



December 6, 2018

Dear Senators and Representatives,

Thank you for your service in the upcoming 66th legislative session and especially for your commitment to **putting Montana's students first!** Attached to this correspondence is a memo which outlines my Elected Official Requests and priorities for the OPI in the 2019 Legislative Session.

Below is an overview:

Fiscal Impact:

- **Restore cuts made in the 2017 session and special session**
 - Over \$20 million
- **Inflationary Increase for Schools:**
 - Provide early in the session an inflationary increase to BASE Aid funding of \$70.7 million. This is a promise to schools that provides budget stability.
- **Provide a \$1.8 million inflationary increase for special education**

No Fiscal Impact:

- **Student Safety Accountability Act:**
 - Revise the definition of consent to criminalize sexual relations between students and any school official regardless of a student's age
 - Criminalizing the aiding and abetting of sexual abuse of children by prohibiting certain classes of individuals from assisting a person in gaining employment if there is probable cause to believe that the person in question has committed sexual misconduct with a student
- **School Safety:**
 - Seek legislative authority to transfer \$1 million in existing (no new funds) Program 6 funds to schools through competitive grants for professional development in school safety

- **Revise Student Data Protection Statute:**
 - Allow data sharing between OPI and OCHE to better provide post-secondary opportunities to students

- **Align School Funding Payments with Treasury Receipts:**
 - Swap the November and December BASE Aid distribution payments to schools to prevent the possibility of delayed payments to schools by better aligning payments with tax receipts

- **Montana Digital Academy**
 - Make the Digital Academy its own line item and remove its one-time-only designation

If you have any questions or concerns, please reach out to Dylan Klapmeier at 406-444-3559 or dylan.klapmeier@mt.gov. We look forward to working with you and please do not hesitate to reach out if the OPI can be of service!

Best,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Elsie Arntzen". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "E" and "A".

Elsie Arntzen
State Superintendent