

Hi SAMLN17 Members!

Week 13 has started with a bang. So much activity on Monday and Tuesday that this update has been prepared for your use.

Thank you to all who have participated in the [CALL TO ACTION for HB 376](#) on Monday. We had several administrators attend the hearing in the Senate Education Committee and provide compelling testimony in opposition to this bill – this makes a huge difference – thank you! Now is the time to keep the pressure on the Senate Education Committee as the contemplate executive action on this bill – please contact them.

Click [SAMLN17 Schedule Week 13 Mar 27-31 Revised 3-28-17](#) to see the schedule of hearing for this week.

Amendments to [HB 2](#) were approved in Senate Finance and Claims Committee this morning (Tuesday, 3/28) at about 10:00 AM. Though the session is certainly not done, the moves on HB 2 begin to clarify education funding for this session and also clarify the strategies in place with companion bills to seek the advocacy priorities established by SAM and MT-PEC. Click [HB 2 Amendments in Senate Finance w Explain Vote 3-28-17](#) to see the amendments that gained approval. Note that **Special Education funding** (close to inflation) was added with amendment HB2000229-E, Montana Digital Academy funding (to the current level of funding) was added with amendment HB2000291-E, Data or Achievement payment was added with amendment HB2000225-E, and a complicated mix of block grants, NRD payment, facilities and others were addressed with amendments. Click [HB 2 Amendments in Sen Finance - Comments from MT-PEC 3-28-17](#) to read about the implications of the actions on HB 2 this morning and the companion bills we believe will clarify the picture for PK-12 education as the session move toward a close.

Your SAM advocacy team along with the MT-PEC partners have been deeply involved with helping legislators understand the needs for our schools and how that those needs can be met even during a session with very tight budget constraints. We will continue to work with you in seeing these strategies through to the end of the session. Contact Pat or I if you need clarification or have questions moving forward.

Thanks for your great efforts in advocacy during this session!!

General Information

Click [SAM Bills Still Active](#) to review the bills SAM is tracking that are still alive. You can follow the bills that are SAM advocacy priorities by clicking on the priority area ...

- [SAM School Funding Bills](#)
- [SAM Privatization with Public Fund Bills](#)
- [SAM Recruitment & Retention Bills](#)
- [SAM Special Ed Funding Bills](#)
- [SAM Facility and Technology Infrastructure Bills](#)

You are also able to see the bills that have successfully made through the session and signed by the governor, just click [SAM Bills Signed by Governor](#). All references to past info and what lies ahead, can be found on the [SAM Legislative Network 2017](#) webpage.

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Please use the SAM website (www.sammt.org) as a resource for all things legislative under ‘Announcements’, then ‘[2017 Legislative Session](#)’. All information for the SAMLN17 is posted under ‘[SAM Legislative Network 2017](#)’ on the webpage – including this first SAMLN Update.

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 tracked by SAM can be found on the [SAM Bills 2017](#) webpage under [SAM General Bills](#).

[Contact a Legislator](#) site is on the [Legislative Session](#) webpage. You can use the [Online Message Form](#).

You may also watch or listen to [Live & Upcoming](#) meeting and hearings. Just click on the meeting or hearing that is on the schedule.

There has been much discussion on when and how it is allowable to advocate as a SAM member and school district employee, please read [SAMLN17 Rules of Conduct for Political Activity and Advocacy](#) to understand this.

Before giving testimony on a bill, please view [SAM "How To" Video - Providing Testimony at a Legislative Hearing](#).

Each of the links in this Update are on the [SAM Legislative Network 2017](#) website. Contact us if you have questions. We hope this background is helpful to you as you share information with your colleagues in your area!

Kirk and Pat