

Hi SAM Legislative Network 2019 (SAMLN19) Members!

Highlights of Week 10 (Mar 11 – Mar 16)

Saturday, March 16 will mark day 54 of the 66th Montana Legislative Session. Administrators will gather in Helena to advocate for MT public education and visit with legislators on Monday, March 18 for the Day of Advocacy. Review [SAMLN19 Legislative Update 10 3-8-19](#) and [Podcast Week 10](#) to find out about the week's activity.

Discussions about early childhood education took place this week with both the Governor's office and legislators interested in legislation for preschool. The MT-PEC partners prepared a memo and sent it to the interested parties in order to ensure clear understands of where we stand on the issues being discussed. The public education advocates partnering in the MT-PEC appreciate the bipartisan interest in supporting publicly-funded early childhood education in Montana. The memo offers thoughts on what the MT-PEC partners understand to be the evolving plan to fund early childhood education in the 2019 Legislature. The current form of the bill would allow public funding for private education, which is in conflict with SAM Advocacy Priority to Oppose Privatization with Public Funds. Please click [HERE](#) to view the memo in its entirety.

Monday 3/11/19

Senate Floor:

- [HB 247 \(Grubbs\)](#) Provide greater flexibility for school districts in financing major maintenance-Support. SAM Priority Bill – Passed 3rd reading in Senate 50–0; signed by Speaker.

House Education Committee

Bill Hearings:

- [SB 164 \(Thomas\)](#) Generally revise school safety laws – Monitor
- [SB 35 \(Thomas\)](#) Generally revise school safety laws - Support
- [SB 8 \(Regier\)](#) Generally revise laws related to participation in extracurricular activities – Monitor

House Appropriations Committee

Executive Action:

- [HB 2 \(Ballance\)](#) General Appropriations Act – Section E - Executive Budget for Program 6 (OPI) and Program 9 (School Funding) – Passed as amended

Bill Hearing:

- [HB 218 \(Vinton\)](#) Generally revise laws related to career and technical education – Support – passed 22-2; transmitted to Senate.
- [HB 295 \(Anderson\)](#) Create grant program to encourage work-based learning – Support; scheduled for 3rd reading.
- [HB 351 \(McKamey\)](#) Encourage transformational learning – Support. Incentivize Transformational Learning – passed 18-4; transmitted to Senate.
- [HB 387 \(Jones\)](#) Create advanced opportunity act for Montana students – Support. Incentivize CTE Innovation – passed 19-3; transmitted to Senate.

House Judiciary Committee

Bill Hearings:

- [HB 492 \(Vinton\)](#) Generally revise laws related to school bus safety – Support if assured that cameras not mandatory and there is a funding source

Tuesday 3/12/19

House Judiciary Committee

Bill Hearings:

- [HB 477 \(Funk\)](#) Enact child access prevention and education laws – Monitor. Gun safety bill
- [HB 480 \(Dunwell\)](#) Revise gun laws to provide for safe gun storage – Monitor. Gun safety bill

House Appropriations Committee

Bill Hearings:

- [HB 638 \(Bedey\)](#) Increasing K-12 special ed allowable cost payment – Support. Spec Ed Approp Cmte Bill with OTO inflation – passed 21-1 (Burnett); scheduled for 3rd reading. If passed, HB 638 will increase special education funding for Montana's public schools by \$4.4 million over the next four years, however does not ensure inflationary increases for special education funding or include the \$2 million funding increase to Coops. In testimony to the Appropriations committee, SAM (Kirk) requested amendments to include the special ed Coop adjustment and to include the special ed allowable costs in the K-12 school funding formula. These amendments did not pass.
- [HB 14 \(Lynch\)](#) Long-Range Building Bonding Program - Monitor. Governor Infrastructure Bill; tabled in committee.

