE CHECKS	Stacy Lemelin, MAEMSP	Motion passed
#99/02/06/07/16/17-08	SCHOOL BASED MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES	Scott Kinney, MASS	Motion passed
#00/15/16/18-09	BOARD/ADMINISTRATIVE TEAM PROFESSIONAL LEARNING	Nikki Trahan, MAEMSP	Motion passed
#00/03/05/14-10	ANB FUNDING FOR 19 YEAR OLDS	Everett Holm, META	Motion passed
#01/03/06/08/09/10/14/16/19-01	FUNDING	Jack Eggensperger, MACSS	Motion passed



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#01/03/14-02	RETIREMENT	Matt Lewis, MAEMSP	Motion passed
#01/18-04	PERMISSIVE FUNDING FOR HIGH IMPACT COSTS	Shelley Andres, MAEMSP	<p>Discussion: Carol Phillips, META, made a motion to pluralize pandemic to pandemic(s). Dan Schmidt, MASS, seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.</p> <p>Laurie Barron, MASS, stated that permissive levies increase inequities across the state and put a burden on local tax payers. Tamra Covington, MCASE, stated that MCASE is actively seeking other ways to fund special education. Carol Phillips, META, asked if it would be better to focus on the funding formula for schools. Kirk stated that changing the funding formula metric would take legislative action which they have not done when urged several times. More state funding would also give the state more control over several issues. This resolution is about creating a funding stream for high impact costs and emergencies.</p> <p>Motion as amended passed unanimously</p>
#01/03/05/12/14/15/16/17-07	STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT AND ASSESSMENT	Matt Lewis, MAEMSP	Motion passed
#02/12/14-03	VOUCHERS, TUITION TAX CREDITS, TAX SAVINGS ACCOUNT, AND CHARTER SCHOOLS (OTHER THAN AS DEFINED IN ARM 10-55-604)	Marlin Lewis, MAEMSP	Motion passed
#03/15-01	SPECIAL EDUCATION FUNDING	Lisa Von Bergen, MCASE	Motion passed
#03/06/11/16/17-02	ADDITIONAL FUNDING FOR MANDATED SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES	Matt Lewis, MAEMSP	Motion passed



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#03/04/06/14-03	INSTRUCTIONAL TIME AND SCHOOL IMPROVEMENTS	Shelley Andres, MAEMSP	Motion passed
#03/05/06/10/16-05	COOPERATING PROFESSIONAL LEARNING	Stacy Lemelin, MAEMSP	Motion passed
#03/05/15-06	HOME SCHOOLS	Scott Kinney, MASS	<p>Jack Eggenesperger, MACSS, made a motion to change the designation to ACTION; Pam Birkeland seconded the motion.</p> <p>Discussion: Jack Eggenesperger, MACSS, stated that MACSS would like to see more home school accountability. Scott Kinney stated that other states support more accountability by including districts in providing adequate curriculum to home school students. Pam Birkeland, MACSS, stated that it is a travesty that the only current accountability is to send an email to the County Superintendent stating that all hours have been completed. Paul Furthmyre, MASSP, asked if the delegates think that now is the time to change this to designation to action, during a pandemic. Kirk stated that he thinks that we will see more public funds funneling toward private schools during the upcoming session and he doesn't think legislators will require more accountability to home schools. He is concerned about finding a legislator to carry this type of bill. Alex Ator, MASS, asked what fiscal impact more home school accountability would have and who would be responsible to follow through with the accountability. Susan Metcalf, MACSS, stated that she understands the difficult position this amendment would place on SAM.</p> <p>Jack Eggenesperger, MACSS, recommended to withdraw the amendment; Pam Birkeland, MACSS, agreed.</p> <p>Motion passed</p>
#03/05/14-08	FEDERAL PROGRAM RETIREMENT FUNDING	Nikki Trahan, MAEMSP	Motion passed



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<p>#04/14/16-02</p>	<p>EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS</p>	<p>Scott Kinney, MASS</p>	<p>Matt Lewis, MAEMSP, made a motion to change the designation to ACTION; Pam Birkeland, MACSS, seconded the motion.</p> <p>Discussion: Matt Lewis stated that even though funding may be difficult, the early intervention opportunities are important. Shelley Andres, MAEMSP, agreed stating that MAEMSP would like to receive support for programs that are already in place or in the planning stage. Pam Birkeland, MACSS, stated that Montana is one of only a few states that does not have early education funding. Paul Furthmyre, MASSP, asked for clarification on what happened during the last session with the Governor’s early childhood education bill. Rick and Kirk stated that privatization with public funds was overshadowing the early childhood education funding in both HB 755 and SB 352. Paul Furthmyre asked if it would be beneficial to designate this as an action item. Kirk doesn’t feel an action designation would be harmful as long as the funds are both publicly funded and equitably distributed. Nick Schumacher, MASS, stated that the southeast Montana school districts would struggle to add qualified certified staff to accommodate new programs.</p> <p>Matt Lewis stated that SAM’s funding resolution includes PreK-12 funding, so moving this to an action item would provide consistency. However, MAEMSP recognizes that staffing new programs could be difficult. This could also provide more discussion opportunities with higher education programs to create PreK training in their teacher education programs. PreK would not be mandated but would provide opportunities to districts.</p>
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			<p style="text-align: center;">The amendment failed.</p> <p>Motion Passed</p>
#04/14/16-03	SUMMER/AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMS	Shelley Andres, MAEMSP	Motion Passed
#05/09-03	CARL PERKINS AND HIGH SCHOOL CAREER AND TECHNICAL REFORM FUNDING	Justin Helvik, MASSP	Motion Passed
#06-02	PARENT INFORMATION RESOURCE CENTERS	Shelley Andres, MAEMSP	<p>Jack Eggensperger, MACSS, made a motion to change the designation to ACTION; Pam Birkeland, MACSS, seconded the motion.</p> <p>Jack Eggensperger stated that providing parent information resource centers is a large part of successful educational experience. Laurie Barron, MASS, stated that she agrees but worries about SAM asking for more funding during this upcoming session. Pam Birkeland stated that a resource center could include parenting classes and educational resources. Mary Meehan, MCASE, stated that there are several community resources available to parents and districts could coordinate what is already established in communities. Scott Kinney, MASS, stated that his county works with the county health department to provide these resources. Sara Novak, MCASE, stated that free resources exist and available resources need to be shared.</p> <p>Jack Eggensperger withdrew his amendment; Pam Birkeland agreed.</p> <p>Passed Unanimously</p>
#08/12-01	EDUCATIONAL SERVICES FOR DETAINED STUDENTS	Stacy Lemelin, MAEMSP	Discussion: Pam Birkeland, MACSS, stated that a school district in her county received a bill for a student who attended a different district and had been receiving ANB funding for that student.



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			Motion passed
#10/16-01	UNIFIED RECRUITMENT & RETENTION	Matt Lewis, MAEMSP	Motion passed
#10/16-03	MEDICAL MARIJUANA REGULATIONS	Shelly Weight, MASSP	Motion passed
#11/14-01	ADMINISTRATOR EVALUATION	Shelley Andres, MAEMSP	Motion passed
#12/13/15-01	PRINCIPAL/ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL ASSIGNMENT	Shelley Andres, MAEMSP	Motion passed
#12/13/16-03	SCHOOL PRIVATIZATION WITH PUBLIC FUNDS LEGISLATION	Jack Eggensperger, MACSS	Motion Passed
#13/15-01	CAPITAL FACILITY NEEDS	Alex Ator, MASS	Motion Passed
#13/14/18-02	ALIGNMENT OF ACCREDITATION STANDARDS AND FUNDING	Matt Lewis, MAEMSP	Motion Passed
#13/14/15-03	MORE EFFICIENT AND EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS	Stacy Lemelin, MAEMSP	Motion Passed
#13/14/17-04	FEDERAL ISSUES IMPORTANT TO MONTANA	Tamra Covington, MCASE	Motion Passed
#13/16/17-07	PROFESSIONAL LEARNING	Marlin Lewis, MAEMSP	Motion Passed
#14-04	FUNDING SPECIAL EDUCATION COOPERATIVE INFRASTRUCTURE	Tamra Covington, MCASE	Motion Passed
#15/17-01	SPECIAL EDUCATION FUNDING, CLOSING THE GAP	Pam Pettigrew, MCASE	Motion Passed
#15-08	KINDERGARTEN AS PART OF COMPULSORY EDUCATION	Darin Hannum, MASS	Motion Passed
#16-02	STATE TRANSPORTATION REIMBURSEMENT FOR ACADEMIC SUMMER SCHOOL	Matt Lewis, MAEMSP	Motion Passed



