

School Funding Survey

Q4 Please elaborate on your choices above and/or describe other school funding topics you consider to be high priorities.

Answered: 677 Skipped: 716

#	Responses	Date
1	ESSENTIAL that the Legislature follow the State Constitution: free and appropriate PUBLIC SCHOOL EDUCATION for ALL. Highly qualified teachers and Administrators know what and how things should be done. Students deserve a quality education and it is theft of an education for a lifetime! There has to be standards for all Home Schooled children. Ask your County Supts. of School what happens to the majority of HS kids, ask teachers what happens when most Home Schooled children come back to school after being absent for a while.	9/9/2015 9:43 PM
2	Native American Indian students who are gifted are doubly left behind. Many Native Students are at risk because of the poverty and the stereotypes of them. ALL children deserve a chance. Let us spend the next 40 years working to service the GT and the Native children.	9/9/2015 9:43 PM
3	Because Montana is facing a worker shortage in the future we need to insure that every child is educated. We need qualified teachers who are compensated for the work they do commensurate with their educational training.	9/9/2015 9:25 PM
4	This Commission should have no conversations about "programs". Programmatic offerings are in the Board of Education and the Office of Public Instruction's jurisdiction . "Funding", which is what the committee is charged to discuss, means providing resources to ensure what the Constitution guarantees.	9/9/2015 9:22 PM
5	Pre-K funding for Montana children.	9/9/2015 9:12 PM
6	Insure that Montanas schools continue to accurately and adequately educate all of our kids n	9/9/2015 9:07 PM
7	reducing number of assessments given: cost savings and better climate for students	9/9/2015 8:46 PM
8	Gifted Education programs are chronically underfunded and not meeting the academic/social/emotinal needs of these at-risk students	9/9/2015 8:37 PM
9	The budgeting for the current school year is calculated after the year. The school budgeting system needs to be more proactive and responsive to each counties student population. The legislative perspective over the past few decades has failed to focus on effective means of empowering gifted students. While these students need to master the required curriculum standards, they also need to be encouraged to understand and develop their strengths in a more flexible and meaningful way. Instruction to these students should be more focused on supportive direction, differentiation and independent study projects, instead of on content lectures and additional busy work. Despite their likely academic abilities (probably not in all subjects), gifted students, just as the "special needs" students, also need social and emotional support and understanding of how they experience their world (greater sensitivity and intensity) and how this may differ from some of their peers. These students desperately need greater support throughout Montana. If encouraged and supported appropriately, these students will be inspiring leaders, creative innovators, and passionate citizens of our communities in the future. Identifying and meeting the needs of gifted students and at-risk students is much likelier to happen with teachers who understand the needs of students across the learning spectrum. These teachers will be comfortable with differentiation in their classrooms and able to provide or find the appropriate support for the students with whom they are working. A significant percentage 90%+ of the teachers in our district are excellent at relating to all types of students and providing them with an appropriate level of education opportunities. However, I absolutely plead with the state and districts to identify more tangible ways to evaluate the contribution and/or failure of some teachers, who fail so many of the students in their classes by not providing relevant, timely learning opportunities; who relate in a negative/berating manner to students almost daily; and who either need to be placed in a different position (not the primary teacher in any classroom) or removed from the school environment entirely. Parents, students, administrators, and teachers know which teachers are failing the students. It is very frustrating to be stuck in a system that does not adequately address such performance. Please consider offering parents and students the opportunity to provide feedback on what worked well during the school year and what improvements may be suggested. Obviously every student and teacher relationship is not going to be perfect all the time. However, if a teacher and his/her administrators are receiving a common theme in the survey feedback over one or more years, then the teacher's performance needs to be addressed.	9/9/2015 7:58 PM
10	I wish I had more time to elaborate on my choices. Even though I have taught for 15 years, I'm averaging 12 hours a day because this is my first year teaching fifth grade.	9/9/2015 7:33 PM

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11	Rural communities need to be granted local control in order to accomplish educational priorities that are not necessarily aligned with more urban educational models, focusing on place-based education and capitalizing on the creative talent that exists in growing creative enclaves in the small towns in the Bitterroot, Flathead and Bozeman areas,	9/9/2015 7:02 PM
12	All schools need to be adequately funded!!	9/9/2015 7:02 PM
13	I feel we spend a lot of time, effort, and capital on the bottom 20% and top 10% of students and them middle/average students are often overlooked or forgotten. I feel there needs to be an emphasis on those students especially in small districts that border large ones where many families choose to send there students out of district.	9/9/2015 6:16 PM
14	There should be something in place so all schools regardless of size can pay teachers a decent wage. It is wrong that a small school can afford only to start teachers at around 25k when the big districts can start them at \$37k or even higher.	9/9/2015 6:15 PM
15	Gifted education is an un/under-funded mandate. More resources and focus should be allotted to this area.	9/9/2015 6:05 PM
16	Programs for Gifted & Talented: VERY LITTLE EDUCATION is provided as an undergraduate for this population. Most have 1 paragraph in a text over 4 years of education for their degree. Therefore, our Montana teachers are unprepared for how to provide for this population. Each child deserves to learn something each day & be (better) understood.	9/9/2015 5:52 PM
17	We need to pay our teachers & administration a wage to retain good staff. Let schools make decisions that pertain to local needs. We need a balance to help special need children and gifted children	9/9/2015 5:34 PM
18	I think we need to be able to serve a diverse student body, culturally and academically. I believe a good school is full of good teachers, administrators and staff.	9/9/2015 5:29 PM
19	State funding for school facilities and school operations has lagged. Increased funding for both will allow for teacher retention, updated facilities, and better achievement.	9/9/2015 5:09 PM
20	Believe strongly that public schools should be adequately supported by taxpayers; public money should not be allocated to private or semi-private schools.	9/9/2015 4:35 PM
21	CTE needs to become a much higher priority. We need to invest heavily in our CTE programs. Montana is in great need of a skilled workforce. This investment should be priority # 1 after appropriate funding for the educational programs specified for our state standards.	9/9/2015 2:30 PM
22	My children are both gifted, yet inadequate programming available left them uninspired to reach their full potential. As one still has years in the system, I hope that alternative learning modules are made available at the higher grades/high school level so that he might again be psyched to go to school. (There is currently too much focus on teaching for standardized tests, and not enough teaching HOW to learn. Kids need to be taught HOW TO research, write papers, use alternative sources of information, communicate with the larger world, etc. If taught HOW, the what would not be a problem.) On transportation: as high schools are free choice, and with the prevalence of single parent households, where a child may live on two disparate sides of town depending on whose parenting week it is, transportation needs to be made available to get any kid from any side of town to any school, not the old "if you're in this neighborhood you can have a bus ride, but if you live too far away you can't" model. Too often the burden of transporting a child falls on the mother, who is typically the more economically disadvantaged of a split parent family. These moms could greatly benefit from having buses available to take their kids to school.	9/9/2015 1:00 PM
23	Our school needs more positive parent involvement	9/9/2015 12:46 PM
24	Funding is foremost so a district can have the materials and staffing necessary to give students a quality and varied education.	9/9/2015 12:45 PM
25	I would think that the 10 year study requires you to consider all these things and more. Why are you trying to restrict your work to only five?	9/9/2015 12:44 PM
26	We need to look at all ways of educating our children to get them ready for the workplace of today. More technology and classes for children who don't fit into the four year college type programs. Monies needed so we can also educate children that can find good paying jobs in the future - like plumbers,electricians, welder, and car mechanics.	9/9/2015 12:06 PM
27	I think that recruitment and retention of qualified teachers and administrators is important because we are in direct competition with surrounding states that are currently focusing on those exact issues. Let's keep our best and brightest here in Montana! A quality teacher can have an enormous impact-ask anyone who their favorite teacher is.	9/9/2015 12:03 PM

