



Montana Legislative Services Division
Office of the Executive Director

August 19, 2020

To: Members of the Legislative Council
From: Susan B. Fox
Re: New Proposal for Education Commission of the States Dues

The Education Commission of the States (ECS) was created in the 1960s through the Compact for Education, which was approved by all 50 state legislatures. Montana statutes, 20-2-501 through 505, MCA, were passed in 2001. Today, ECS has evolved into a national policy organization that serves as a partner and resource to education leaders across the states.

- Non-partisan and Unbiased
- Full Education Spectrum
- All Education Leaders

Montana Commissioners (7)

- Steve Bullock, Governor
- McCall Flynn, Governor Bullock's Education Policy Advisor, Governor's Proxy
- Elise Arntzen, Superintendent of Public Instruction
- Seth Berglee, Montana House of Representatives
- Elly Driggers, STARS Preschool Coach
- Alison Harmon, Dean, College of Education Human Development, MSU
- Keith Regier, Montana Senate
- Darlene Schottle, Chair, Montana Board of Public Education

Montana's dues to ECS have only been paid informally by various parties to the compact. ECS typically send one state dues invoice for \$53,100 to the Office of Public Instruction (OPI). Last year, OPI, Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education and the Governor's Office each paid \$10,000. The Legislative Services Division was able to participate in dues for FY22.

Questions for Legislative Council:

- Whether or not to adopt a New Proposal to include the dues in Program 21?
- If yes, whether to include the entire amount for each year of the biennium (\$53,100 yearly for a biennial total of \$106,200) or to include only one-quarter of the amount for each year of the biennium (\$13,275 yearly for a biennial total of \$26,550)?

If the Council included the entire portion in the legislative budget, the Joint Subcommittee on General Government could consider the package and either distribute the costs to each appropriate budget or leave under the Legislative Services Division to pay the dues on behalf of the state.

Regarding travel costs, this is the information received regarding the planned 2020 Travel Support for ECS Commissioners at two annual meetings (as of April 2020):

- ECS National Forum: July 8-10 in San Diego, CA. ECS covers two nights hotel, up to \$500 for air travel and meeting registration fee.
- ECS Winter Commissioners Meeting: December 3-4, 2020 in Chicago. ECS covers one night hotel and meeting registration free.

On June 18, 2020, the Education Interim Committee voiced support for the proposal to include funding for paying all or a portion of the state's dues as a member of the Compact for Education and the Education Commission of the States in the Legislative Services Division budget.