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#16-05	CHANGE COMPULSORY ENROLLMENT AGE FROM 7 TO 6 YEARS OLD	Pam Birkeland, MACSS	Motion Passed
#16/17-06	ADDITIONAL FUNDING FOR CAREER AND VOCATIONAL/TECHNICAL EDUCATION	Justin Helvik, MASSP	Motion Passed
#16-07	ADEQUATE FUNDING FOR MANDATED SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES	Shelley Andres, MAEMSP	Motion Passed
#16/17/19-08	ANB ALLOCATION FOR TECHNOLOGY HARDWARE UPGRADES	Sheri Heavrin, MASSP	Kirk stated that SAM has been actively working on this resolution, even outside a legislative session. This has been evident in the Governor's disbursement of \$65 million recently for COVID relief. Motion Passed
#16/17-09	SUPPORT OF ADEQUATE BANDWIDTH FOR SCHOOLS	Rich Lawrence, META	The DASC motion proposed changing the designation from Support to Action. The motion passed.
#16-11	REMOVING THE LIMIT DURATION ON TECHNOLOGY LEVY FUNDING	Stacy Lemelin, MAEMSP	Rich Lawrence, META, made a motion to change the designation to ACTION; Carol Phillips, META, seconded the motion. Rich stated that the sun setting of funding after 10 years is a burden to school districts. Jack Eggenesperger, MACSS, stated that MACSS would also like to change this to an action designation. The motion passed. The motion passed as amended.
#18-03	DAYLIGHT SAVINGS	Laurie Barron, MASS	Motion Passed
#19-01	ALLOWING THE USE OF VIDEO EVIDENCE TO ENFORCE SCHOOL BUS STOP ARM VIOLATIONS	Scott Kinney, MASS	Pam Birkeland, MACSS, made a motion to change the designation to ACTION; Jack Eggenesperger, MACSS, seconded the motion. The motion passed. The motion passed as amended.



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New Proposed Resolution	New Proposed Resolution	New Proposed Resolution	New Proposed Resolution
#20-01	SPECIAL EDUCATION FLEXIBILITY FUNDING	Shelley Andres, MAEMSP	<p>Tamra Covington, MCASE, made a motion to replace “sports” with “extra-curricular”; Pam Pettigrew, MCASE, seconded the motion.</p> <p>The motion passed.</p> <p>Tamra Covington, MCASE, made a motion to add “WHEREAS, SB 191 funds are not available to all school districts or communities based on an insufficient or non-existent tax base, including but not limited to small rural communities, districts that reside within federal lands, and communities dependent on specific revenue streams such as oil, coal, etc”; Sara Novak, MCASE, seconded the motion.</p> <p>The motion passed.</p> <p>The motion passed as amended.</p>

Delegate Assembly 2020 concluded at 11:30 AM.

Respectfully submitted,
 Kimberly Scofield
 Director of Member Services and Professional Learning



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POSITION STATEMENTS Approved by SAM Membership 10-14-20

It is the role of the Delegate Assembly to bring before the membership timely and important resolutions which will, upon adoption, serve as the platform for action.

Any reference to ‘non-public schools’ throughout the document also includes home schools.

POSITIONS PREAMBLE

SAM (The School Administrators of Montana) is an organization that is student centered, constantly looking for ways to improve the educational climate within the state. SAM has put a great deal of thought and discussion into various issues that affect the students and education in general in this great state. Public schools are endeavoring to provide the best education possible for all students; to this degree the organization has taken a stand on certain issues. The positions and resolutions relative to many concerns are listed on the following pages.

Part I. BE IT RESOLVED, that SAM develop and adopt a position that will carry forward year to year through the 2021 Legislative Session, specifying the process to be followed and the topics to be addressed by the K-12 Vision Group.

Part II. BE IT RESOLVED, that the Delegate Assembly Steering Committee recommends that the resolutions be carried over for further review and discussion through the next year in preparation for the 2020 Delegate Assembly, assign a designation and undertake the actions called for under such Positions and Resolutions. In no case should these resolutions be seen as SAM priorities that are segregated from the considerations in Part I.

Part III. BE IT RESOLVED, that SAM establish new Resolutions adopted by the membership, assign a designation and undertake the actions called for under such Resolutions in the same manner and subject to the same limitations as recommended for resolutions approved by the membership under Part II above.

STUDENT ISSUES

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

SAM supports efforts designed to: (a) educate school district personnel in recognizing and reporting symptoms of child abuse and neglect and (b) enable school districts and other community agencies to integrate services in carrying out their legal responsibility for these children in a school setting.

Designation: Support

CULTURAL STUDIES

SAM supports curriculum pertaining to diversity and cultural studies as well as the establishment of local policies concerning curriculum development, which would enhance the education of all Montana students.

Designation: Support



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FOCUS ON THE WHOLE CHILD

SAM believes that the child is the focal point of the educational process and the primary focus should be on student learning and academic rigor. It is the responsibility of the school administrators to facilitate the direction of available skills and resources toward helping each child develop a positive self image and to strengthen feelings of self-worth through academic rigor and social emotional learning.

SAM urges all groups involved in the educational process of children to work in unity for the total development of the child and providing opportunities by which each child may realize his/her fullest potential.

Designation: Support

SAFE, SECURE, RESPECTFUL, DRUG FREE, AND HEALTHY SCHOOLS

SAM supports and promotes legislation (including IDEA reform) and funding that addresses violence, discipline, respect and security in public schools as well as funding for such IDEA mandates as alternative interim educational settings. SAM further supports programs such as Montana Behavior Initiative (MTSS- Multi Tiered System of Supports); school based mental health and day treatment services as integral components of the continuum for safe and healthy schools. SAM supports and promotes safe, respectful, drug free, healthy schools and the continuation of federal and any additional funding for such programs.

Designation: Support

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

SAM supports compulsory education and daily attendance of all school age children. SAM supports legislation to strengthen truancy laws by increasing parent and student accountability and by establishing clear enforcement procedures.

Designation: Support

STUDENT DATA PRIVACY

SAM supports and believes in the essence of 20-7-1326, MCA (formally HB745, 2019 Legislative Session) a law mandating Montana pupil online personal information protection. SAM also recognizes and identifies challenges to the implementation of the law including, but not limited to, management oversight at the local and state level; legal ramifications and consequences of non-compliance and vendor violations; and further views this law as an unfunded mandate obligating local school districts to perform legal requirements without a suitable funding mechanism.

Designation: Support



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STATEWIDE ISSUES

ACCREDITATION STANDARDS

SAM supports the implementation and maintenance of strong educationally sound accreditation standards and supports the position that the State Board of Public Education decisions be made with input from all sectors concerned with education. No action should be taken that will affect schools until all concerned are given notice and are provided with the opportunity to be heard through public hearings. Changes affecting fiscal responsibility should not take effect until adequate resources are provided to the school districts.

Designation: Support

CONTINUITY OF LEADERSHIP

SAM believes and research has confirmed that continuity of school and district leadership is essential for the continuous improvement of educational quality. SAM supports legislation and practice which will require multi-year superintendent contracts after the initial year of service, provide for longer multi-year contracts for superintendents, link superintendent evaluations to the accomplishment of district goals, and institute a mediation system to help solve problems between a board and its superintendent.

Designation: Support

COOPERATION IN EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Education costs are a continuing concern. SAM urges the state to continue to encourage the use of cost effective and educationally effective cooperative efforts, programs and services among educational institutions and state agencies which serve children.

Designation: Support

DEVELOPMENT OF CURRICULUM

SAM supports OPI's ongoing development of model curriculum, materials, and assessments aligned to National and State adopted Content, Program and Performance Standards. This development will be done collaboratively with national content area organizations and state education leadership associations.

Designation: Support

EDUCATION OF COMMUNITIES AND LEGISLATORS

SAM supports an ongoing community forum to inform and educate all stakeholders, including legislators, about PK-12 education in our local communities.

Designation: Support



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LICENSURE

SAM believes that it is the responsibility of the State Board of Public Education to determine the rules and regulations for the consistency of licensing of teachers and administrators with the advice of the Certification Standards and Practices Advisory Council (CSPAC). The Office of Public Instruction shall administer and continuously review the licensing of teachers and administrators and not permit any endorsement issued to be eliminated. SAM reviews and remains involved in the regulation of related service providers licensed through the Department of Labor and Industry. Licensure of professional educators is required to offer services in Montana schools.

Designation: Support

MONTANA DIGITAL ACADEMY

SAM supports the Montana Digital Academy and continued full funding by the state to guarantee equitable access to educational curriculum.

Designation: Support

MONTANA HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATION

SAM supports the Montana High School Association concept and opposes the Montana High School Association becoming a part of the Office of Public Instruction or an agency of the State Legislature.

Designation: Support

NON-PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND HOME SCHOOLS

SAM supports legislation that strengthens the accountability of non-public schools and home schools in Montana.

Designation: Support

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

SAM recognizes and encourages efforts to support school improvement and acknowledges that several models can be viable approaches to educational improvement. SAM believes that such efforts must not detract from the educational quality, equity, and funding available to the other students in the state. Furthermore, SAM strongly opposes the arbitrary removal of the school administrator(s) as a means of school improvement.

Designation: Support



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SPECIAL EDUCATION ADMINISTRATIVE RULE MAKING

SAM supports state administrative rules for the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) that do not exceed the requirements in the federal laws and rules.