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28	I believe a move to classically educate students (meaning 3 stages: grammar, dialectic, rhetoric) would improve our schools throughout the state and nation. Next, programs for at-risk students should be evaluated and expanded. Student transportation seems to be a large budget item. It seems foolish to bus so few children on such large buses because of federal expectations. Preservation of local control is a must in my view as influence can be experienced with locals who live in the community (school boards) vs federal employees who may be disconnected from our needs. Finally, small isolated schools have different needs than larger, inner city schools. Thank you for taking the time to listen.	9/9/2015 11:39 AM
29	More funding from the state.	9/9/2015 11:37 AM
30	Diversity in schools coupled with infrastructure needs create funding shortages that must be addressed. Special education costs have not kept pace with a law that continues to expand without adequate funding.	9/9/2015 10:51 AM
31	We need to ensure we are recruiting and retaining highly qualified teachers, ensure our special needs students are receiving the education they require for their individual needs, and ensure our schools are up to date with 21 century technology and needs so that students are prepared for post secondary education, and career readiness.	9/9/2015 10:51 AM
32	I think instituting smaller student teacher ratio, say 15 to 1, and access to technology and the internet are the 2 highest priorities for education in Montana.	9/9/2015 10:48 AM
33	Despite previous lawsuits, we still are not honestly acknowledging and accepting the real cost of educating our children and the high price we all pay when we underfund our schools. We are neither adequate nor equitable in our approach...and we must come out of the dark ages and fund lifelong learning! Research shows it all happens BEFORE the age of FIVE and we have nothing.	9/9/2015 10:18 AM
34	Holding School Boards accountable with the mill levy money that they are given. Making sure they use it for the intended purpose that it was given.	9/9/2015 10:17 AM
35	The majority of our students travel a great distance to attend our school. Some 30 miles one way and some 47 miles one way. Parents have to take turns getting the students to the bus stop traveling 17 miles to do so. Some of our students are waking at 5am to get here on time. They are great!!	9/9/2015 10:16 AM
36	More funding for schools	9/9/2015 9:54 AM
37	Another high priority is the adequacy of the state's share in the costs of facility maintenance, repair, and public asset management.	9/9/2015 9:10 AM
38	Programs for at risk students: we need funding for after school programs to augment what can be done in the classroom. We have proven it can work in Corvallis, but cannot fund the program to continue long term.	9/9/2015 8:47 AM
39	Facility Maintenance funding - roofing repairs, bleachers replacement, tennis courts resurfacing, old building repairs. Curriculum -Textbooks and technology products	9/9/2015 8:31 AM
40	The funding for schools, especially on reservations, is severely lacking. We personally have facilities that are in need of major upgrades and/or total rebuilds and there is no where to get the funding on a local level. Not only that it is very hard to hang onto quality educators when there is a limited amount of funding to go around. Only a small percentage of people pay local and state taxes in our area which is a major source of funding of schools. This leads to non-sufficient facilities, educators and administration because you can only "tax" people so much. Don't get be wrong, I am not racist in any way shape or form but this inequality will lead to the demise of school districts on reservations until funding is shared equally among all people benefiting from being able to get an education. I just believe that everyone should pay their fair share.	9/9/2015 8:08 AM
41	Balancing opportunities so small districts can provide the same courses that large districts provide.	9/9/2015 7:57 AM
42	Missing from this list is secure funding for long term capital needs like buildings. This is an area the state could fill in the gap with better access to cheap debt or a greater funding source for districts to draw upon.	9/9/2015 7:46 AM
43	The ability to meet expenses for the district is important. The highest percentage of general funds is spent on salaries and benefits, so recruitment and retention is a big priority as well as staying current with technologies to best serve students. The students who struggle the most are those with at-risk characteristics. Local taxpayers are refusing to help with this more often and the state has a constitutional obligation to provide a public education.	9/9/2015 7:43 AM
44	With enrollment's declining, come up with a better way to fund schools.	9/9/2015 7:32 AM
45	I have a major concern with how administrators use the fund given to them. Teachers know there is serious abuse, but no one does anything about it. I am a SPED teacher required to teach the reading and math programs the school has adopted but I am NOT provided with the resources to service my students. There are several students at our school who would probably qualify for a gifted program but we do not have anyone to teach it, nor do we look for anyone to teach it. We have several paras at our school who have no training and have a hard time helping some of even our lower grades with work. In the state of LA, you cannot become a para without courses. This ensures that the paraprofessionals have some qualifications. Maybe every state should consider this...	9/9/2015 7:30 AM

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46	I would like to see the state foot more of the bill for education costs. We live in a very conservative district that does not pass levies on a regular basis, so we are constantly operating at well below our maximum budget. This causes us to continually operate at the bare minimum accreditation standards and maximum class sizes. We are surviving, but it would be nice to be able to operate at a comfortable level and provide our students with better educational opportunities.	9/9/2015 7:01 AM
47	proper funding is needed in the schools to help the other objectives, there seems to be more students who are at risk due in large part to their parents/guardians having drug problems, because of low teacher wages Montana has a hard time keeping/getting good quality teachers. American Indian Students continue to fall behind other students of which a lot of them fall under the affected by environmental conditions. There is also a great need for qualified teacher for our special ed students. It would also be wonderful after all these needs are met to have funding for students who excel so they are challenged and allowed to reach their potential.	9/9/2015 6:53 AM
48	I am seeing funding in our school going to Administrators rather than the needs of our students and school facility	9/9/2015 6:42 AM
49	We should be focused on the student needs. Which includes retaining high quality teachers to meet the needs of the students.	9/9/2015 6:24 AM
50	All schools funded equally. Special attention to small schools who don't get as much funding but need to provide quality education and highly qualified teachers and staff. Would like to see gifted students receive the same attention as students with disabilities.	9/9/2015 6:15 AM
51	Enormous resources go towards the 25% of children who are struggling. An (at least) equal investment needs to be made in the 25% of children who are ahead of the curve and need advanced challenged to reach their potential. It's fair and just makes sense.	9/8/2015 11:44 PM
52	It is hard to get teachers for certain subjects in small, rural schools.	9/8/2015 10:25 PM
53	Please avoid having too many "programs." It is necessary to assess students and teach them in ways that allow them to achieve the most they can with their aptitudes. When we allow students to fail, they become liabilities, but allowing the better student to achieve at an average level costs society also. We wouldn't expect the football coach to make a team of students who are small, weak, passive , and nonathletic; the coach does the opposite; he usually takes only the talented, and cares little about trying to develop the poor athlete. We should concentrate on developing faculty, not buildings.	9/8/2015 10:09 PM
54	There needs to be an emphasis put on looking into funding for special needs and at-risk children. The more we advance in our early detection and diagnoses of these behaviors and needs, the more the district's find themselves struggling to meet those needs. The rate at which children are being given IEP's is growing exponentially and something needs to be done to addresses this ever growing problem.	9/8/2015 10:05 PM
55	The main focus I have is to bring the classrooms into the 21st Century through up to date technology. We need tablets or iPads in every class. We need more student cooperative learning on the electronic devices and less worksheets. I would like to see a more Globe Learning classroom that takes the students in a rural community to the outreach of the world.	9/8/2015 9:01 PM
56	ALL students have special needs and deserve the education that allows them to fulfill their potential, as mandated by our Constitution.	9/8/2015 8:37 PM
57	Salaries of teachers need to be the same statewide or at least with a minimum floor which is a living wage.	9/8/2015 8:11 PM
58	Find a way to utilize mentor teachers (experienced at a specific level) to facilitate recruitment and retention of qualified personnel	9/8/2015 8:00 PM
59	Retention of neighborhood schools for better learning environment and keeping neighborhood communities together, while maintaining property values.	9/8/2015 7:30 PM
60	Technology available to students in our schools varies by district and even by schools within a district. In order to meet the needs of our students there should be some money geared toward maintaining and improving this technology (right down to kindergarten)! We are using old state give-away computers for our student workstations that are unreliable, at best. Also, but along the same lines, we are NOT addressing the needs of our GT kids - and they are some of our greatest resources for the future! Money should be specifically earmarked for working WITH GT kids so that it cannot be channeled into other GT-slightly-related ways.	9/8/2015 6:38 PM
61	One of the biggest issues facing many school districts is the aging nature of the existing facilities. Many school buildings across the state are very old and replacing and updating them is a very expensive proposition, often (until the bonding authority limit was recently lifted) exceeding the available bonding capacity, or greatly taxing - in both senses of the word - local finances and voter will. It would help if there were additional state-level resources available to address this issue.	9/8/2015 6:28 PM

