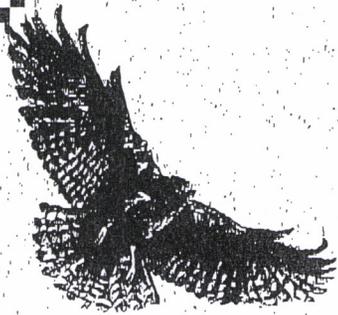


DATE 3/15/2013

# THOMPSON FALLS PUBLIC SCHOOLS SB14

School District No. 2, P.O. Box 129, Thompson Falls, MT 59873



*"The Blue Hawks"*

I am writing in support of SB 14: which allows for schools to be funded for educating 19 year old students. This bill makes sense and would help schools provide educational services to kids that need an extra year to graduate. Students may stray from the traditional academic track for a variety of reasons ranging from poor personal choices to circumstances that are beyond their control. Public schools are compassionate institutions that open their doors to everybody and strive to educate all students. Many students have challenging backgrounds filled with moves and unfortunate circumstances. Educators do their best to make connections with these kids and get them back on track to graduate and be successful beyond high school. The reality is that there are times when students or families get off track for a year and need an extra year to graduate. Recognizing the importance of working with these families and funding schools to provide educational services assist kids in earning a diploma through the age of 19 is a good thing.

Jason J. Slater

High School Principal

Thompson Falls, MT, 59873

**Dr. Jerry L. Pauli**  
Superintendent  
(406) 827-3323  
(406) 827-3020 (FAX)

**V. Gayle Munson**  
District Clerk  
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**Jason Slater**  
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(406) 827-3463 (FAX)



BY CHOICE HOTELS

March 14, 2013

Office of Public Instruction

Stephanie Munk- Representing Town Pump Hotel Group. A division of Town Pump of Montana.

Children are our future! Our commitment- Is to help build a strong future for all Montana students.

At Town Pump we recognize the importance of supporting Montana schools in their efforts to provide a quality learning environment of all students, with goals of graduation. That's why we support this bill.

Through Town Pumps Charitable Foundation we provide grants to schools throughout Montana with a variety of programs that include Newspapers in Education, reading programs, and student recognition programs, which includes hosting the Graduation Matters Student Advisory Board members, when they convene in Helena for their annual summits.

After graduation Town Pump supports employee efforts to further their education, to allow them to grow personally and professionally. We encourage employee participation in educational opportunities and will provide financial support through scholarships , with the guidelines of staying in high school and earning their degree.

Our goal in the end.... To motivate our employee's of the importance of a High School Education.

Town Pump wants to make a difference !

We ask you do the same by supporting this bill.

Thank you

Stephanie Munk

Sales Manager

Comfort Suites Helena



# Hardin High School

702 North Terry Avenue  
Hardin, Montana 59034  
(406) 665-6300  
Fax (406) 665-1909

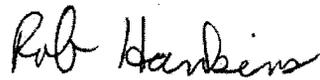
March 14, 2013

Hardin High School appreciates the opportunity to add our voice to those of other Montana High Schools who are supporting the adoption of SB 14 to allow the State of Montana to provide basic state funding payment for 19-year-old students. The issue directly affects Hardin High School as every year as we receive 19-year-old students from other districts or watch those students we have educated for their entire K-12 careers hit the 19-year-old mark. Hardin High School continues to encourage those 19 year olds to complete their education, even if the high school district no longer receives the basic payment. Of the 120 19-year-old students enrolled in Montana high schools this fall, 7.5% of them were Hardin High School students.

We continue to support their completion of high school because we believe it is in the best interests of the district and all of Montana to have as many of its young adults with what has become the prime certificate for entering the employment market and for any of the necessary advanced training so necessary in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Every student that graduates from high school is a return on the state's investment in the future. Yes, Hardin High School would stand to benefit financially from the state's investment in 19-year-olds, but the state would stand to gain enormously in the long run. Montana cannot afford dropouts in the future. In recent years Hardin High School has received 19 year olds who have been encouraged to transfer to Hardin.

Big Horn County, which encompasses Hardin High School's district and two other high school has a lengthy history of high unemployment. For more than 50 years, the unemployment rate has been in the double digits. Often this translates into families who are very mobile in seeking employment to keep families together. We see students who move between school systems regularly and this can translate into students who often require an extra year to complete grades K-8. And four years later, these students are 19-year old seniors, and districts do get "penalized" on the funding.

SB-14 offers a reasonable way to deal with this problem. It is not an open-ended piece of legislation. There are reasonable limits to adding funding for 19 year olds. It will demonstrate that Montana does not give up on students simply because a student turns 19. We ask the committee to support legislation, which is another step in our statewide efforts to increase the number of graduates and to decrease the number of dropouts.

  
Rob Hankins, Principal

**Halliday, Deb**

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**From:** Kathy Heisler [kheisler@lincoln.k12.mt.us]  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 14, 2013 9:51 AM  
**To:** Halliday, Deb  
**Subject:** SB 14

Deb-

I hope this helps-

### **Support of SB 14**

If the goal of the state of Montana is to decrease our high school dropout rate and support students staying in school and receiving their high school diploma, then SB 14 makes sense.

Students show up at our doors with various personal situations. Why would you not financially support a school district and these students while they are completing their requirements for a high school diploma? In today's global economy, students need, at minimum, a high school diploma to find a decent paying job. Data shows that wages and tax contributions of a high school graduate are substantially higher over a life time compared to a high school dropout.

SB 14 will allow districts some flexibility when working with students that need extra time in high school or that have personal situations that may require a more flexible schedule.

SB 14 would allow districts to include 19 year old students for ANB (Average Number Belonging) calculations, would set a limit on the number of students that could generate ANB funding and retains local control by School Boards to grant special permission for admission.

I believe that SB 14 is a win-win situation for school districts, the state of Montana, and most importantly- the students.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Heisler, Superintendent

Lincoln K-12 schools

## Halliday, Deb

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**From:** Mary Johnson [maryj@bps.k12.mt.us]  
**Sent:** Friday, March 15, 2013 10:20 AM  
**To:** Halliday, Deb  
**Cc:** Senator Shannon J. Augare; Forrestina CalfBossRibs; lea.whitford@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Support SB 14

Deb Halliday:

On behalf of Browning Public Schools I would like to express full support for SB 14 which amends the definition of a "student" to include 19 year olds.

A high school student should not be determined merely by age. A high school student is an individual who attends the high school with the motivation, the ability, and the credits to earn a high school diploma.

Students who live in poverty often are faced with situations where "life gets in the way" of their schooling for a period of time. Situations such as homelessness, substance abuse in the family, grief, physical or sexual abuse, transiency as a result of unemployment, or teen parenting can result in a student getting behind and not being able to meet the lock step timelines currently in place. If these students are motivated to graduate despite their hardships, it is in the best interest of, not only the student, but the community and the state to accommodate them with the extra time they need.

Currently Browning Public Schools accepts motivated 19 year olds despite the fact that we receive no funding for them nor are they counted in our graduation completion rate. It is our belief that by their graduation, they have a better opportunity to become productive citizens and contribute to the community, helping to break the cycle of poverty.

Sincerely,  
Mary Johnson  
Superintendent  
Browning Public Schools

**Montana Office of Public Instruction**  
**Denise Juneau, Superintendent**