Designation: Support

STUDENT CAREER PREPARATION

SAM recognizes the importance of the development of career/technical skills and strong work ethics in all students. SAM supports the formation of career preparation and school-to-work programs in partnership with other agencies, post-secondary institutions, and business. SAM expects that public schools will be fully involved in all planning and implementation of these programs.

Designation: Support

STUDENT DATA WAREHOUSE

SAM supports the use of a secure statewide data warehouse that the Office of Public Instruction uses for the maintenance of student academic records and longitudinal data.

Designation: Support

TEACHER & ADMINISTRATOR RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

SAM affirms that teacher and administrator retention and recruitment are keys to quality education. It supports efforts to support mentoring and to fund incentives for recruitment and retention of staff. Districts are faced with an increasing need to compete with other states for a shrinking pool of qualified candidates. The legislature must address current laws, administrative rules, and funding support to provide districts the flexibility to retain personnel and to compete for new candidates.

Designation: Action

TEACHER EDUCATION

SAM recognizes the growing level of diverse educational needs of students. SAM urges Montana's teacher education programs to better prepare teachers to competently address the diverse educational needs of all students.

Designation: Support

PUBLIC SCHOOL EMPLOYEE HEALTH INSURANCE

SAM will seek legislative changes to find a method for relief to health insurance costs.

Designation: Action



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REGIONAL SERVICE AGENCY STRUCTURE AND GOVERNANCE DEFINED IN LAW

SAM will work in collaboration with other public education advocacy groups in developing necessary guidelines, policies, structures and other resources to assist school districts in establishing/structuring/implementing regional service center areas to maximize efficiencies and optimize resources under existing law.

Designation: Support

SUPPORT OF TRAINING FOR FEDERAL E-RATE REIMBURSEMENT

SAM will support a model for training for E-Rate applications and submittal to leverage expertise to ensure every district in Montana is taking advantage of the Federal E-Rate funding.

Designation: Support

LOCAL CONTROL ISSUES

CENSORSHIP

SAM reaffirms its position to oppose any legislative action that removes local control of written, printed, and/or electronically transmitted publications by students.

Designation: Support

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

SAM supports the position that the direction of collective bargaining should be retained at state and local levels in a manner that does not mitigate the policy-making authority of local boards of trustees. Collective bargaining should be limited to salary, hours, fringe benefits, and directly related financial conditions of employment and grievance procedures. Arbitration should be limited to matters of contract interpretation and should not be used to settle a negotiation impasse. Collective bargaining legislation and/or contracts should include adequate provisions for the resolution of unfair practices and provide for adequate protection of employer and employee rights.

Designation: Support

COUNTY SUPERINTENDENTS

SAM affirms that counties should have a qualified county superintendent.

Designation: Support

LEAD TEACHER/COMMITTEE OF TEACHERS

SAM believes that all teachers should have the benefit of working with effective administrators. SAM opposes the concepts of a lead teacher or a committee of teachers as a substitute for the school administrator. Small rural schools with nine or fewer FTE licensed staff and without a licensed



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superintendent as per 10.55.705(1) fall under the office of the county superintendent to provide administrative services.

Designation: Support

PROFESSIONAL RELATIONS

SAM will endeavor to work cooperatively with staff and educational associations on issues of common concern. Through a joint, cooperative effort the organization will continue striving to improve education in the state of Montana.

Designation: Support

SCHOOL BOARD RELATIONS

SAM believes that school administrators and their school trustees share a commitment and a responsibility to work cooperatively toward a common goal of developing effective educational programs for Montana youth. To achieve this goal, it is imperative that trustees and administrators foster and nurture a sense of trust and respect individually and collectively for each other. Full and open communication is essential between them if their common goal is to be attained. If trustees and administrators are to succeed in their efforts to provide the best educational opportunity for students, they must strive to understand and appreciate their respective leadership roles.

Designation: Support

EMERGENCY SITUATIONS

SAM believes that local control is vital to a local educational agency's (LEA) ability to maintain and direct the educational wellbeing of our schools at the local level in Montana. Local control is essential to ensure continuity of services in our communities for all publicly educated students in Montana, especially in emergency situations, such as a pandemic.

Designation: Support

FUNDING ISSUES

FEDERAL PROGRAMS

Federally funded programs should be written in language that ensures easy understanding, minimum paperwork, maximum student-to-teacher contact and interaction, and which allows for local districts to expend allocated funds on eligible students in a manner which they, the local districts, feel most beneficial. It is incumbent on local boards and their administrators to insure that the intent of federal programs is properly implemented and that programs are managed with fiscal and educational integrity.



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To enable Montana schools to benefit from various sources of federal funding, SAM supports legislative efforts to pool applications and reporting requirements for receipt of these federal funds.

To ensure equitable funding to all Montana students, SAM supports formula grants instead of competitive grants. SAM will encourage our federal and state legislators to work to this end.

Designation: Support

FUNDING OF PK-12

SAM believes that educational opportunities should continue to be based on equal opportunity, equity and adequacy in funding and therefore supports the following:

- state funding for schools should be 100% of the BASE budget for the school district general fund budget;
- all federal and state programs be fully funded (no unfunded mandates);
- all components of state funding be increased on a yearly basis to reflect the effect of inflation;
- funding of public alternative educational programs;
- maintaining, stabilizing and/or increasing state and federal funding for existing PK-12 programs.
- the state general fund will not be supplanted with educationally targeted federal funds.

Designation: Support

NON-PUBLIC AND HOME SCHOOL FUNDING (PK-12)

SAM opposes any legislation or initiatives, which would allow for vouchers, tuition tax credits, tax savings accounts, or any other funding plans for any non-public and home PK-12 schools.

Designation: Action

RETIREMENT SYSTEM

SAM supports efforts to protect the integrity of current retirement systems. SAM supports efforts to make the system more equitable for career administrators, hard to fill positions and to provide creative ways to retain senior administrators without benefit reduction.

Designation: Support

TAXES

SAM supports the position that the Legislature should enact a balanced taxing system for the state of Montana. The financial investment in public education should be based upon equitable and appropriate taxes, and opposes funding formulas shifting the burden onto the local taxpayers.

Designation: Support



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TECHNOLOGY

SAM believes technology is now and will forever be an integral part of our culture and presents ever changing challenges and opportunities for our students. Schools throughout Montana struggle to finance critical technology infrastructure. Educational services requiring technology are not available to all Montana Students. Therefore SAM will support:

- Administrative, operational and learning process change at the federal, state, district and school levels must be addressed strategically where goals, resources and timing for improvement are managed cohesively.
- Baseline funding for supportive technology infrastructure should be addressed by a variety of methods that include; mechanisms that account for life cycle cost of ownership, technology that is driven by changes in classroom and/or curricular needs, and operational technology related to business function necessary to run a school district (i.e. State reporting, security systems, telecommunications, etc). Districts would be encouraged to fund additional infrastructure and capabilities as demanded by their environments.
- Technology education for administrators, staff, technologists and students is timely, relevant, and compulsory.
- The management of technology requires a baseline of understanding and education. School administrators and leaders need support in specific process and technology implementation management.
- Technology planning, implementation and support functions, requiring specialized skills and knowledge, are accomplished by professional staff or contracted consultants according to specific district business models.

Designation: Action

UNFUNDED MANDATES

SAM opposes any legislation that mandates services, programs, or processes without providing full funding.

Designation: Support

CERTIFIED TAXABLE VALUATION

SAM supports efforts to strengthen notification and accountability for all state and county agencies involved in establishing taxable valuation of school district taxing jurisdictions. Once taxable valuation of the taxing jurisdiction is certified, all stakeholders must be notified.

SAM supports requiring that if there is a change to a county taxable valuation after the certification is approved, the Montana Department of Revenue shall notify all effected school districts within seven (7) days of the change.

SAM supports efforts to strengthen accountability for entities responsible for errors in reporting taxable value changes made past the certification date.