Wednesday 3/13/19

Senate Education Committee

Bill Hearings:

- [HB 177 \(Anderson\)](#) Allow school districts to use equalization aid for preschool programs – Support
- [HB 388 \(Caferro\)](#) Generally revise education laws related to students with exceptional needs – Support
- [HB 619 \(Zolnikov\)](#) Revise student data privacy laws - Support

House Judiciary Committee

Bill Hearings:

- [HB 640 \(Morigeau\)](#) Generally revise laws related to childhood sexual abuse – Monitor

Thursday 3/14/19

House Floor

- [HB 218 \(Vinton\)](#) Generally revise laws related to career and technical education – Support – passed 3rd reading 89-4; transmitted to Senate.
- [HB 351 \(McKamey\)](#) Encourage transformational learning – Support. Incentivize Transformational Learning – passed 3rd reading 68-26; transmitted to Senate.
- [HB 387 \(Jones\)](#) Create advanced opportunity act for Montana students – Support. Incentivize CTE Innovation – passed 3rd reading 77-17; transmitted to Senate.

Friday 3/15/19

House Judiciary Committee

Bill Hearings:

- [HB 325 \(Regier\)](#) Generally revise firearm laws – Monitor
- [HB 357 \(Regier\)](#) Revise concealed carry laws– Monitor. Referendum that includes no concealed carry in public schools

House Appropriations Committee

Bill Hearings:

- [HB 420 \(Runningwolf\)](#) Encourage grow your own programs to address teacher shortage – Support. Recruitment and retention bill.
- [HB 459 \(Beard\)](#) Provide support for rural school recruitment and retention – Support. Class 3 (70%) and 2 (30%) districts receive distribution. Recruitment and retention bill.

Senate Education Committee

Bill Hearings:

- [SR 19 \(Salomon\)](#) Confirm Governor's appointees to board of public education – Support

Saturday 3/16/19

Upcoming Week 11 (Mar 18 – Mar 23)

[SAM Followed Bills 3-15-19](#) are up to 119 with 260 bill drafts being monitored. [SAM Followed Bills Priority Status 3-15-19](#) describes the status of bills under the SAM advocacy priorities – Support Adequate and Equitable School Funding (21 bills), Support Recruitment and Retention of Quality Educators (5 bills), Oppose Privatization with Public Funds (0 bills), Support Facility and Technology Infrastructure (4 bills), Support School Based Mental Health Services (5 bills), and a new category of Other SAM Followed Bills (35 bills).

Please checkout [SAMLN19 Schedule Week 11 Mar 18-23 Revised 3-14-19](#) to see the schedule of bills and the status of the SAM's - support, opposition or monitoring - during the upcoming committee hearings.

Remember, MT-PEC's Day of Advocacy is in Helena on Monday. This date was specifically chosen to have our members be able to touch base with their legislators during this critical time of the session. It would be great if we could get even more of our members to attend. We know that every person who comes will have made a significant and positive difference for each child in every public school through your advocacy efforts. If you have not yet registered but are planning to come, please email me at samkm@sammt.org.

As I have described, about 90% of the SAM advocacy package has been achieved with the passing of HB 159 K-12 funding bill - inflation, and the remaining 10% is a heavy lift that is underway. We are seeing positive movement on bills we have worked on and support that fit into that 10% of the work remaining category.

- [HB 247](#) has passed the Legislature. Provided that the Governor signs as expected, then starting July 1, 2019, school districts will have new options to obtain loans for major maintenance and will be able to use major maintenance state (NRD payment) and local (levy) resources to service the debt on such loans. This is a major victory for our members interested in maintaining their buildings and was a bill whose idea was born at the SAM Delegate Assembly 2018 and is headed to become law!
- [HB 218](#) CTE bill (by a vote of [89-4](#)); [HB 351](#) Transformational learning bill (by a vote of [68-26](#)) and [HB 387](#) Create advanced opportunity act (by a vote of [77-17](#)), all passed third reading in the House on Thursday. These bills combined will, if passed, increase funding for Montana's public schools over the next four years by just short of \$30 million. Clearing the House with their appropriations intact is a huge positive step in the right direction and increases the likelihood that we will obtain new support for both proficiency-based/personalized learning and career and technical education.
- [HB 638](#), providing an inflationary increase for special education, is likely to pass the House today on third reading after a [92-8](#) passage rate on 2nd reading yesterday. This is not all we want or need in relation to special education but it does meet at least part of our objective to ensure inflationary

increases for special education funding. If passed, HB 638 will increase special education funding for Montana's public schools by \$4.4 million over the next four years. Coops are still a priority for us and we are still pursuing funding increases of \$2 million annually. At this point, however, we are gaining no appreciable traction on our advocacy. We will be working on solutions to sustain our cooperatives regardless of what happens in this session and will be focusing on options for using the tuition fund nonvoted levy to help sustain the quality services provided to children throughout Montana while we fight for an increase in state funding during the upcoming interim. This is a good reminder that advocacy is a year-round activity.