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62	The State's share has remained essentially the same while the proportional burden on local taxpayers has increased as costs have risen. Local communities and School Boards are responsible for all the details of making education work locally. The system requires schools to be "creative" in how and when they ask for any levy. It should not be a choice between a safe, secure school building and a quality academic program. All the pieces of education are important and should be funded accordingly. The State has a responsibility under the MT Constitution to base its share on educationally relevant factors which include transportation, buildings, technology, assessment, etc. Schools need to be far more nimble in how they respond to a rapidly-changing world about them. Technology advances are fueling that need. What worked just five years ago is antiquated today. Increased reporting demands have burdened Districts. The data is important but the manpower & tech support needed to maintain & report it is a burden.	9/8/2015 6:18 PM
63	It is nearly impossible to provide a 2015 education with century-old buildings and communication systems unable to meet students' needs	9/8/2015 4:53 PM
64	We need to be looking at helping fund our Gifted population - and not just our at Risk! These students are just as much at risk as our low level learners!	9/8/2015 4:40 PM
65	In reality, all of the above choices are important, but there must be a limited number to work on so achievement is possible.	9/8/2015 4:24 PM
66	Wolf Point desperately needs preschool as some come through the door with less than 50 word vocabulary, We lack funds.	9/8/2015 4:24 PM
67	My concern has always been the high cost of Spec. needs students. It has been a necessary program, but it has always been a strain on the general fund budget. Because of the cost many other things in a school district suffer. To add to the problem, a rural school has to also absorb the transportation cost of spec. needs students. To conclude funding for special needs students in smaller rural school take a much bigger hit on funding than the inner city schools do.	9/8/2015 4:10 PM
68	Increase education funding by the legislature. All of the above are priorities, all of the above need increased funding.	9/8/2015 4:00 PM
69	The current assessment systems are not geared toward the special needs students. The whole process for the students in special education is degrading to students with learning disabilities. They know before beginning that they will do poorly no matter how much they have practiced ahead of time. There is also a large population of students who are at risk for failing or dropping out. A 30 second video will not keep them in school.	9/8/2015 3:54 PM
70	I believe that local control is key. We keep getting more bureaucratic in Helena and less is getting to the school. We need much less OPI, and much more local control.	9/8/2015 3:38 PM
71	We need qualified people in charge of our special education cooperatives. Struggling students are being exited or not accepted. Extreme bias exists. Whether this is a funding issue or not, it needs to be addressed.	9/8/2015 3:34 PM
72	Facilities are AWFUL!!!!	9/8/2015 3:31 PM
73	focus more on the kids that are trying to really be successful. Need to drive the schools to higher level. Most funding is based on head count and title/special education. These are great for public schools. We have don't need to neglect the kids who are going to be successful. Funding should be easier for schools. Should be able to carry over funding from one year to another.	9/8/2015 3:28 PM
74	Small schools serve an increasing small percentage of total students in Montana so their needs can be overlooked Ensuring small schools have flexibility to meet requirements is important.	9/8/2015 3:28 PM
75	Helping teachers get to content specific training, not sending PE teachers to reading trainings or musi teachers to math trainings	9/8/2015 3:28 PM
76	Having the funding give us what we need as educators to do the job that is expected of us. We can't do online tests and assessments when we are not given the proper number of licenses for the programs or if we do not have working computers. It is hard to get the tech time in every day for every student that is required of us.	9/8/2015 3:28 PM
77	Teacher salaries in MT are lagging in comparison to neighboring states. We've had excellent teachers in areas that are difficult to fill leave for Wyoming. There has got to be a way to become more competitive without tying funding to the boom and bust of natural resource development.	9/8/2015 3:18 PM
78	School infrastructure across the state is in dire need of repairs. If something isn't done now to help the local communities with these needs it will be to late. Our teachers are professionals and they need to be paid like it. We are losing the most promising young teachers to other fields and other states as fast as they graduate because they can't afford to be a teacher in our state. Our rural schools especially are seeing this.	9/8/2015 2:59 PM
79	With the oil, many schools are underfunded and many have such an excess that they are spending it on unnecessary items for programs.	9/8/2015 2:37 PM