Designation: Support



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K-12 Vision Group

SAM specifies the following ongoing process for convening the K-12 Vision Group, 2013-2021

BE IT RESOLVED, that SAM take the following position with regard to school the K-12 Vision Group and funding of Montana’s schools:

1. SAM will continue to participate in the K-12 Vision Group on an ongoing basis through the 2021 Legislative Session to provide continuing guidance and recommendations aligned with the “Vision for Public Education in Montana” developed by the K-12 Vision Group in 2012. The work of the K-12 Vision group shall be designed to culminate with consensus recommendations regarding the definition of the basic system of free quality schools that is scheduled to be reviewed by the Legislature during the 2021 Legislative Session pursuant to 20-9-309, MCA.
2. The membership of the K-12 Vision Group will continue to include trustees, business managers, teachers and administrators representing all MTSBA caucus groups and shall be annually revised and/or renewed prior to November 1, to incorporate nominations from the School Administrators of Montana (SAM), Montana School Boards Association (MTSBA), Montana Rural Education Association (MREA), MFPE, Montana Association of School Business Officials (MASBO), and Montana Quality Education Coalition (MQEC).
3. SAM shall extend the opportunity for full collaborative partnerships in facilitating the ongoing work of the K-12 Vision Group to MTSBA, MFPE, MREA, MQEC and MASBO.
4. SAM supports that MTSBA shall facilitate the K-12 Vision Group’s work using knowledge-based decision making processes, emphasizing careful, deliberate and comprehensive analysis of issues, the use of open dialogue (the purpose of which is to inform) prior to deliberation (the purpose of which is to decide), pursuit of insight regarding what the involved groups’ members want, need and prefer, and consideration of the ethical implications of our choices and mitigation of disadvantage to certain aspects of the respective groups’ members that might be caused by recommendations made by the K-12 Vision Group.
5. SAM and Affiliate Associations shall seek to collaborate with and inform legislators from both political parties as well as key representatives of the offices of the Governor, the Board of Public Education and the Superintendent of Public Instruction of the progress and ongoing work of the K-12 Vision Group to ensure open communications and the availability of legislative and executive branch perspectives regarding such work.
6. SAM and Affiliate Associations shall start to engage other external stakeholders outside of public education circles to increase awareness of the work of the K-12 Vision Group and to identify common interests and goals and opportunities for collaboration. There should be no static identification of “outside interest” groups but rather a process for highlighting broad public awareness of the work of the K-12 Vision Group and emphasizing an open invitation for the public to weigh in on such work. This might be accomplished, for example, through a combination of public opinion polling, facilitated community dialogue, outreach to business, higher education and other community leaders and public awareness campaigns. The key will be to ensure that we generate broad public support for the recommendations of the K-12 Vision Group over time.
7. The work of the K-12 Vision Group shall be focused on the following:
 - a. A global look at the current funding formula for schools with an eye toward determining how the formula could be simplified, made more responsive to need, equitable and adequate to allow schools



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throughout the state to provide the basic system of free quality schools as that term is defined in 20-9-309, MCA. Specifics to be reviewed as part of the global look at the formula shall include:

- i. Whether the formula sufficiently promotes local control. If not, recommendations should be developed regarding how the formula could be improved to better vest authority in the elected trustees to make financial decisions.
 - ii. Review of weighting adjustments in current formula and identification of possible enhancements. This inquiry shall include analysis of what other states do to account for economies of scale and address needs of school systems in different circumstances.
 - iii. Whether the current formula is sufficiently responsive to the educationally-relevant factors identified in 20-9-309, MCA, including:
 1. the number of students in a district;
 2. the needs of isolated schools with low population density;
 3. the needs of urban schools with high population density;
 4. the needs of students with special needs, such as a child with a disability, an at-risk student, a student with limited English proficiency, a child who is qualified for services under 29 U.S.C. 794, and gifted and talented children;
 5. the needs of American Indian students; and
 6. the ability of school districts to attract and retain qualified educators and other personnel.
 - iv. Recommendations regarding how the varying challenges experienced by different school districts throughout the state of Montana can be met to ensure that the needs of every child can be met.
 - v. Whether there is a practical way to better predict and incorporate relevant inflation into the formula that is based on the predominant expenditures of school districts.
- b. As part of its work in identifying a simple, adequate, equitable and rational funding formula, the K-12 Vision Group shall undertake the following:
- i. Review of the differential that exists between current funding and funding necessary to meet the definition of the basic system of free quality schools under 20-9-309, MCA.
 - ii. Revenue necessary to eliminate the differential;
 - iii. A long range plan to eliminate the differential; and
 - iv. A communications plan to create the political will to accomplish the elimination of the differential.

Designation: Support



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RESOLUTIONS Approved by SAM Membership 10-14-20

(From this point forward School Administrators of Montana shall be referred to as SAM)

(Understanding Resolution nomenclature: #99/03/08/10/18-01 is a system of numbering that indicates this resolution was first considered by the SAM Delegate Assembly in 1999 as the 1st new resolution that year (99/xx/-01), and that the resolution was revised in 2003, 2008, 2010, and 2018 (xx/03/08/10/18-xx))

Resolution #99/03/08/10/18-01 - REQUIRED ATTENDANCE

WHEREAS, school laws of Montana do not adequately address attendance accountability for students; and

WHEREAS, student non-attendance adversely affects student learning, impedes adequate yearly progress, and jeopardizes future academic success; and

WHEREAS, the 2016 American Community Survey identified many thousands of students between ages 5-17 not enrolled in any school, including public, private, or homeschool in Montana;

BE IT RESOLVED, that SAM supports legislative action ensuring consistent statewide guidelines be established concerning excessive student absences, beginning with school enrollment through a student's graduation; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that SAM supports partnering with all applicable agencies to locate and enroll students not previously enrolled; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that SAM supports initiatives aimed at keeping students engaged and enrolled through graduation.

Designation: Support

Resolution #99/12-02 – FINGERPRINTING, BACKGROUND AND REFERENCE CHECKS

WHEREAS, the safety of our students is of paramount importance; and

WHEREAS, school districts across the nation are seeing increased incidents of violent behavior and abuse;

BE IT RESOLVED, that SAM supports the development of an effective state-funded program for consistent, timely and comprehensive background and reference checks and fingerprinting of school employees and volunteers who have unsupervised contact with students.

Designation: Support



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Resolution #99/02/06/07/16/17-08 – SCHOOL BASED MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

WHEREAS, disruptive, dangerous, and aggressive behaviors to self and others are occurring at increasing rates in our school communities due to a variety of factors; and

WHEREAS, economic conditions of families and society where adequate mental health services are not provided, families are not eligible for adequate insurance coverage, or determined ineligible for mental health services under existing state guidelines obligate school districts to provide greater attention and resources to students with mental health needs; and

WHEREAS, mental health services remain unfunded within communities and school districts, school districts are using educational resources to provide minimal health services to students with identified needs; and

WHEREAS, there has been a history of inadequate state funding for mental health programs for students with mental health needs in community and school based programs; and

WHEREAS, there exists a significant need for comprehensive services, including community and interagency coordination to meet the needs of children with mental health needs within the school setting; and

WHEREAS, there exists a significant need for a continuum of services including community support, outpatient day and residential treatment, and acute care services with transition support between schools and mental health agencies to meet the mental health needs of children within the state;

BE IT RESOLVED, that SAM supports new state funding for Montana residential/educational services for children with mental health needs; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that SAM urges the State of Montana continue to support and provide funding for school based mental health services; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that SAM supports new state funding for a continuum of mental health services for students in addition to existing state and federal programs without reducing dollars from the state education general fund.

Designation: Action

Resolution #00/15/16/18/19-09 – BOARD/ADMINISTRATIVE TEAM PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

WHEREAS, schools, like all institutions, need continuous renewal to fulfill their mission of educating all children to high levels of achievement; and



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WHEREAS, SAM strongly supports and recommends high-quality, state funded instruction each year for the school board/administrative team; and

WHEREAS, SAM believes that the board/administrative team will become more effective when board members and the administrative team participate together in leadership renewal;

BE IT RESOLVED, that SAM supports board/administrative teams professional learning through MTSBA/SAM/MT-PEC or equivalent training opportunities.

Designation: Support

Resolution #00/03/05/14/15/16/18-10- ANB FUNDING FOR 19 YEAR OLDS

WHEREAS, the state does not provide funding to support high school services for students who turn 19 years of age on or before September 10th; and

WHEREAS, children often do not enter school until they are older than the present minimum age requirement, therefore attaining their 19th birthday on or before September 10th even though they have progressed 1 grade each year; and

WHEREAS, exchange students from other countries are funded; and

WHEREAS, delay in student's progression through school may be a result of illness, accident, participation in foreign exchange program, academic difficulties, disabilities; and

WHEREAS, research shows that all students learn at varying rates;

BE IT RESOLVED, that SAM supports funding for all 19-year-old students as determined by the ANB formula, only if adequate additional funding is provided beyond the services already allocated to support schools.

Designation: Support

Resolution #01/03/06/08/09/10/14/16/19-01 – FUNDING

WHEREAS, Montana continues to seek avenues for equitable and adequate revenue distribution for PK-12 education; and

WHEREAS, schools need to set levies, hold elections, hire staff, set academic schedules and make numerous educational decisions in the early spring; and



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WHEREAS, the ability to carry over unencumbered funds would eliminate minuscule levy elections conducted by districts to maintain prior year budgeting authority;

BE IT RESOLVED, that SAM supports school funding be on two year cycles corresponding to the off years of the regular legislative session; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that SAM supports the development of a statewide economic plan to generate and distribute revenue needed to provide adequate and equitable funding levels for PK-12 education; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that SAM supports requiring the legislature to allocate at a minimum the amount budgeted for PK-12 education in the prior session or special session; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that SAM supports legislation to allow districts to carryover unencumbered prior year funds without affecting budget maximums; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that SAM believes that the MTDA (Montana Digital Academy) funding sources shall come from the state legislature and not from the individual district; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that SAM supports funding of state special education allowable costs as a part of the school funding formula, with the additional allocation adjusted to meet the needs of special education cooperatives and inflationary increases applied to this component of the funding formula; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that SAM supports continued funding of full time kindergarten.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that SAM supports additional and continued funding for early childhood education programs.

