



SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS OF MONTANA
RESOLUTIONS

*Approved by the SAM Delegate Assembly Steering Committee on 5-5-16 for
Recommendation to the SAM Delegate Assembly 2016*

Edits – Red Bold Underline for additions and ~~Strikeout~~ for deletions with Comments included

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

Resolution #99/03/08/10-01 - 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;

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 legislative action to increase the monetary fine for truancy of not less than \$200 and not more than \$500, and assign the authority to the appropriate local/county legal system to enforce; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that SAM supports legislative action to involve Child Protective Services for truancy and assign the authority to the appropriate local/county legal system to enforce; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that SAM supports legislative action to involve local/county legal systems which has the authority to suspend/revoke a student's driving privileges.

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

WHEREAS, aggressive and dangerous behaviors are occurring at increasing rates in the schools; and

WHEREAS, changes in the economic conditions of families and society obligate school districts to provide greater attention and resources to students with mental health problems; and

WHEREAS, school districts are finding it extremely difficult to allocate adequate resources to provide quality programs for students with emotional disorders and mental health problems; and

WHEREAS, many students’ families do not meet low-income financial eligibility for mental health services under existing state guidelines; and

WHEREAS, there have been drastic reductions or elimination of state funding for mental health programs which have historically provided necessary services for emotional disturbed youth in 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 emotional disturbance within the school setting; and

WHEREAS, there exists a significant need for a continuum of tiered services including community support, residential educational placement and treatment, and intensive inpatient services to meet the needs of children with emotional disorders, mental health problems, and autism within the state;

BE IT RESOLVED, that SAM supports new state funding for Montana residential/educational services for children with significant and/or aggressive behavior and 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 school based mental health services and day treatment/residential services for students who are not financially eligible under existing state and federal programs (such as Healthy Montana Kids (HMK) and Medicaid) without reducing dollars from the state education general fund.

Designation: Support

Resolution #00/15/16-09 – PROFESSIONAL ~~DEVELOPMENT~~ LEARNING

Comment [KM1]: More contemporary language

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

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



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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 **development learning** through MTSBA/SAM or equivalent training opportunities.

Comment [KM2]: Contemporary language

Designation: Support

Resolution #00/03/05/14/15/16-10- 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, etc.; 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.

Comment [KM3]: Enough funding to cover the needs of the student to be served

Designation: Support

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

WHEREAS, Montana consistently ranks at or near the bottom of all 50 states in economic development; and

WHEREAS, Montana has one of the highest poverty levels in the country; and

WHEREAS, Montana chooses not to distribute revenue to adequately fund K-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 P-K-12 education; and

Comment [KM4]: Takes into account Pre-K programs

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

Comment [KM5]: Pre-K programs accounted for

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 continued funding of full time kindergarten.

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

Designation: Support

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;

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



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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 #01-04 – PERMISSIVE FUNDING FOR HIGH IMPACT COSTS

WHEREAS, Montana school districts continue to experience high impact fixed operating costs, such as 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: Support

Resolution #01/03/05/12/14/15/16 - 07-- TESTING AND STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

WHEREAS, the ESEA mandates Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP); and

Comment [KM6]: ESSA eliminates this

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. ~~in the determination of AYP;~~
and

~~**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, AYP determination shall be measured through current mandated testing measures or a minimum of one year growth in one year's time based on the needs of the student;~~
and

~~**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, SAM supports reauthorization of the ESEA; and~~

Comment [KM7]: ESSA changes this

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 ~~AYP~~ levels of performance (cut scores) that are reviewed and approved by Montana educators following baseline results on the assessment;

Comment [KM8]: ESSA Change

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



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Resolution #01/09/10-09 - STATEWIDE PUBLIC SCHOOL EMPLOYEE INSURANCE PROGRAM

WHEREAS, current health insurance programs available to local school districts are consuming larger amounts of the district employees income and district general funds; and

WHEREAS, there is evidence that both the University Health Insurance and Public Employee Health Insurance Pools are considerably lower in cost than other plans available to local school districts; and

WHEREAS, state funding of public education is the equivalent to state funding of the University System and Public Employee System health insurance pools; and

WHEREAS, local school districts are facing difficult financial problems, including an aging group of employees who desire health insurance benefits as part of retirement programs, and new employees who desire low cost shared health benefits;

BE IT RESOLVED, that SAM will work with legislators to introduce legislation to establish a statewide public school employees' insurance program; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that SAM supports cooperative wellness efforts by districts to promote improved employee health; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that SAM supports the removal of the words "except for a school district" from current statute, MCA 2-09-212.

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

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; and



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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

Resolution #03/06/11-02 - FUNDING FOR MANDATED SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

WHEREAS, the state provides no funding to support the mandated services required of schools for students with disabilities in the 3-5 year old age range; and

WHEREAS, the state provides no funding for mandated extended school year services for students with disabilities;

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



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BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that SAM supports full state and federal funding for mandated Extended School Year special education services.