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80	Antiquated facilities and low salaries for starting teachers is a priority for improved state funding. Very difficult to compete with bordering states that offer higher salaries and much better benefits. Lack of state funding for new and/or renovated facilities (unlike Wyoming as an example) is a major cause for concern for the quality of our education system.	9/8/2015 2:35 PM
81	Too much testing...especially at the lower levels with not enough equipment for them to use. Monies received from revenue that affects the state needs to be used equitably. Common core is ok as long as we are able to teach other important concepts. Too much teaching to those standards and schools as a community is lost.	9/8/2015 2:27 PM
82	Funding schools should be the first item our legislature attends to each session.	9/8/2015 2:16 PM
83	The state legislature needs to find monies in the budget to ensure solid k12 education at all levels of ability.	9/8/2015 2:01 PM
84	We need equitable funding--not just dependent on the tax base, involvement/donations, etc. of the local community. Some schools can rely on very active parent councils for fundraising and materials while others have so little.	9/8/2015 2:01 PM
85	Some school still have asbestos in their facility that need to be removed to ensure student's safety. Schools need equipment to transfer disabled students to their classrooms which aren't at ground floor. Water quality has not been check if the water pipes are safe to deliver drinkable water.....	9/8/2015 1:55 PM
86	All mandates from government should come with an automatic funding mechanism. A larger share of special education funding should come from the state, without decreasing other educational funding. Local school boards should be allowed more control in areas of curriculum. Less control from federal and state government.	9/8/2015 1:50 PM
87	My highest priority is shifting the school tax burden from local districts back to the state. Next, state school facilities are deteriorate and the legal requirement to address them has not been met. Through the years, the equalization formula is working less well. A new funding formula based upon educational reasons has yet to be developed. The adequacy issues from C Falls Sch Dist 6 vs. State has not satisfactory been addressed. We still need a funding formula based upon sound educational reasoning.	9/8/2015 1:46 PM
88	I'm not sure I understand all of the above. Adequacy of state share of funding, important in the sense that adequate funding is important. And, if "facilities" includes adequate computer technology, then also hugely important. The reason I put "educational program" is because my kid takes music two times every week and yet will not have exposure to a foreign language one time in his elementary school career. This seems crazy to me.	9/8/2015 1:45 PM
89	Funding for at-risk students seems to be provided heavily through grants. These grants are unpredictable and not a steady source of funding. To make programs, and specific positions, effective long-term, it would help if the funding was long-term and not on a year to year basis. As a very rural state, it's important that control of schools remain local so that individual districts can adapt to their specific needs and differentiate for their specific student population. Recruitment and retention of qualified teachers and administrators is probably the most efficient and significant way to ensure all students have access to quality education. It's people, not programs, that make schools successful.	9/8/2015 1:41 PM
90	sp ed kids in class	9/8/2015 1:34 PM
91	An annual sustainable adjustment to school funding, so schools don't have to go back to the legislature and ask for COLA increases.	9/8/2015 1:32 PM
92	We are teaching more and more at risk children and we need curriculum that meets them where they are so they can learn.	9/8/2015 1:25 PM
93	Believe schools are opportunities for students and those opportunities should be as accessible as possible and rigorous as possible.	9/8/2015 1:23 PM
94	I think the state should fund a greater portion of the costs to educate our students. In conjunction with this should be the funding of additional educational elements: world languages (k-5), ESL, technology, language immersion. We need more resources for our k-8 gifted/talented students so they don't languish in standard educational environments. We DEFINITELY need to prepare for the growing ESL student population; especially in Spanish.	9/8/2015 1:23 PM
95	We live in a district, because of the high poverty levels, that passing a levy to maximize support for schools in challenging. Making long term facility improvements is impossible when it is completely reliant on passing levies and/or bonds. Instead of investing in major renovation, we are stuck with using the bandaid approach to fixing and maintaining our facilities and grounds. Our enrollment numbers fluctuate dramatically during the year. We had over 1/6 of our student population come and go during the year.	9/8/2015 1:06 PM
96	Our entire public education system needs a huge funding boost from the state. We must have functional, up-to-date and well-maintained facilities. We must recruit and retain the best education professionals. The better educated our population, the better our economy for the entire state.	9/8/2015 12:56 PM
97	Basic educational foundations plus keeping up with advances in technology.	9/8/2015 12:37 PM
98	The State of Montana should pay a greater percent of the total school budget!	9/8/2015 12:35 PM

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99	Teacher Retirement funds must be available to teachers and controllable by investors.	9/8/2015 12:32 PM
100	I would like to see more costs equalized around the state and want the funding level to be at the average of the six states in our northwest area.	9/8/2015 12:28 PM
101	Shared oil money to all districts.	9/8/2015 12:27 PM
102	I feel that the special education program suffers due to lack of funding resulting in lack of needed aide support - forcing inappropriate ability grouping for instruction. Also \$\$\$ to be available to purchase alternate math and reading programs when the district's common core curriculum does not work for certain students.	9/8/2015 12:25 PM
103	Funding for students with special needs and or at risk is inadequate at the state level. Facility maintenance and replacement also needs funding options for the safety of our students.	9/8/2015 12:22 PM
104	Smaller classrooms and assign problematic students to alternative schools Hold students accountable for learning and behavior	9/8/2015 12:15 PM
105	As a student, I find that there are many programs to help struggling students excel, but students who are bored and find the curriculum too slow or simple are often extremely held back and less likely to pursue their talents or higher education.	9/8/2015 12:07 PM
106	It is extremely difficult to recruit new teachers to Montana right now. We offer some of the lowest teacher pay in the nation!!! This shameful circumstance must be rectified before we come to the point that we cannot provide a quality education to our students. The problem is particularly bad in rural schools that lack both the budgets and social opportunities/amenities that urban schools offer. No other issue within the realm of school funding is as dire as this. Why would we not want to attract the best and brightest teachers in the nation!??? If you want to consistently get them, you have to provide the financial incentive to be here.	9/8/2015 12:03 PM
107	We need funding to help students who are struggling who do not qualify for Special Education.	9/8/2015 12:00 PM
108	As a small school in a county with a small tax base trying to update our facilities, it is hard to find the money and not burden the taxpayers. It is always a challenge to find good quality of teachers and administrators when we can't compete with the salaries that are offered at bigger schools. Technology needs are a must. It is costly, but in this day in age our students deserve the most recent technology to learn with in order to succeed beyond their schooling. Last, but CERTAINLY not least, we need to be able to develop programs for the gifted and talented children in our schools. Tons of money and resources are spent catering to low level and at risk students while our top end students are sacrificed the education they are so deserving of.	9/8/2015 11:55 AM
109	Schools are faced with a growing diversity of students. It is hard to meet the needs of all children without proper funding in these areas such as at risk and special education.	9/8/2015 11:55 AM
110	Montana is a big state and consideration for education is a wide ranging, but adequate & equitable funding is a main concern. Kids in Harrison should have the same education as a kid from Billings. Certification for teachers is a big concern for us. We have people perfectly capable of teaching technology but cannot do it because they are not certified for it. It would be a 2 year + program to certify this person to teach 1 maybe 2 classes in our school. That's a concern.	9/8/2015 11:53 AM
111	deteriorating facilities...in helena I believe our youngest elementary school was built in the 70s	9/8/2015 11:53 AM
112	Consideration should be given for high needs special education students. Standards should be "relaxed" when qualified staff are not available. The University System should be required recruit more students into education fields.	9/8/2015 11:53 AM
113	First, in the past 25 years, the level of state funding for schools has been cut in half, leaving an increasing amount of dollars reliant on local politics. Meanwhile, the state continues to dictate, through accreditation standards, specific teacher, program, and classroom requirements, which each district must maintain, regardless of their capped funding. Second, we need to be identifying promising teacher candidates from among our brightest and best, and educating them "on purpose", with the intention of expecting much and paying well for their dedication. Third, why would we pour seemingly limitless funding into special education programs, while ignoring our most promising and talented students who pass through our system? Fourth, the assessment tool needs to be refined to measure how well we are actually teaching our students to collect appropriate information, process their findings, and arrive at viable solutions to problems. In the face of Smarter Balance difficulties, we're not there yet. Fifth, our local school boards need to be the bridge between the education community and the local population. If we marginalize our local school boards, the outcry against "government control" will be deafening!	9/8/2015 11:52 AM
114	The recruitment and retention of highly qualified teacher's in our district is near impossible. Rural schools need more funds that other schools for teachers because its hard to find people that either want to drive 20 + miles a day or live in small communities.	9/8/2015 11:52 AM
115	As a small school district with an extremely high special needs population we are spending an increasing level of our General Fund monies on fewer and fewer high needs students which has forced us to cut programs.	9/8/2015 11:50 AM