Designation: Action

Resolution #01/03/14-02 – RETIREMENT

WHEREAS, school administrators and teachers are leaving Montana education after 25 years of enrollment in the TRS system to take jobs in other occupations and states, allowing them to collect full retirement from Montana TRS and at the same time collect another salary; and

WHEREAS, Montana faces a serious shortage of administrators, teachers and related service providers; and

WHEREAS, an ever-increasing percentage of administrators, teachers and related service providers are eligible to retire and leave education in Montana;

WHEREAS, districts having Retirement Reserves cut from 35% to 20% has caused issues for systems facing a large number of retirees and caused cash balance issues for many districts;



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BE IT RESOLVED, that SAM supports the return of Retirement Reserves percentages to the pre-2013 levels;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that SAM supports changes in TRS – (1) For the legislature to create an actuarially sound system, (2) to grant a change from 1.67% to 2% per year rates for retirement occurring after 30 years of creditable service with appropriate funding sources, (3) to establish an additional funding mechanism to grant retirees the ability to reenter education at up to a full salary without loss of benefits.

Designation: Support

Resolution #01/18/20-04 – PERMISSIVE FUNDING FOR HIGH IMPACT COSTS

WHEREAS, Montana school districts continue to experience high impact fixed operating costs, such as pandemic(s), utilities, fuel costs, technology and health insurance, which in recent years have increased dramatically; and

WHEREAS, school districts are required to pay for these costly expenditures through the general fund budget which negatively impacts educational opportunity for students; and

WHEREAS, school districts have little or no way to control such costs or even budget for them without cutting or eliminating educational programs;

BE IT RESOLVED, that SAM supports the creation of separate funds or inclusion into existing funds, outside the General Fund Budget supported through permissive levies, to fund high impact fixed costs and protect the ability of the GFB to support the educational needs of students.

Designation: Action

Resolution #01/03/05/12/14/15/16/17-07 –STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT AND ASSESSMENT

WHEREAS, SAM believes there is no single measurement evaluating the quality of education between students and schools; and

WHEREAS, SAM believes any mandated programs of testing must be fully funded and include fully funded research-based intervention programs that help students reach benchmarks; and

WHEREAS, SAM believes that the current concept of high stakes testing does not help schools meet the needs of its students or its community;

WHEREAS, SAM believes that federal and state mandated testing and reporting are excessive and the time required for testing needs to be balanced with time for student instruction;



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WHEREAS, SAM believes that using computer adaptive testing is valuable and technology should work appropriately to insure students have the best opportunity to reflect what they know and are able to do during testing in order to have reliable and valid results;

BE IT RESOLVED, that SAM supports use of multiple measures of school assessment in local school improvement projects; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that SAM supports the use of a growth based model of student achievement which includes multiple measures of student performance; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that if the state funds interim assessments that the use of that funding and the choice of assessment used will remain under the control of local school districts;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, SAM supports full state and federal funding of mandated assessments and subsequent intervention programs;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, SAM supports grade band testing at grade levels determined and approved in Montana, with minimum reporting to the federal government;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, SAM supports establishing levels of performance (cut scores) that are reviewed and approved by Montana educators following baseline results on the assessment;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, SAM supports no sanctions to schools or students in Montana as a result of testing that may affect reliability and validity of results.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that local school administrators are responsible for communicating the value of student testing, and also the limitations of the results received, with their local community, state and federal officials. The best interests of students and their learning is the goal and we support and recognize the importance of receiving timely assessment results to inform instruction and monitor student progress.

Designation: Support

Resolution #02/12/14-03 – VOUCHERS, TUITION TAX CREDITS, TAX SAVINGS ACCOUNTS AND CHARTER SCHOOLS (OTHER THAN AS DEFINED IN ARM 10-55-604)

WHEREAS, vouchers, tuition tax credits and charter schools detract from the goal of comprehensive improvement of public schools, do not enhance public and non-public school competition, and do not significantly impact student achievement levels; and

WHEREAS, voucher programs do not cover the full tuition costs of many schools, thus preventing true choice for many parents and students; and



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WHEREAS, the acceptance or use of public funds by private and parochial institutions would threaten the unique mission of these schools by requiring every recipient of public funds to abide by the same laws, rules, and regulations as public schools; and

WHEREAS, non-public schools ultimately determine which students will be admitted and/or removed from their rolls therefore increasing discrimination; and

WHEREAS, vouchers, tuition tax credits and charter schools are prohibitively expensive, require taxpayers to finance the tuition costs of students attending private and parochial schools, and remove funds from public schools;

BE IT RESOLVED, that SAM will oppose the use of vouchers, tuition tax credits, tax savings accounts and charter schools in any form.

Designation: Action

Resolution #03/15-01 - SPECIAL EDUCATION FUNDING

WHEREAS, the percentage of state support for earmarked special education general fund expenditures has declined at a rate significantly greater than has the rate of state support for the total general fund budget; and

WHEREAS, the original intent of Congress was to fund special education at the 40% level of the national average for pupil expenditure; and

WHEREAS, the lack of state fiscal support for mandated special education services effectively decreases the amount of general funds available to support general education programming;

BE IT RESOLVED; that SAM urges the legislature and state officials to avoid state appropriations that may suggest discriminatory funding practices between special education and regular education; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that SAM supports legislation to allow school districts to increase their budget caps to provide for the disproportionate costs associated with educating students with special needs; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that SAM supports efforts to fully fund IDEA at its originally intended levels and to allow flexibility in maintenance of effort requirements.

Designation: Action



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Resolution #03/06/11/16/17-02 – ADDITIONAL FUNDING FOR MANDATED SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

WHEREAS, the state provides inadequate funding to support the mandated services required of schools for students with disabilities placing a disproportionate financial burden upon local tax-payers;

BE IT RESOLVED, that SAM supports full state and federal funding for mandated special education services for students with disabilities with parallel increases to ANB funding based on the current formula;

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that SAM will prioritize support of legislative action to increase the monetary investment for such mandated special education services by applying additional state funding without reducing payments for the Instructional Services Block Grant, Related Services Block Grant, and the Disproportionate Cost Reimbursement.

Designation: Action

Resolution #03/04/06/14-03 – INSTRUCTIONAL TIME AND SCHOOL IMPROVEMENTS

WHEREAS, quality instruction is best provided by regularly assigned classroom teachers; and

WHEREAS, school improvement demands coordinated efforts amongst numerous professional staff members; and

WHEREAS, current efforts for school improvement require staff members to be removed from primary teaching or administrative duties; and

WHEREAS, the absence of regularly assigned, certified staff results in a loss of continuity in classroom academic progress, as well as, building and district leadership; and

BE IT RESOLVED, that SAM promotes additional pupil instruction related (PIR) hours fully funded by the state be added to the school calendar for the purpose of school improvement.

Designation: Support

Resolution #03/05/06/10/16-05 - COOPERATING PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

WHEREAS, quality new professional teachers and related service professionals are in high demand; and

WHEREAS, teachers and related service professionals who work in the role of the cooperating or supervisory teacher and related service professionals for a student teacher and related pre-service professionals are currently without specific cooperative professional learning; and



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WHEREAS, individuals pursuing an education career are deserving of a strong student teaching and related pre-service experience;

BE IT RESOLVED, that SAM encourages Montana teacher and related service professional education programs to involve specific professional learning and/or pre-requisite study and adequate compensation and/or college credit for cooperating or supervisory teachers and related service professionals.

Designation: Support

Resolution #03/05/15-06 – HOME SCHOOLS

WHEREAS, SAM believes a free public education is the cornerstone of American democracy; and

WHEREAS, alternative options such as home schooling have been authorized by state legislation; and

WHEREAS, Montana has a very liberal law concerning home schooling. This creates situations that are not consistent with a quality education as defined by the State Constitution; and

WHEREAS, the law enables families to avoid the schooling of the child or provide only minimal schooling; and

WHEREAS, it is difficult to place home school students at the proper level in the public system;

BE IT RESOLVED, that SAM supports legislation that strengthens the accountability of home schools in Montana; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: Resources and authority should be provided to make certain that those who exercise these options are held strictly accountable for the academic achievement of children on a quarterly basis.

Designation: Support

Resolution #03/05/14-08 – FEDERAL PROGRAM RETIREMENT FUNDING

BE IT RESOLVED, that SAM supports legislation allowing retirement costs for those district and cooperative employees paid through federal funds to be paid from the district's retirement fund.

Designation: Support

Resolution #04/14/16/19-02 – EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS

WHEREAS, high quality early childhood programs contribute to later academic and social success; and



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WHEREAS, many of Montana students do not have access to quality early childhood programs;

BE IT RESOLVED, that SAM supports the development of additional and continued fully funded public early childhood programs in Montana; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that SAM supports the development of high standards for both early childhood programs and early childhood teacher quality.

Designation: Support

Resolution #04/14/16-03 – SUMMER AND/OR AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMS

WHEREAS, many schools are offering summer school programs and/or after school programs to provide more learning time for students; and

WHEREAS, research has shown that extended learning time increases achievement;

BE IT RESOLVED, that SAM supports additional state and/or federal funding to schools that offer summer and/or after school programming to its students; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that SAM supports additional state and county funding for student transportation for schools that offer summer and/or after school programs.

