



Bills That Have Been Signed by the Governor as of May 13, 2019, 10:00 am

[HB 351](#) – Wendy McKamey (R) Encourage transformational learning. This bill is intended to incentivize districts that are interested in implementing ‘transformational learning’ programming. Transformational learning is defined in this bill as ‘an appropriate means of fulfilling the people’s goal of developing the full education potential of each person.’ The key words in this definition are ‘each person’ suggesting a program of personalized learning for individual students. There is no specific program or process required to reach this goal, school districts have the discretion to define how this will happen locally. There are requirements for ‘strategic plans’ with ‘measurable objectives to ensure accountability’. It is rare that strategic plans with measurable objectives for accountability doesn’t mean more reporting and HB 351 is NOT AN EXCEPTION. The funding in this bill is only intended to ‘provide effective professional development to assist employees in transitioning to a transformational learning model.’ This is a voluntary program. Effective on passage and approval, terminates June 30, 2027. [MCA 20-9-116](#)

[HB 576](#) – David Bedey (R) Revise school finance laws related to gifts and endowments. This bill is intended to provide greater flexibility for trustees regarding gifts not otherwise specified by the donor. When a district receives a gift, the trustees may deposit the gift in any budgeted or nonbudgeted fund at the discretion of the trustees if there are no specific directions made by the donor.

The trustees of a district that previously deposited donated funds in an endowment fund without specific instructions by the donor may move the donated funds and any accumulated interest to any other budgeted or nonbudgeted fund of the district and may spend donated funds and any accumulated interest unless there are restrictive condition. Effective on passage and approval. [MCA 20-9-604](#).

[HB 601](#) – John Fuller (R) Transfer funds within OPI for school safety professional development grants. This bill allows the OPI to transfer up to \$200,000 over the next biennium from their operational budget to the budget where state funds are distributed to public schools. These funds will be available through a grant program for the purposes of keeping students safe from violence, bullying, harassment, and substance use at schools and school-related activities.

NOTE: There is no past precedent for the State Superintendent of Public Instruction to request legislative approval for such a transfer of funds. The net effect of this bill will be to reduce the operational budget of OPI by \$200,000 over the next biennium. It seems odd that there would be excess funding for the OPI to accomplish this goal. Effective July 1, 2019.

[HB 636](#) – Llew Jones (R) Revise laws related to protested taxes. This bill is intended to help those few districts where typically energy related business enterprises protest their property taxes which has created a negative impact on the local taxpayer and school district. Most recently we have seen this happen in Laurel and Shelby. Applies to protested taxes paid and appeals adjudicated after December 31, 2019. [MCA 15-1-402](#).

[HB 638](#) – David Bedey (R) Increasing K-12 special ed allowable cost payment. This bill provides for inflationary increases for state special education funding. The bill does state that that it is the intent of the legislature “that the increases to the appropriations in fiscal year 2021 be considered as part of the ongoing base for the next legislative session.” This is interpreted to mean that these increases will be used to calculate the base starting point for state special education funding. But, inflation increases on these amounts will take legislative action in the next session. Overall this is good news, but the total appropriation for the entire state over the next biennium is only \$1,860,219. Effective July 1, 2019.

[HB 643](#) – Rhonda Knudsen (R) Extend state lands reimbursement block grant for schools. This bill extends state support for any school district with greater than 20% of the county’s land area composed of state school trust lands to 2021. Section 1 effective on passage and approval. Section 3 effective July 1, 2019.

[HB 662](#) – Llew Jones (R) Implement provisions of HB2, Sec E – Education. This is one of 3 companion bills that were offered late in the session relating to education. The other 2 companion bills were never used. HB 622 was amended to provide for appropriations for K-12 Career and Vocational/Technical Education that had been overlooked through the legislative process. Effective July 1, 2019. [MCA 20-7-305](#).