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 #03/15/16-04 FEDERALLY QUALIFIED PERSONNEL~~

~~**WHEREAS**, the State of Montana continues to experience a shortage of qualified personnel; and~~

~~**WHEREAS**, many Montana districts because of geographic isolation and size are unable to hire and retain qualified personnel in order to be in compliance; and~~

~~**WHEREAS**, “qualified” professionals coming to Montana from out-of-state experience numerous problems with obtaining licensure in Montana; and~~

~~**WHEREAS**, many highly effective educators, currently employed by Montana schools, will not meet the federal definition of “highly qualified personnel”;~~

~~**BE IT RESOLVED**, that SAM supports the state definition of “highly qualified personnel,” which gives consideration to recruitment and retention issues and roadblocks to licensure in Montana.~~

Designation: Support

Comment [KM9]: Highly qualified definition is eliminated in ESSA



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

Comment [KM10]: Contemporary language

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 ~~development~~ learning; and

Comment [KM11]: Contemporary language

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 ~~development~~ learning and/or pre-requisite study and adequate
compensation and/or college credit for cooperating or supervisory teachers and related service
professionals.

Comment [KM12]: Contemporary language

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



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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 #04/14-02 – PRE-SCHOOL PROGRAMS

WHEREAS, high quality pre-school programs contribute to later academic and social success; and

WHEREAS, many of Montana students do not have access to quality pre-school programs;

BE IT RESOLVED, that SAM supports the development of additional and continued fully funded universal pre-school programs in Montana; and

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

Designation: Action

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

~~**WHEREAS**, the demands of ESEA are requiring extended school time for more and more students in order to meet AYP and learning demands; and~~

Comment [KM13]: ESSA update

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



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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

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' 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



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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 #10/16-01 – 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 2005 (IDEA); 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, Montana's Comprehensive System of Personnel Development has actively engaged in statewide recruitment activities as a part of the state plan; 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 for the past three years; and

Comment [KM14]: No longer contemporary

Comment [KM15]: Not up to date as years have passed, but the issue still exists.



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WHEREAS, Montana continues to have chronic shortages ~~despite these extensive recruitment efforts;~~

Comment [KM16]: No identification of extensive efforts in this resolution

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: ~~Support~~ Action

Comment [KM17]: RISE4MT effort is leading this to Action

Resolution #10/16-03 – MEDICAL MARIJUANA REGULATIONS

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

~~WHEREAS, the present application of medical marijuana regulations appear to be confusing in Montana;~~

Comment [KM18]: Language doesn't add merit to the resolution

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

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;



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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 **P**K-12 education in Montana by existing school boards in current member districts who are subject to popular election to ensure that publicly-funded **P**K-12 education remains accountable to citizens in each community through oversight by volunteer elected trustees; and

Comment [KM19]: Support for future Pre-Kindergarten programs

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that SAM oppose any attempts to fund private **P**K-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 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:



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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

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.

Designation: Action

Resolution #13/14-02 – 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.

Designation: Support



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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

Resolution #13/14-04 – 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

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

BE IT FUTHER 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 FUTHER 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 FUTHER 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 and the impact these reductions could have on local and state funding of current education priorities; and



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BE IT FUTHER 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

Resolution #13/16-07 – PROFESSIONAL ~~DEVELOPMENT~~ LEARNING

Comment [KM20]: Contemporary language

WHEREAS, the Montana Board of Public Education has adopted ~~the Montana Common Core~~ Standards; and

WHEREAS, funding for implementation of the ~~Montana Common Core~~ Standards ~~was removed from SB175~~ **is inadequate**; and

WHEREAS, new mandatory state assessments are ~~to begin in 2015~~ **in place**; and

WHEREAS, ~~new~~ Chapter 55 Accreditation Standards ~~now~~ 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 Common Core~~ Standards, ~~new mandatory~~ state assessments, and the Montana State Models for Teacher and Principal Evaluation.

Comment [KM21]: Clean up language to be more general to meet needs

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



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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

~~NEW RESOLUTIONS 2015~~

Comment [KM22]: Delete because these are approved. Will add the New Resolutions 2016

Resolution #15-01- SPECIAL EDUCATION FUNDING, CLOSING THE GAP

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;

WHEREAS, the 2015 legislature provided no increase in funding for special education services, this lack of additional revenue from the state places increasing pressure on districts to use local revenue to fund special education services;

WHEREAS, because districts and cooperatives are not receiving an increase 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 develop a proposal to present to their educational partners, the Office of Public Instruction, and the Governor’s office, to “close the gap” in funding increases for general education versus special education.

Designation: Action

~~Resolution #15/16-03— ALLOW 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 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, the Board of Trustees desire the ability to use all possible resources to be able to offer extended learning opportunities to the students in need in this school district, 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 SAM supports academic improvement through extended learning opportunities for students and is resolved to formally assist in the development of legislation that would remove the 180 day limit on state transportation reimbursement under 20-10-145, MCA.

Designation: Support

Comment [KM23]: Deleted in order to consider new Resolution #16-02

Resolution #15/16-07 STATEWIDE BROADBAND

WHEREAS, high speed internet is pivotal to today's educational requirements; and

WHEREAS, large discrepancies exist throughout Montana in regards to availability of high speed internet; and

WHEREAS, large discrepancies exist throughout Montana in regards to prices charged for said internet access; and

WHEREAS, changes to available speeds and reduced pricing is not readily disclosed to school districts;

BE IT RESOLVED, that SAM supports legislative action to normalize internet pricing for school districts across Montana; and



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~~BE IT RESOLVED, that SAM supports legislative action to require internet providers to disclose information to school districts in regards availability of increased speeds and/or price reductions of existing service; and~~

~~BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that SAM supports legislative action requiring local and national internet providers to solve high speed internet issues in remote school districts throughout Montana.~~

~~Designation: Action~~

Comment [KM24]: To be replaced with new Broadband Resolution #16-09 recommended by META

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