Designation: Support

Resolution #05/09-03 – CARL PERKINS AND HIGH SCHOOL CAREER AND TECHNICAL REFORM FUNDING

WHEREAS, the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Act is an essential component of funding for quality career and technical education in Montana high schools; and

WHEREAS, the administration and Congress are looking at ways of involving the federal government in reforming the nation's high schools by moving the ESEA model into high schools; and

WHEREAS, current ESEA funding for Title programs in secondary schools is at inadequate and proportionately low levels; and

WHEREAS, SAM is fully supportive of, and committed to, high school improvement;

BE IT RESOLVED, that SAM opposes efforts to eliminate or reduce funding Carl Perkins programs for Montana Schools; and



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BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that SAM supports significant federal and state resources for the development of long-term strategies and systemic improvement of high school career and technical reform efforts.

Designation: Support

Resolution #06-02 – PARENT INFORMATION RESOURCE CENTERS

WHEREAS, there exists a significant need to provide parents with information resources to help their children be successful in school; and

WHEREAS, some households within our communities may lack the awareness, knowledge and/or confidence to support effectively students’ social-emotional, academic and physical needs at times; and

WHEREAS, school districts from across the state would benefit from the ability to provide ongoing and consistent parent resources/information such as conflict management, health and nutrition information, homework/study skills strategies, and time management;

BE IT RESOLVED, that SAM urges the State of Montana to support and restore funding for Parent Information Resource Centers that would provide parents with effective strategies in meeting the emotional, academic and physical needs of their children.

Designation: Support

Resolution #08/12-01 – EDUCATIONAL SERVICES FOR DETAINED STUDENTS

WHEREAS, there are students detained in detention/treatment centers that may or may not be enrolled in a school district; and

WHEREAS, the school district in which the student or his or her parents reside is responsible for educational expenses;

BE IT RESOLVED, that SAM supports state financial responsibility for educational services of detained students in detention/treatment centers.

Designation: Support

Resolution #10/16/19-01 – UNIFIED RECRUITMENT & RETENTION

WHEREAS, Montana has significant difficulty in recruiting and retaining highly qualified teachers and related service professionals in general and special education; and



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WHEREAS, Montana has historically experienced difficulty in the recruitment and retention of low incidence professional positions, such as speech pathologists, school psychologists, occupational therapists, physical therapists, sign language interpreters and other professional staff necessary for the provision of a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) under the Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA); and

WHEREAS, Montana has historically experienced difficulty in the recruitment and retention of general education professional positions necessary to provide instructional service which meet accreditation standards; and

WHEREAS, school districts currently spend a significant amount of resources including time and money on the recruitment and retention of low incidence personnel; and

WHEREAS, a unified collaborative effort towards statewide recruitment and retention would be more cost effective and efficient; and

WHEREAS, recruitment and retention of highly qualified/low incidence positions is difficult due to the geographic isolation of many communities of Montana; and

WHEREAS, Office of Public Instruction has worked collaboratively with Montana Council of Administrators of Special Education on the recruitment and retention of highly qualified/low incidence personnel; and

WHEREAS, Montana continues to have chronic shortages;

BE IT RESOLVED: That SAM supports the implementation of a unified recruitment and retention program designed to address current personnel shortages in both general and special education.

Designation: Action

Resolution #10/16/19-03 – MEDICAL MARIJUANA REGULATIONS

WHEREAS, SAM has always supported safe, secure, drug free school efforts;

BE IT RESOLVED, that SAM supports drug free schools and drug-free work place policies that prohibit the use of medical marijuana on school grounds, at school events, or any activity involving schools or students.

Designation: Support

Resolution #11/14-01– ADMINISTRATOR EVALUATION

WHEREAS, school administrators are an important factor in a quality education; and



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WHEREAS, each school is unique; and

WHEREAS, administrative evaluation is a valuable piece of professional growth;

BE IT RESOLVED, that SAM supports an evaluation process that is adopted at the local level based on multiple measures.

BE IT RESOLVED, that SAM does not support the use of state-wide student assessment scores in administrator evaluation.

Designation: Support

Resolution #12/13/15-01 – PRINCIPAL/ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL ASSIGNMENT

WHEREAS, SAM believes and research has confirmed that continuity of school level leadership is essential for the continuous improvement of educational quality;

BE IT RESOLVED, that SAM supports legislation and practice which will recognize a principal/assistant principal's years of service in regard to maintaining salary and cost of living raises and benefits; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, in the event of reassignment without cause; service, salary and benefits will remain the same and progress as cost of living increases rise.

Designation: Support

Resolution #12/13/16-03 – SCHOOL PRIVATIZATION WITH PUBLIC FUNDS LEGISLATION

BE IT RESOLVED, that SAM take the following positions with regard to school privatization legislation of any kind by the Legislature; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that SAM work to ensure that elected school boards in member school districts are empowered to innovate and adapt public school offerings to best meet the needs of students and to fully develop the educational potential of each student in the public schools as envisioned by the Constitutional framers in writing Article X, Section 1 of the Montana Constitution; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that SAM work to ensure continued supervision and control of all publicly funded PK-12 education in Montana by existing school boards in current member districts who are subject to popular election to ensure that publicly-funded PK-12 education remains accountable to citizens in each community through oversight by volunteer elected trustees; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that SAM oppose any attempts to fund private PK-12 education, including sectarian and non-sectarian private schools and home schools through public means and that SAM



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interpret “public means” to include but not necessarily be limited to any appropriation, tax credit, tax deduction, voucher or any other financial incentive or construct mandated or allowed by law or proposed in any bill or initiative. Guidance on SAM’s position and efforts are to be derived from but not limited to the language of Article X, Section 6 (Aid prohibited to sectarian schools) and applicable interpretations of this provision by the Montana Supreme Court and other courts interpreting similar language in their respective state constitutions; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that SAM work to ensure that any school choice legislation be limited only to public schools and comply with and afford every student in every public school with all constitutional rights specified in Article X of the Montana Constitution and access to a public education that complies with the definition of the basic system of free quality schools adopted by the Legislature in 20-9-309, MCA;

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that SAM actively and vigorously opposes any legislation failing to meet the standards set forth above and pursue enforcement of the constitutional provisions referenced in this resolution through any lawful means.

Constitutional References:

Section 1. Educational goals and duties. (1) It is the goal of the people to establish a system of education which will develop the full educational potential of each person. Equality of educational opportunity is guaranteed to each person of the state.

Section 6. Aid prohibited to sectarian schools. (1) The legislature, counties, cities, towns, school districts, and public corporations shall not make any direct or indirect appropriation or payment from any public fund or monies, or any grant of lands or other property for any sectarian purpose or to aid any church, school, academy, seminary, college, university, or other literary or scientific institution, controlled in whole or in part by any church, sect, or denomination.

Section 8. School district trustees. The supervision and control of schools in each school district shall be vested in a board of trustees to be elected as provided by law.

Designation: Action

Resolution #13/15-01 – CAPITAL FACILITY NEEDS [2019 Legislative Session HB 247, HB 652]

BE IT RESOLVED, that SAM pursue continued and expanded state funding for capital facility needs in districts across the state of Montana to match and leverage local support for maintaining quality, safe, healthy, and educationally appropriate school facilities that meet the needs of 21st Century learning. The resolution should include support for technology costs within the definition of capital facility needs. The resolution should encourage energy efficiency, quality materials, and the general concept of sustainability. In addition, we encourage state support to match local building reserves so that school districts will be able to maintain facilities.

We encourage state support maintaining local control, and ensuring full funding for programs such as the state Facility Guaranteed Mill per ANB funding, as well as new initiatives that might be developed in the future.



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We believe that this resolution is important to the needs of students in districts across the state of Montana.

Designation: Action

Resolution #13/14/18-02 – ALIGNMENT OF ACCREDITATION STANDARDS AND FUNDING

BE IT RESOLVED, that SAM work to regularly monitor changes in accreditation standards and work to ensure appropriate alignment between the accreditation standards adopted by the Board of Public Education and funding appropriated by the Montana Legislature to assist school districts in implementing such standards. SAM shall pursue such alignment either through opposition to unfunded or underfunded changes or through pursuit of funding necessary to allow school districts to comply with such standards.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that SAM collaborate with the Office of Public Instruction and the Board of Public Education to develop a Small Schools Process by which Student Performance Standard Level of Accreditation is determined that takes into consideration the unique nature of Montana’s smallest schools and protects a student’s right to privacy.

