

HOUSE BILL NO. 32

INTRODUCED BY K. KELKER

BY REQUEST OF THE SCHOOL FUNDING INTERIM COMMISSION

A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT REVISING FUNDING FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION; INCREASING AND REVISING THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE SPECIAL EDUCATION ALLOWABLE COST PAYMENT; PROVIDING AN APPROPRIATION; AMENDING SECTION 20-9-321, MCA; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE."

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

Section 1. Section 20-9-321, MCA, is amended to read:

"20-9-321. Allowable cost payment for special education. (1) As used in this section, "ANB" means the current year ANB.

(2) The 3-year average ANB provided for in 20-9-311 does not apply to the calculation and distribution of state special education allowable cost payments provided for in this section.

(3) For the purpose of establishing the allowable cost payment for a current year special education program for a school district, the superintendent of public instruction shall determine the total special education payment to a school district, cooperative, or joint board for special education services formed under 20-3-361 prior to July 1, 1992, using the following factors:

- (a) the district ANB student count as established pursuant to 20-9-311 and 20-9-313;
- (b) a per-ANB amount for the special education instructional block grant;
- (c) a per-ANB amount for the special education-related services block grant;
- (d) an amount for cooperatives or joint boards meeting the requirements of 20-7-457, to compensate for the additional costs of operations and maintenance, travel, supportive services, recruitment, and administration; and
- (e) any other data required by the superintendent of public instruction to administer the provisions of this section.

(4) (a) The total special education allocation must be distributed according to the following formula:

- (i) ~~52.5%~~ 50.2% through instructional block grants;



1 (ii) ~~47.5%~~ 16.7% through related services block grants;

2 (iii) ~~25%~~ 23.9% to reimbursement of local districts; and

3 (iv) ~~5%~~ 9.2% to special education cooperatives and joint boards for administration and travel.

4 (b) Special education allowable cost payments outlined in subsection (4)(a) must be granted to each
5 school district and cooperative with a special education program as follows:

6 (i) The instructional block grant limit prescribed in subsection (4)(a)(i) must be awarded to each school
7 district, based on the district ANB and the per-ANB special education instructional amount.

8 (ii) The special education-related services block grant limit prescribed in subsection (4)(a)(ii) must be
9 awarded to each school district that is not a cooperative member, based on the district ANB and the per-ANB
10 special education-related services amount, or to a cooperative or joint board that meets the requirements of
11 20-7-457. The special education-related services block grant amount for districts that are members of approved
12 cooperatives or a joint board must be awarded to the cooperatives or joint board.

13 (iii) If a district's allowable costs of special education exceed the total of the special education instructional
14 and special education-related services block grant plus the required district match required by subsection (6), the
15 district is eligible to receive at least a 40% reimbursement of the additional costs. To ensure that the total of
16 reimbursements to all districts does not exceed ~~25% of the total special education allocation~~ the 23.9% limit
17 established in subsection (4)(a)(iii), reimbursement must be made to districts for amounts that exceed a threshold
18 level calculated annually by the office of public instruction. The threshold level is calculated as a percentage
19 amount above the sum of the district's block grants plus the required district match.

20 (iv) Of the amount distributed under subsection (4)(a)(iv), three-fifths must be distributed based on the
21 ANB count of the school districts that are members of the special education cooperative or joint board and
22 two-fifths must be distributed based on distances, population density, and the number of itinerant personnel under
23 rules adopted by the superintendent of public instruction.

24 (5) The superintendent of public instruction shall adopt rules necessary to implement this section.

25 (6) A district shall provide a 25% local contribution for special education, matching every \$3 of state
26 special education instructional and special education-related services block grants with at least one local dollar.
27 A district that is a cooperative member is required to provide the 25% match of the special education-related
28 services grant amount to the special education cooperative.

29 (7) The superintendent of public instruction shall determine the actual district match based on the
30 trustees' reports. Any unmatched portion reverts to the state and must be subtracted from the district's ensuing

1 year's special education allowable cost payment.

2 (8) A district that demonstrates severe economic hardship because of exceptional special education
3 costs may apply to the superintendent of public instruction for an advance on the reimbursement for the year in
4 which the actual costs will be incurred."

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6 **NEW SECTION. Section 2. Appropriation.** The following money is appropriated from the general fund
7 to the office of public instruction for the purpose of increasing the special education allowable cost payment:

8 FY 2018 \$2,587,620

9 FY 2019 \$3,087,895

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11 **NEW SECTION. Section 3. Effective date.** [This act] is effective July 1, 2017.

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