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116	Student assessment is a big thing to me because i never got the help when I needed it so I think it is a big thing to have around like tutoring or having someone stay later at school to get the help they need.	9/8/2015 11:50 AM
117	Special education needs full funding. All mandates need full funding. Insurance coverage needs a separate fund. Elementary PER ANB needs to be increased.	9/8/2015 11:50 AM
118	It seems that our smaller populations sometimes are underserved and there is an overall lack of funds in each school I have ever come into contact with for overall education across all employees.	9/8/2015 11:44 AM
119	to help funding at the laurel high school.	9/8/2015 11:44 AM
120	to help funding at laurel high school.	9/8/2015 11:44 AM
121	I think that schools should allow students ,who have abilities and talents far above anyone else, to have special courses fit to their abilities and talents.	9/8/2015 11:44 AM
122	One of the biggest priorities is the qualified teachers. If a teacher doesn't know what he/she is doing, the students aren't going to learn anything.	9/8/2015 11:42 AM
123	extra curricular activities	9/8/2015 11:40 AM
124	Schools need extra curricular ativities	9/8/2015 11:40 AM
125	A bigger weight room	9/8/2015 11:39 AM
126	i chose those because they seem good.	9/8/2015 11:39 AM
127	I think that music and sports should also be high priorities	9/8/2015 11:39 AM
128	The gifted and talented program is a wonderful program and I believe it should be funded.	9/8/2015 11:39 AM
129	grades	9/8/2015 11:37 AM
130	It seems like we have a lot of support for our struggling students. It would be nice to have that support for our high achieving students.	9/8/2015 11:32 AM
131	I think equitable distribution of state funds is highly important. School's that have a small tax basis struggle to higher educators and provide for their students due to the lack of funding available. As a special education teacher, there are not enough resources provided to us in our own schools to best serve our students.	9/8/2015 11:31 AM
132	The arts and music are not represented here	9/8/2015 11:26 AM
133	I would also like to see more students able to receive free breakfast and luncyh.	9/8/2015 11:23 AM
134	Living in rural Montana, not a "canned" curriculum is not always the best course of action for the betterment of all students. Board Trustees, administrators & local personnel know what should be best utilized within their particular school district. The government is getting way too involved by initiating Common Core standards. While I think there is a lot of good with the common core, I also think it has gone way overboard. In particular, the math program is just awful and more confusing. This coming from having a background in math. I left the public education system as a teacher as I was tired of feeling accountable as a teacher rather than the students and parents being accountable. The work ethic has gotten worse as we are subject to everyone feeling good and getting "participation" grades & awards. Physical education must be a high priority also and it seems that it's been cut as well. One day a week for a physical education class in grade school is horrendous. So much for teaching kids the value of health and activity. This is a direct correlation to the problems in the health care system as well, the obesity rates, and the rise of suicide and diseases.	9/8/2015 11:19 AM
135	In MT, we need to ensure that infrastructure in all communities is addressed to avoid a massive burden on communities.	9/8/2015 11:18 AM
136	You want good teachers you have to pay for good teachers. Raise the pay for teachers in Montana. Then fewer of them would leave to go to Wyoming and Alaska.	9/8/2015 11:17 AM
137	Rural schools need support in ways that will allow recruitment of the top tier teachers. We need a state salary schedule for teachers.	9/8/2015 11:12 AM
138	When we did not get the Quality Schools Funding we needed, it became a funding issue for the school district and community especially since the legislature has adequate funding in the State's checking account.	9/8/2015 11:08 AM
139	(At risk, disabled, gifted) The non-traditional learners need a boost and the teachers need training and funds to deal with their needs properly.	9/8/2015 11:07 AM

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140	We need to make sure we retain educators so that they can develop continuity in the educational process, it takes several years to find out what kids can do, how long they need to do it, and what background info they may be lacking. Technology and facilities need to be top notch if we want them to learn effectively today. Funds need to be equitable, it isn't a kid's fault if they go to school in an area without much oil resources for example. Help teachers educate with standards in mind.	9/8/2015 11:05 AM
141	Technology staff for all schools, as technology changes the landscape the staffing should change to reflect that change. Qualified teachers and support people for technology.	9/8/2015 11:01 AM
142	I feel like small schools are really struggling to retain good teachers because they are so poorly funded. The bottom line is that those students still deserve quality educators (arguably they need better educators because those educators need to "wear so many hats"), but better educators are going to where they will receive better pay (larger schools), and no one can blame them because people with families cannot survive on what small school districts pay.	9/8/2015 10:54 AM
143	State support for facilities	9/8/2015 10:54 AM
144	We have to find ways to attract teachers and keep them. Look at state wide salary schedules!!!	9/8/2015 10:53 AM
145	I am especially concerned about the twice exceptional child who is gifted as well as having a learning disability. Not enough attention is given to helping these underachievers. Inservice needs to be made available to schools.	9/8/2015 10:49 AM
146	Facilities assistance is desperately needed, especially after the lack of action at the last session. I do not support the current ranking system for schools.	9/8/2015 10:43 AM
147	Equitable funding distribution to all schools in MT regardless of enrollment numbers	9/8/2015 10:34 AM
148	Access to current technology for all students is one of our big expenses and it needs updated frequently, making education more expensive.	9/8/2015 10:33 AM
149	Pre-school funding--huge! Breakfast program funding	9/8/2015 10:32 AM
150	We need to find a balance in our funding for schools that can not pass additional levies. Our base budgets are not covering the needs of students. Since the mail in ballot system has been used we have not passed a levy. Permissive taxes on the local taxpayers are not being granted any longer by the community so It seems that the state needs to address the funding for schools so that the communities are not paying the difference any longer.	9/8/2015 10:31 AM
151	Many times our at-risk students and our gifted and talented children do not get the services they need because of lack of staff and supplies.	9/8/2015 10:28 AM
152	K-8 Districts such as Lockwood, East Helena and Missoula Hellgate should have the ability to ask taxpayers whether they would approve expansion to a K-12 District.	9/8/2015 10:27 AM
153	We need to address the way we pay teachers in this state. We are losing some great talent to states like Wyoming who value education and pay their teachers.	9/8/2015 10:24 AM
154	Montana needs to do a study on the need for teachers and how to assist in elevating the salaries for teachers. School districts need assistance with facilities and grants such as the Quality Schools Grant need to be maintained by the state.	9/8/2015 10:22 AM
155	The state needs to fund Special Education more adequately. The state needs to look at accreditation for small schools, there is a shortage of teachers and this is increasingly hard to fill with the accreditation the way it is. We need to raise the teacher pay across the board and across the state to be competitive with other states.	9/8/2015 10:18 AM
156	Vocational education continues to need additional support. At risk students continue to need additional help and support. Teacher professional development is key to our continued success. We need additional funds for this to occur with any fidelity.	9/8/2015 10:15 AM
157	Big schools in big cities have a better share of the funds they need to operate, while smaller, rural schools are operating on FTE and other program funds, yet expected to have all the extra staff and money to keep up with the other schools.	9/8/2015 10:15 AM
158	Economically depressed areas such as ours are in dire need of more adequate funding. There is too much emphasis on testing, and there is a trend toward too much control over how teachers teach in order to meet artificial "progress" markers.	9/8/2015 10:13 AM
159	Defund the number of tests children are required to take.	9/8/2015 10:13 AM
160	Class sizes are a huge issue in our district. The district states there is no money for additional teachers but there are 29-30 students in 2 and 3 grade classrooms. Too Many!!!	9/8/2015 10:12 AM