Designation: Support

Resolution #13/14/15-03 – MORE EFFICIENT AND EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS

WHEREAS, school districts have learned from experience that there are many areas of statute and rule that do not allow for flexibility or in efficient operations at the local level. School elections, student discipline, and open meeting laws are examples of areas of policy that have been reviewed and improved for the benefit of school districts, and

WHEREAS, as a matter of equity, school districts who contract for transportation services should be treated the same as districts who own their buses and are exempt from state fuel taxes, and

WHEREAS, School districts should be able to utilize the best available technology and use cost-effective means in meeting the requirement to store records, but currently operate under restrictions imposed by statute and by the Local Government Records Committee, and

BE IT RESOLVED, that SAM, in the interest of more efficient and effective governance, the optimization of resources, as well as enhancements to and revival of local control, call on SAM membership to engage in discussions at the local board table related to efficiencies, optimization of resources efforts, and identification of implementation barriers to create efficiencies, and bring them to the attention of SAM, the Montana Public Education Center (MT-PEC) and the legislature for the establishment of appropriate laws to allow districts to become as efficient and effective as possible.

Designation: Support



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Resolution #13/14/17/19-04 – FEDERAL ISSUES IMPORTANT TO MONTANA

BE IT RESOLVED, that SAM will work with the Montana Congressional Delegation in support of full federal funding of special education (IDEA) and Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA); and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that SAM will work with the Montana Congressional Delegation to ensure that the USAC E-rate program stays fully funded to ensure equitable and adequate bandwidth to every student; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that SAM supports Net Neutrality; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that SAM will communicate with the Montana Congressional Delegation regarding our continued opposition to school vouchers in any form; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that SAM will work with the Montana Congressional Delegation during the reauthorization of any education legislation in support of adequate funding and to ensure that the implementation of the federal legislation is reasonable for Montana school districts; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that SAM support a stronger voice for rural education at the federal level that includes the establishment of an Office of Rural Education Policy within the U.S. Department of Education to recognize the unique challenges facing rural schools and that federal policies should balance the needs of urban and rural school districts; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that SAM will communicate with the Montana Congressional Delegation regarding the concern of Montana school districts over a drop in federal funding for important programs such as Title I and other Title programs, Carl Perkins, Impact Aid, and Medicaid Reimbursement, and the impact these reductions could have on local and state funding of current education priorities; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that SAM will advocate for maintenance of local supervision and control over federal funds allocated to Montana's public schools and oppose provisions in federal/national legislation, regulation or other standards that would denigrate local control of Montana's public schools; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that SAM supports formula funding and opposes competitive grant programs at the federal level; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that SAM will support additional federal resources for capital or operational programs only to the extent that these programs are not unfunded mandates or under-funded programs.

Designation: Support



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Resolution #13/16/17-07 – PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

WHEREAS, the Montana Board of Public Education has adopted Montana Content Standards; and

WHEREAS, funding for implementation of the Montana Content Standards is inadequate; and

WHEREAS, mandatory state assessments are in place; and

WHEREAS, Chapter 55 Accreditation Standards require teacher and principal evaluation systems;

BE IT RESOLVED, that SAM supports additional state funding for the training of teachers and administrators for the implementation of the Montana Content Standards, state assessments, and the Montana Educator Performance Appraisal System (EPAS) State Models for Teacher and Administrator Evaluation.

Designation: Support

Resolution #14-04 – FUNDING SPECIAL EDUCATION COOPERATIVE INFRASTRUCTURE

WHEREAS, a large majority of school districts, 81%, participate in special education cooperatives owing in a large part to a very sparsely distributed population; and

WHEREAS, increasing frequency, intensity, and investments of special education services require a robust cooperative infrastructure necessary to assure our students in rural schools equal access to special education services and quality education; and

WHEREAS, school laws of Montana do not adequately address funding the basic entitlement of Cooperatives in order to establish the appropriate infrastructure necessary for rural students to have equal access to special education services and quality education;

BE IT RESOLVED, that SAM supports legislative action ensuring the development of the full educational potential of each person;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that SAM supports legislative action to increase the monetary investment in Cooperative infrastructure including means to recruit and retain highly qualified personnel in rural areas; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that SAM supports legislative action to ensure educational infrastructure is equitably and adequately funded across all Montana administrative units.

Designation: Action



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Resolution #15/17-01- SPECIAL EDUCATION FUNDING, CLOSING THE GAP [2019 LEGISLATIVE SESSION HB 638]

WHEREAS, review of recent legislative funding increases for K-12 education will clearly show there has been, and continues to be a significant “gap” between increases in revenue provided general education versus increases provided special education; and

WHEREAS, historically, state and federal legislative increases in funding for special education services have been infrequent and wholly inadequate. This lack of additional revenue places increasing pressure on districts to use local revenue to fund special education services; and

WHEREAS, because districts and cooperatives are receiving inadequate increases in special education revenue, the effect on districts includes reducing services to special education children placing districts at risk of failing to provide FAPE (Free Appropriate Public Education), places special education in the position of “competing” for local funding with general education, sports, and other activities, and places an increasing burden on local tax payers;

BE IT RESOLVED, that SAM will work with their educational partners, the Office of Public Instruction, Governor’s office, and the Congressional delegation to “close the gap” in funding increases for general education versus special education.

Designation: Action

Resolution #15-08 – KINDERGARTEN AS PART OF COMPULSORY EDUCATION

WHEREAS, kindergarten is a very important building block in a child's education;

WHEREAS, kindergarten has a more educational focus with specific content standards;

BE IT RESOLVED, that students should begin their compulsory education with attendance in kindergarten;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that SAM supports that kindergarten is part of a child’s compulsory education in the State of Montana.

Designation: Support

Resolution #16-02 – STATE TRANSPORTATION REIMBURSEMENT FOR ACADEMIC SUMMER SCHOOL

WHEREAS, the challenges of academic improvement are not limited to a 180 day school year; and



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WHEREAS, current law allows provision of education throughout the year, computed on the basis of minimum aggregate hours of instruction, without any limitation to the number of days on which such instruction is provided; and

WHEREAS, significant research exists supporting the value of expanded and year round learning opportunities in addressing achievement gaps and preventing summer learning loss; and

WHEREAS, the needs of students in poverty to have access to quality classroom instruction are further limited by the current 180 day limit on state transportation reimbursement under MCA 20-10-145; and

WHEREAS, the current organization of schools statewide is limited by geography, and

WHEREAS, the education system in Montana is constantly adapting to the changing demographics of the student population in our state; and

WHEREAS, the use of State Transportation reimbursement is expressly prohibited by the criteria set forth in MCA 20-10-145; and

WHEREAS, Montana school districts use all possible resources to be able to offer extended learning opportunities to their students, and

WHEREAS, communities should have the right to determine how, when, and upon what terms education is provided through their public schools; and

WHEREAS, current law penalizes communities that choose to organize their school calendar over the summer months by prohibiting state transportation reimbursement;

BE IT RESOLVED, that academic summer programs would be approved by the local trustees under the policy for student enrollment for exceptional circumstances before requesting reimbursement.

BE IT RESOLVED, that any additional county transportation reimbursement be approved by the county transportation committee;

BE IT RESOLVED, that state transportation reimbursement should be aligned with any and all viable pupil instruction, including non-aggregate hour calculations for summer school instruction; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the SAM supports academic improvement through extended learning opportunities for all Montana's publicly educated students that would remove the 180 day limit on state transportation reimbursement as cited in MCA 20-10-145.

Designation: Support



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Resolution #16-05 – CHANGE COMPULSORY ENROLLMENT AGE FROM 7 TO 6 YEARS OLD

WHEREAS, it is well-documented that students who are provided a formal education at an earlier age have greater successes throughout their schooling; and

WHEREAS, several initiatives have been put forth in an effort to get students into schools at an early age, Montana law currently only requires compulsory enrollment at the age of 7; and

WHEREAS, this makes it difficult for schools to ensure that students are attending school. Moreover, as Montana law caps funding for students at the age of 19, compulsory enrollment beginning at 7 creates situations where students may “age out” of school, causing the potential for dropouts;

BE IT RESOLVED, that Montana Code Section 20-5-102, be amended to change the compulsory enrollment age from 7 to 6 years.

Designation: Support

Resolution #16/17-06 – ADDITIONAL FUNDING FOR CAREER AND VOCATIONAL/TECHNICAL EDUCATION [2019 LEGISLATIVE SESSION HB 387]

WHEREAS, funding for Career and Vocational/Technical Education (CTE) in Montana is well below the funding levels for programs in neighboring and other western states; and

WHEREAS, state funding for career and technical education is distributed using the Carl Perkins formula, these funds are earmarked for high school programs only and no mechanism is currently available in law to fund middle school programs; and

WHEREAS, career and technical education prepares students for a wide range of careers and post-secondary education programs; and

WHEREAS, career and technical education courses provide students with life and employment skills to make them highly desirable employees in today's modern workforce; and

WHEREAS, the majority of jobs in the U.S. labor market now require more than a high school diploma but less than a four-year degree; and

WHEREAS, career and technical education directly benefits not only our students, but also employers and local economies; and

WHEREAS, enrollment in career and technical education courses has been identified as a path that increases student engagement and high school graduation rates; and

WHEREAS, it is widely recognized that the foundation for these high school programs should be established in middle school; and



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WHEREAS, as funding increases at the high school level it creates a larger gap between those programs and middle school options; and

WHEREAS, establishing an ongoing funding mechanism for middle school career and technical education makes minimal resources available for middle school level career and technical education offerings; and

BE IT RESOLVED, that SAM will primarily support legislative action targeting additional funding for HS CTE programs including inflationary increases; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that SAM will support legislative action to create a funding mechanism to provide career and technical education opportunities for students in accredited middle schools that supplements but does not supplant high school funding.