- [HB 211](#) Critical educator shortage loan repayment, [HB 420](#) Encourage grow your own programs to address teacher shortage, and [HB 459](#) Provide support for rural school recruitment and retention – are recruitment and retention bills that are still alive and would infuse funds help our schools with recruiting and retaining quality educators.

Monday 3/18/19

MT-PEC Day of Advocacy

Senate Education Committee

- [HB 298 \(Pope\)](#) Revise funding for students with disabilities - Monitor

House Education Committee

- [HB 648 \(Farris-Olsen\)](#) Create state program to incentivize school breakfast program – Support. Governor No Kid Hungry incentive bill.
- [SB 9 \(Salomon\)](#) Revise school funding related to overestimated ANB increases – Support. Clean Up Bill EDIC. Removes unintended double GTB Take
- [SB 60 \(Salomon\)](#) Generally revise laws related to financial aid programs– Monitor. MT University System

Tuesday 3/19/19

Senate Judiciary Committee

- [HB 302 \(DeVries\)](#) Constitutional amendment to define person – Not a SAM Followed Bill

Wednesday 3/20/19

House Education Committee

- [HB 643 \(Knudsen\)](#) Extend state lands reimbursement block grant for schools – Support
- [SB 140 \(Smith\)](#) Establish the Montana dyslexia screening and intervention act – Monitor
- [SB 197 \(Welborn\)](#) Generally revise education laws related to Montana youth challenge academy - Monitor

Senate Education Committee

- [HB 576 \(Bedey\)](#) Revise school finance laws related to gifts and endowments – Support. Flexibility for school districts.
- [HB 41 \(Windy Boy\)](#) Extend the Cultural Integrity and Commitment Act (language immersion programs) – Monitor

House Taxation Committee

- [SB 253 \(Smith\)](#) Revise the tax lien and tax deed process for residential property – Monitor, MACSS research

State Administration Committee

- [SB 130 \(Salomon\)](#) Revise school election law – Support
- [SB 154 \(Sales\)](#) Revise campaign practices vote disclosure requirements – Not a SAM Followed Bill
- [SB 162 \(Webb\)](#) Generally revise election laws – Not a SAM Followed Bill

Thursday 3/21/19

Senate Judiciary Committee

- [HB 413 \(Anderson\)](#) Address vaping in schools - Support

Friday 3/22/19

House Taxation Committee

- [HB 630 \(Morigeau\)](#) Revise laws related to cryptocurrency
- [HB 636 \(Jones\)](#) Revise laws related to protested taxes
- [SB 152 \(Barrett\)](#) Repeal sunset on 6-mill university levy - Monitor

Saturday 3/23/19

Each of the links in this Update are on the [SAMLN19](#) webpage. We have produced the [SAMLN19 Legislative Update 11 Podcast 3-15-19](#), giving you the opportunity to listen to what is happening for your convenience. I hope this background is helpful to you as you share information with your colleagues in your area!

Kirk

Please use the SAM website (www.sammt.org) as a resource for all things legislative under ‘Advocacy’, then [2019 Legislative Session](#). All information for the SAMLN19 is posted on the [SAMLN19](#) webpage – including this first SAMLN Update.

General Information

Click on the items in [blue underline font](#) as they are links that will go directly to the item.

For a copy of the bills, click on the bill number (e.g. [HB 1](#)) or go to [LAWS](#).

All Bills being followed by SAM can be found on the [SAM Bills 2019](#).

[Contact a Legislator](#) (not ready yet at the time of this writing) site is on the [2019 Legislature](#) webpage. You can use the [Online Message Form](#).

You may also [Watch or Listen](#) to live and upcoming meeting and hearings. Just click on the meeting or hearing that is on the schedule.

[2019 SAM Legislative Session](#) webpage.

[SAMLN19 Rules of Conduct for Political Activity and Advocacy](#).

[SAMLN19 Effective Advocacy PowerPoint](#).

[SAMLN19 ‘How to Provide Testimony on a Bill’ Video](#).

[SAMLN19 Community Forum](#).

[Legislator Contact Info by School District](#)