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161	Small isolated districts are having difficulties retaining teachers and hiring new ones due to funding issues. IE lack of funds. In smaller districts the needs of at risk students tend to be larger and a larger burden applied to the schools. It is difficult to afford programs for these students much less more gifted students when schools are having a difficult time just paying their teachers.	9/8/2015 10:08 AM
162	I believe the primary three areas to focus on would be: 1) An emphasis needs to be placed on facilities of schools and funding the regular maintenance and replacement of them. 2) Also funding for early childhood development and learning opportunities. 3) Increasing state funding levels for elementary and high schools in our state.	9/8/2015 10:08 AM
163	Our school buildings are crumbling. We need to figure out how to build schools that meet the needs of students & teachers. The state share of school funding needs to be increased. Graduation Matters is a program that works & should be funded.	9/8/2015 10:03 AM
164	To produce students that will make good citizens you need high caliber teachers & administrators, healthy environments (facilities that aren't falling down, adequate heat and cooling, etc.), money to provide curriculum for a quality education, and control by local trustees to ensure hands on needs for the district.	9/8/2015 10:00 AM
165	It's a shame that so little is spent on the actual facilities and fixtures. How can you let an investment in buildings and property just go to hell for lack of maintenance?	9/8/2015 9:59 AM
166	What about a priority of ensuring schools provide an outstanding education that inspires and ensures every student succeeds? Or is that simply too broad?	9/8/2015 9:56 AM
167	The fundamental issue is adequate financial resources to support: local development of curriculum in accordance with standards; safe and adequate facilities upgraded to make current technologies available to students and teachers; funding to provide high quality assessment systems that allow schools to monitor growth throughout the year (such as STAR assessments), to access the proprietary version of SBAC as the summative assessment, and to develop district level common assessments and challenging learning opportunities for students. At-risk students with behavioral problems pose additional and serious considerations, both in terms of their own education and their potential impact on the educations of others. Without the ability to offer emotional, social, and academic support for these students, they are often unable to function safely and productively in the school environment. Because schools cannot unilaterally place students in higher levels of care, we must have the resources to offer the higher level of care needed to provide both the at-risk student and the typical student with safe and appropriately structured learning environments. At-risk students with academic challenges, who are behaviorally appropriate, need for schools to have the extra capacity to provide intervention support in addition to the regular classroom support. When we expect all students to achieve to high levels, the old model of one teacher with 30 kids is not adequate. Another area sorely lacking in support from the state is funding for curriculum materials. Schools are required to stay current with materials, but the funding levels often require districts to choose between personnel and materials. Predictable, stable, and adequate funding based on the actual cost of providing effective services would be an asset MT schools have never experienced. Although it's not politically fashionable to address teacher pay as an issue requiring real attention, the fact that MT lags behind neighboring states in terms of actual pay and benefits means that many strong teachers leave MT seeking better pay. Adequate funding for schools must take into consideration the people required to provide the level of education required by the accreditation standards and by expectations for student performance relative to standards. In summary, if MT school funding covered the actual cost of providing required services and educational performance, we would be better able to serve all students appropriately.	9/8/2015 9:55 AM
168	As a parent of a student with special needs and of a student identified as gifted, my concerns are related to meeting their individual goals. My child with special needs does not receive appropriate job training skills due to the fact that his special education teachers are not adequately trained nor due they have the time and resources to meet his needs. My son that is gifted is again, not educated by individuals that are knowledgeable in the area of gifted and talented education. I am concerned that this will lead to behavior problems as well as a dislike for school. I would like to see more training and the expectation set that all teachers need to meet the needs of children identified as gifted.	9/8/2015 9:53 AM
169	I think we need more funding for SPED kids to help them be ready for life after high school so they can be independent citizens.	9/8/2015 9:52 AM
170	The lack of teachers to fill teaching positions is seriously hampering the ability of small schools to meet accreditation standards. The state needs to find a way to compensate teachers adequately and somewhat fairly across districts.	9/8/2015 9:52 AM
171	We are losing good teachers to surrounding states that pay better. A student educated in Montana should have the same education whether it is Absorakee or Zortman.	9/8/2015 9:51 AM
172	Local control is extremely important. Many times state and federal agencies place blanket mandates on schools. Even if it doesn't fit the needs or surroundings of that scho and district.	9/8/2015 9:49 AM
173	The ability to hire and retain teachers in rural Montana is nearly impossible with the salary the way it is. Money speaks and when we are one of the lowest salary schools in Montana we are one of the last to be looked at by candidates.	9/8/2015 9:49 AM
174	I also believe that Vocational Education needs more funding so that all students have a skill in some technical area.	9/8/2015 9:49 AM

School Funding Survey

175	I think many of these areas could benefit from the advancement of the Graduation Matters campaign	9/8/2015 9:48 AM
176	I feel the state needs to take into consideration the special needs of students in low socioeconomic areas. We need to address the issues that are impacting low test scores on reservations and find ways to support that in collaboration with Tribes.	9/8/2015 9:47 AM
177	Every school district is having difficulty finding and retaining qualified staff.	9/8/2015 9:45 AM
178	Qualified teachers and administrators are becoming more difficult to attract to our community due to the unavailability of housing. Additionally young professionals are leaving the academic environment with high student loans. Loan forgiveness is not as easily granted as it have been advertised. Rural communities would be served if readily available loan forgiveness and housing assistance were available.	9/8/2015 9:43 AM
179	Funding to provide staffing and resources for a quality education program for all students is essential. Hiring teachers has become a struggle the last 2 years. There aren't enough to fill the open spots. We have to be able to offer more competitive salaries to draw people to our state. Starting teacher pay at least at \$32,000 would make a huge difference as well as movement up the salary schedule seeing bigger jumps per year. To entice college students to go into education. There are just not the numbers graduating and staying.	9/8/2015 9:43 AM
180	Local taxpayers are being asked to do more for facilities because of the lack of action at the state level. Differences in the local tax base make this a top concern.	9/8/2015 9:39 AM
181	I think they are self explanatory.	9/8/2015 9:37 AM
182	The entire state has woefully poor, old, failing and inadequate school facilities. The state needs to develop a process and funding source to provide adequate educational facilities for all children and communities. Shortages of quality teachers is also not a new problem. Though pay in MT lags that of most states and is part of the solution, other incentives could also be very attractive in recruitment and retention.	9/8/2015 9:36 AM
183	The state needs to take into consideration the condition of school buildings in our state and the need to up grade or just maintain these buildings. More state funding is needed for this.	9/8/2015 9:34 AM
184	I know our school does not receive the same funding as other schools in our area due to socioeconomic status. Also, the tax burden that is placed on our tax payers is greater than other school districts in the state and yet they still receive more funding than we do. (We have had the misfortune of turning money back to the state the last few years due to inexperience at the business manager level - even my experience is limited - so it may seem like I am talking out of both sides of my mouth).	9/8/2015 9:30 AM
185	The expenses related to children with disabilities keep growing at an alarming rate, but the state funding is NOT keeping up. The permissive levy allowed in the tuition fund has helped, but has put the burden on the local taxpayers.	9/8/2015 9:29 AM
186	For our district facilities are our number one issue. Additionally our students with needs such as Sped, behaviors and mental health are growing and need to be recognized as financial demands.	9/8/2015 9:29 AM
187	Recruitment and retention of qualified teachers and administrators in our state should be the highest priority. We cannot retain or recruit individuals with the meager salaries we offer in comparison to adjacent states.	9/8/2015 9:29 AM
188	It is becoming very difficult to retain high quality teachers and in the past two years we have seen the candidate pool become depleted and candidates less qualified. Teacher pay in Montana varies greatly from district to district making it difficult for smaller districts to secure quality educators. School funding needs to be addressed coupled with the equitable distribution of state funds.	9/8/2015 9:28 AM
189	True equalization of operational and facilities funding is key for communities that have little ta base but a high population.	9/8/2015 9:28 AM
190	We have no applicants for our teaching positions and specialty positions, counselors, sped.	9/8/2015 9:21 AM
191	Two of the greatest challenges associated with school funding are providing equity amongst schools and providing quality school in rural areas. Health insurance and facilities are two of our districts greatest financial challenges.	9/8/2015 9:18 AM
192	Our special needs population is growing every year, yet we are struggling to meet their needs and the needs of our staff that are required to work with these children and families. In order to truly help these students succeed, we must be able to provide our schools with the resources necessary to work toward that success.	9/8/2015 9:17 AM
193	Adequate funding is essential to meet curriculum demands of ALL students. This is true in regards to teacher recruitment and retention.	9/8/2015 9:15 AM
194	I feel that students who have special needs or a hard time learning are "pushed" through the system. They need to be taught everything not just shoved through graduation because of lack of interest or resources.	9/8/2015 9:14 AM
195	We should have equal funding, not equitable funding. We need an easier method to get rid of unqualified teachers.	9/8/2015 9:11 AM