Designation: Support

Resolution #16-07 – ADEQUATE FUNDING FOR MANDATED SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

WHEREAS, IDEA, as federal law, mandates a free appropriate public education for children with disabilities, ages 3-21. (Title I, B, 612, a, 1, A) with provision for State level statutory language to limit services to children with disabilities ages 18-21 (Title 1, B, 612, a, 1, B, ii); and

WHEREAS, most Montana school districts limit attendance to age 19, mandated special education services in the State typically address the needs of children with disabilities ages 3-19; and

WHEREAS, inadequate State funding of mandated special education services negatively impacts the education of all students by effectively decreasing the amount of general funds available to support general education programming;

BE IT RESOLVED, that SAM will prioritize adequate funding of mandated special education services; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that SAM will prioritize support of legislative action for statutory language that includes the special education appropriation in the group of education appropriations subject to the mandatory inflationary increase; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that SAM will prioritize support of legislative action to increase monetary investment in Cooperative infrastructure without reducing payments for the Instructional Services Block Grant, Related Services Block Grant, and the Disproportionate Cost Reimbursement; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that SAM recognizes proposals for new program entitlements for students outside the current age-range of State-funded educational programs may negatively impact funding consideration for mandated special education services; and



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BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that SAM will prioritize support of legislative action for inflationary increases for special education and increased monetary investment in Cooperative infrastructure above advocacy efforts for new program entitlements for students outside the current age-range of State funded educational programs.

Designation: Action

Resolution #16/17/19-08 – ANB ALLOCATION FOR TECHNOLOGY HARDWARE UPGRADES

WHEREAS, every school district in Montana strives to provide a quality education for every student that culminates in college and career readiness; and

WHEREAS, every school district in Montana is united in the belief that all students deserve to be successful; and

WHEREAS, every school district in Montana is striving to provide 21st Century learning opportunities and needed skills; and

WHEREAS, every school district in Montana is funded through a variety of sources, but primarily by the average number of students in attendance or ANB, and

WHEREAS, technology touches all aspects of education including the business operations, curriculum resources and assessments. Together these have become a significant burden on technology budgets; and

WHEREAS, schools are having difficulties in funding for technology and funding is not equitable across the state for upgrading, maintaining, and supporting technology hardware in schools; and

WHEREAS, a basic allocation per student, (e.g. Data Achievement (MCA 20-9-325)), would bring a constant revenue that school districts would support refreshing technology hardware on at least a five year cycle (industry standard). A basic annual allocation of \$50 per student over a five year span would generate \$250; which may not cover the complete cost of hardware for a student, but enough that a district can do more effective and efficient planning; and

BE IT RESOLVED, that the SAM hereby requests that the 2021 Montana Legislature increase the state's funding for technology by appropriating \$50 per student each year for technology hardware.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that SAM supports an increase in funding beyond the services already allocated to support schools.

Designation: Action



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Resolution #16/17/20-09 – SUPPORT OF ADEQUATE BANDWIDTH FOR SCHOOLS

WHEREAS, blended classrooms that integrate technology and rich media resources have become essential in the 21st Century classroom; and

WHEREAS, U.S. Department of Education and State Education Technology Directors Association recommendations require 1Mbps per student to ensure a media rich learning environment; and

WHEREAS, many rural schools in the state cannot meet basic bandwidth requirements for state mandated online testing; and

WHEREAS, Montana represents one of the largest sectors of entrepreneurial activity in the country, demonstrating that our students will need access to digital resources to compete globally in careers and college upon graduation; and

WHEREAS, decisions on appropriate bandwidth speeds and service are best made by the administration and trustees of local school districts;

BE IT RESOLVED, the legislators will work with the Governor's office, Education Super Highway, META, and SAM ensure a minimum of 1mbs per student for all Montana public education students.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, SAM and the State of Montana will explore supporting PK-20 connectivity consortiums to allow schools to tie into the State University systems for connectivity to University classrooms and other educational resources.

Designation: Action

Resolution #16/20-11 – REMOVING THE LIMIT DURATION ON TECHNOLOGY LEVY FUNDING

WHEREAS, technology is an ever evolving and necessary tool in every Montana classroom; and

WHEREAS, school districts rely on technology levies to fund the network, student and staff devices, curricular and operational software purchases, as well as training, repairs and support; and

WHEREAS, in many budget years, the general fund has to cover a significant number of those costs; and

WHEREAS, General Fund budgets in many districts are limited to the base budget given local taxpayer's avoidance of operational levies that allow districts to adopt maximum budgets, leaving District's basic operational resources too tight to meet the needs of 21st Century classrooms;

WHEREAS, limiting a technology levy's duration to 10 years, as well as District's risking a previously approved perpetual technology levy may restrict a district's ability to ensure ongoing technological integrity;



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BE IT RESOLVED, section 6 will strike the 10 year maximum limitation and section 8 will be deleted from MCA 20-9-533.

Designation: Action

Resolution #18-03 – DAYLIGHT SAVINGS

WHEREAS, many school activities and other local youth programs take place after school and many school facilities do not have outdoor lighting; and

WHEREAS, it gets dark early during the fall season;

BE IT RESOLVED, that SAM supports keeping daylight savings as is.

Designation: Support

Resolution #19/20-01 – ALLOWING THE USE OF VIDEO EVIDENCE TO ENFORCE SCHOOL BUS STOP ARM VIOLATIONS

WHEREAS, Montana law requires drivers overtaking a school bus from either direction to stop while the school bus is operating visual flashing red signals as specified in [61-9-402 MCA](#), and the driver may not proceed until the children have entered the school bus or have alighted and reached the side of the highway or street, and until the school bus ceases operation of its visual flashing red signal; and

WHEREAS, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) notes stop arm laws are particularly challenging to enforce because violations occur randomly, as opposed to at certain times or locations, and typically must be witnessed by a law enforcement officer in order for a ticket to be issued; and

WHEREAS, Montana school buses travel millions of miles per year on roads, highways, and streets not heavily monitored by law enforcement at all times; and

WHEREAS, Montana schools leverage technology in many ways to ensure our students safety while they are in the schools' care;

BE IT RESOLVED, that SAM will support legislative action authorizing the use of stop arm camera technology to substantiate the reporting of stop arm violations. The implementation of such technology will remain at the discretion of local trustees, not mandatory, and the cost of implementation can come from any applicable fund allowed by law including but not limited to Transportation, Bus Depreciation, and/or School Safety funds.

Designation: Action



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Resolution #20-01 SPECIAL EDUCATION FLEXIBILITY FUNDING

WHEREAS, an historic review of Montana and federal legislative funding increases for K-12 education clearly show there has been, and continues to be a significant “gap” between increases in revenue provided general education versus increases provided special education; and

WHEREAS, because LEAs are receiving inadequate increases in special education revenue, the effect on districts includes reducing services to special education children, placing districts at risk of failing to provide FAPE (Free Appropriate Public Education), places special education in the position of “competing” for local funding with general education, extra-curricular, and other activities; and

WHEREAS, The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is a federal law ensuring a free and appropriate public education to children with disabilities; and as enacted (1975), is supposed to provide for 40% full funding. The federal allocation, however, has historically never exceed 16% funding for students with disabilities; and

WHEREAS, SB 191, 2013 Montana Legislative Session passed the right of a district to levy in its tuition fund without a vote to pay for any costs of IDEA that are in excess of state and federal funding streams provided to the district (20-5-324; 20-7-401, MCA); and

WHEREAS, SB 191 funds are not available to all school districts or communities based on an insufficient or non-existent tax base, including but not limited to small rural communities, districts that reside within federal lands, and communities dependent on specific revenue streams such as oil, coal, etc.

WHEREAS, SB 307, 2017 Montana Legislative Session, required trustees to adopt a resolution of intent to increase non-voted levies no later than March 31 of each fiscal year (20-9-116, MCA); and

WHEREAS, the trustees of a district must adopt a final budget for the district and determine the amounts to be raised by tax levies for the district not later than August 25 (209-131, MCA); and

WHEREAS, exceptional students with significant needs transfer between districts after March 31 and prior to August 25, districts are financially obligated to meet the needs of those students, nonetheless, without fiscal planning to be in compliance with IDEA; and

WHEREAS, the tuition fund does not provide for reserves; and

WHEREAS, cooperative member districts are prohibited from using tuition funds, under 20-5-324 and 20-7-401, MCA, for assessment fee expenditures.

BE IT RESOLVED, that SAM will work with their educational partners and the Office of Public Instruction to ensure that districts will be enabled to annually reserve tuition funds to overcome potential budgetary shortfalls in the event of a transferring significant needs student into their district.



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BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, LEAs, including cooperative member districts, may budget and utilize tuition funds for the purpose of disbursing it for cooperative assessment fees.

Designation: Action

