EXHIBIT 12
DATE 03/21/07
SB 123

1. MAKE QUALITY EDUCATION THE PRIORITY
WHEREAS, a quality education for all the children of Montana is of highest priority to the Montana School Boards Association; and

WHEREAS, the State of Montana has made progress toward restoring constitutionality to its system of funding Montana's public schools in compliance with the State's obligations under Article X of the Montana Constitution through funding increases and amendments to law in FY06 and FY07, but has not fully complied with the terms of the relevant court orders in Columbia Falls Elementary v. State and has not yet complied with the provisions of SB 152.

BE IT RESOLVED AS FOLLOWS:
The Montana School Boards Association's Membership endorses the Montana School Boards Association's continued vigorous pursuit of the State's compliance with the terms of Article X of the Montana Constitution. The Montana School Boards Association must be a leader in ensuring that all children served in Montana's public schools are provided with access to an adequately funded basic system of free quality public elementary and secondary schools.

In pursuing the State's compliance with the terms of Article X of the Montana Constitution, the
Montana School Boards Association's efforts should be focused on:

1. Enforcing the rights of children served in Montana's public schools as a named plaintiff in the case of Columbia Falls Elementary v. State, including the pursuit of enforcement of specific timelines for the state's compliance with its constitutional responsibilities; and
2. The pursuit and support of legislative and other remedies that include a focus on achieving:
    a. Necessary changes to the current funding formula to address the current shortcomings in the formula;
    b. Funding to empower local school districts in narrowing achievement gaps, complying with federal and state mandates and addressing the unique needs of all children served in Montana's public schools including gifted and talented students, through provision of an array of programs and services that education experts consistently report as important to improve at-risk performance, such as:
        i. Early childhood education (e.g. full day kindergarten, lower class sizes in the primary grades);
        ii. Before school, after school and summer programs;
        iii. Tutoring;
        iv. Reduction in class size and alternative learning programs for at-risk students;

v. Gifted and talented curriculum and programs as detailed in SB 152, in statute, and in Montana accreditation standards.
vi. Programs to enhance teacher professional development.
vii. Support funding for students who have not turned 20 by September 10th and have yet to complete the school district's graduation requirements.

c. An assurance of stable funding and support for implementation of Indian Education for All in Montana's public schools;
d. An improvement in salaries and benefits for employees of Montana's public schools with a focus on recruiting and retaining high quality educators and classified staff;
e. Facilities adequate to support the programs required for quality education including both operational and capital costs, and including pre-bond facility programming;
f. Any tax reform that may be necessary to ensure that the State has the capacity to comply with its constitutional responsibilities for K-12 public education.