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196	The inability of our schools to recruit and retain high quality teachers, has reached critical stages. Tied to that is the inability to pay our existing teachers to compete with surrounding states.	9/8/2015 9:08 AM
197	My children are very lucky to attend West Glacier Elementary, a small rural school with multi-grade classrooms. I love that the community is so involved with this school. During the winter months, only the post office and school are open in our small town. The school keeps our community together. I love the fact that there are still many multi-grade rural schools in Montana. I feel as though they are an important part of community. That being said, students should have access to distance learning technologies to help facilitate the needs of the students that teachers cannot meet in our rural area.	9/8/2015 9:07 AM
198	Sustainability of across the board funding.	9/8/2015 9:07 AM
199	We are a small district but our children still need to have opportunities that larger districts have for classes etc. so they can be competitive and ready for college.	9/8/2015 9:04 AM
200	The state does not adequately fund public education. We are a rural school which cannot pass levies. 80% is not enough!	9/8/2015 9:04 AM
201	I believe my selections speak for themselves, we need to be able to provide the best education possible for all of our students throughout the state. Having quality teachers at all of our schools is paramount, regardless of the district's size and enrollment. It is paramount that the state assist schools with the funding to be able to pull this together. As for the common core, it is a great idea that has been poorly implemented, how much longer are we going to make our youth suffer from the epeen battles with other countries. The USA educates all people, not just the people that excel at learning.	9/8/2015 9:01 AM
202	Increase funding for ALL schools! We are simply not economically supporting our schools appropriately. Faculty and Staff salaries, building maintenance, supplies, etc!	9/8/2015 9:01 AM
203	Being a rural school district we have trouble finding teachers that are in more specialized areas such as Special Education, Sciences, Math, Home Economics, and Agriculture/Shop. We have facilities that are the average age of 70 years so facilities upgrades are always a necessity.	9/8/2015 8:59 AM
204	Montana has lost the heart of our small communities from school closures in the last 50 years. With new technologies available, I believe the accreditation standards need to be flexible enough to keep the doors of small schools open to community long distant learning. Winters are tough in Montana so we shouldn't be bussing young children (pre-school) or elders who want to have help learning technology skills. Re-open schools like Joplin, Brady, Whitlash, etc. and keep open schools like Babb and East Glacier with expanded programs in pre-school, H.S. diplomas, long distance learning for college and continuing education. Those opportunities for everything but pre-school can be offered in one classroom. Pre-school, could be on-site part of the day, with the rest of the time devoted to on-line learning, coached as needed by one master teacher.	9/8/2015 8:58 AM
205	Infrastructure needs are by far #1 concerns with close second to recruitment and retention.	9/8/2015 8:58 AM
206	overly complex school funding formulas with special pockets of funding availability is frustrating for the average constituents of each district to understand. This leads to distrust of the public school system.	9/8/2015 8:56 AM
207	Special Education-there is a high need for qualified professionals to work with children in special education. The case loads get higher and so do the needs. The case loads get higher but there is no budget to help these kids to succeed. There are very few programs to help these kids transition from high school to the real world. Gifted and talented- there are some real gifted and talented children that get left behind because there are no programs for them.	9/8/2015 8:53 AM
208	More counselors needed; this could fall under assessment or recruitment/retention of school administrators	9/8/2015 8:46 AM
209	The cost of special needs students is draining the system.	9/8/2015 8:46 AM
210	I worked on an Indian reservation school for many years and discovered a huge mis- use of state funds. More state and federal money is poured into that school with absolutely no results. Indian ed for all is not happening and does not happen in schools outside the reservation except for posters of Indian chiefs put up in the classroom. The funding is not spent well, legislators will not touch it with a ten foot pole, and OPI is in some naive land that it is going on.	9/8/2015 8:44 AM
211	It shouldn't matter if you attend a class C or Class AA school-- everyone should have the opportunity for vocational and advanced classes.	9/8/2015 8:42 AM
212	We had an extremely difficult time recruiting for our science position as well as custodial and maintenance. We can't afford to compete with larger nearby schools. One of our buildings is over 100 years old and needs work we cannot afford and the community doesn't have the cash to pass a bond large enough to either build new or bring this facility up to standard.	9/8/2015 8:41 AM
213	Need to keeping making schools the great equalizer	9/8/2015 8:41 AM
214	I believe that the pool of funds not dispursed during the 2015 legislature should be placed in a pool for future use by public school districts. I think this could be a foundation for a continued source of reveue for all the school in Montana	9/8/2015 8:40 AM

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215	We are losing "educators" to other professions due to the pathetic pay scale for educators. Montana needs to work to improve the way they fund educator pay. I am at the end of my career as an educator, (principal) and my son is at the beginning of his career, (engineer on the railroad), his starting pay is the same as mine after thirty plus years. :(Anything wrong with this picture?)	9/8/2015 8:40 AM
216	Less focus on testing, more focus on preparing citizens for a global economy	9/8/2015 8:40 AM
217	Facilities need upgrades and repairs. We need qualified teachers who will stay for more than 2 years. They need to be paid more.	9/8/2015 8:40 AM
218	Small schools are having a hard time bringing in teachers to our rural areas. We need to continue to offer great programs with less dollars as we lose students.	9/8/2015 8:37 AM
219	Maintenance of our buildings are consuming a larger part of our general fund budget. This reduces the amount of money we could be spending on things that directly impact students in the classroom. We do not have the funds to adequately address improvements on our facilities. We need to come up with a better funding mechanism to specifically address facilities across the state.	9/8/2015 8:36 AM
220	State does not fund all the programs that the government is requiriing schools to have.	9/8/2015 8:36 AM
221	Ovando is a very small rural school, our biggest needs are funds to continue to teach our students.When the school district gets funds based on student numbers and those numbers keep dropping, it makes it very hard to keep qualified teachers. We are really lucky to have the community we have, they have pitched in funds to be able to broaden our students needs.	9/8/2015 8:35 AM
222	The State's efforts to fund Capital Facility needs has been totally inadequate.	9/8/2015 8:34 AM
223	Regardless of what has happened in the past with regard to funding, the funding has got to be equal across all counties. It's not equality when some schools have an olympic sized swimming pool and up to date technology when other schools struggle to stay open and meet acreditedation.	9/8/2015 8:32 AM
224	Facilities are the highest priority. We need financial assistance to deal with the aging structures we are compelled to use. The state has passed the 'buck' from a state funded education system to one that is levied by the local board of trustees. While this does give local districts more control, in the hands of residents that don't fully appreciate the impact their control has, can harm a district's attempts to maintain a standard that is measured through ARM. Facilities often take a back seat in this process. We need the state to improve funding for staff and facilities.	9/8/2015 8:31 AM
225	I believe that it is time for the state to present a statewide salary schedule with cost of living factors built in for specific areas. In this 'salary matrix" a statewide insurance program may relieve some of the local stress that districts feel. This insurance plan could look similar to the one used presently by state employees. Same plan regardless of your location in the state in other words.	9/8/2015 8:31 AM
226	Bottom line: The general fund should be mandated at 100%. 80% is just not enough when you consider the anti-tax attitude of some of the areas in the state.	9/8/2015 8:30 AM
227	The school is the cornerstone of our small town. We have always put out quality students with small amounts of revenue. We need to be able to continue to operate with their needs being a priority.	9/8/2015 8:29 AM
228	The funding mechanism does not address rural costs of living, high costs of goods/services/housing, transient students, and special education.....just to name a few.	9/8/2015 8:29 AM
229	We cannot compete with the wages being offered in the Bakken area (Baker, Sidney); therefore have issues with recruitment/retention. More and more funding seems to be coming from local levies.	9/8/2015 8:26 AM
230	Local control translates to local knowledge of the needs in each community which is much better for students. State support of our most gifted students is an embarrassment at best. We need to provide better education for these students as they are tomorrow's business and innovation leaders.	9/8/2015 8:25 AM
231	More needs to be done to address failing facilities in Montana's aging schools. The loss of funds that were to be awarded through the competitive Quality Schools Grant was catastrophic to the schools that needed them for facilities repair and upgrade. It is a travesty in rural communities to be required to get kids ready for a dynamic future in the "information age" when they are being educated in buildings built over 50 years ago before computer technology even existed. Infrastructure is crucial to a successfully operating society regardless of whether it is in the form of roads, bridges or schools. All are necessary to move both our economy and our state forward.	9/8/2015 8:21 AM
232	Preservation of local control of schools in each district by local boards of trustees is also important, but funding for this topic is not necessarily significant.	9/8/2015 8:20 AM

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233	The citizens and State of Montana desperately need to fund education so that our youth can obtain the kind of education that will help Montana maintain a steady course into the future. Our legislators and certain outside interests would rather see our citizens dumbed down and subservient, but our world, state, nation, and citizenry do much better when we have a strong middle-class and our people are educated. The tax structure is broken, the State doesn't help the public education system the way it should and/or the way it used to support education; that needs to be changed. We need to fund education and support teachers. I can't even afford to buy a house, new car, or other amenities that support our community.	9/8/2015 8:19 AM
234	The purpose of the commission is defined and confined to adequate funding, focus there.	9/8/2015 8:19 AM
235	Funding for special education has never been at the level required. School districts can set budgets for the year and then be hit by some special circumstances that can require large dollars between aides and special equipment. Finding a way for schools to get dollars needed would be beneficial.	9/8/2015 8:17 AM
236	In rural Montana, especially those close to reservations, there is a high need for programs to help at risk youth. With drugs on a larger scale it affects each one of our youth.	9/8/2015 8:15 AM
237	With greater numbers of high-needs students in our districts, local districts are finding it difficult to meet the needs of those students both financially and with personnel.	9/8/2015 8:14 AM
238	More career counseling and traveling to see career choices.	9/8/2015 8:12 AM
239	Quality Schools Grants, districts have a hard time coming up with enough money for large facility projects. These Grants allow schools to be maintained.	9/8/2015 8:11 AM
240	Facilities - Keep the buildings sound and in repair	9/8/2015 8:11 AM
241	THE LEGISLATURE HAS NOT TAKEN THE IMPORTANCE OF FUNDING PUBLIC EDUCATION SERIOULY ENOUGH.	9/8/2015 8:08 AM
242	Under the current licensure rules it makes it very difficult to recruit teaching staff from out of state. Highly qualified teachers from other states are required to get class 5 licenses and then do course work through Montana Universities. If the Montana University system does not produce the teachers that we need, we should be allowed to find those teachers from other states or countries without forcing them to take courses from our Universities. If this doesn't change, districts need additional funding to pay our universities, as the highly qualified teachers from other states will not be interested in paying for their own additional education.	9/8/2015 8:06 AM
243	Adequate funding for special education programs is critical. Otherwise, special education requirements will replace other necessary programs.	9/8/2015 8:03 AM
244	All public schools need funding. I want to see none of my taxes going to charter, private or faith based schools. Less testing and more classroom teaching therefore less money spent on testing process.	9/8/2015 8:03 AM
245	More money should be given to school districts to improve student learning, retention of staff, and facilities maintenance. The state needs to allocate more for these important purposes.	9/8/2015 8:03 AM
246	You don't have adequacy of funds overall and that is the most important thing.	9/8/2015 8:03 AM
247	facilities, funding for OM	9/8/2015 8:03 AM
248	Billings schools are underfunded with high student/teacher ratios and lack of textbooks, etc.	9/8/2015 8:01 AM
249	Students attending school have increasingly complex needs. Funding formulas have not kept up with the costs associated with increased staffing, equipment, facilities, etc. In addition, our infrastructure is ridiculous. Modern facilities for our students is a must.	9/8/2015 7:58 AM
250	Facilities are a high priority for us. Old buildings that need renovation or replaced are very difficult to find funding for this type of project.	9/8/2015 7:56 AM
251	The smaller isolated school districts face unique challenges in MT, where as our enrollment tends to fluctuate greatly from year to year which in turn creates a fluctuation in funding. With a large fluctuation over the 3 year average we see a sharp decrease in funding but may not be able to decrease our services to match from year to year.	9/8/2015 7:56 AM
252	we are a small rural school that is an agriculture based community and are seeing a decline in student enrollment. It is important to keep good teachers on staff for the students that we do have and also to be able to get adequate funding to support our needs.	9/8/2015 7:53 AM
253	Facilities is above and beyond our most critical issue. We need more options for assistance for ALL districts in the state.	9/8/2015 7:51 AM
254	Need funding for Facilities. Did you not listen to last survey?	9/8/2015 7:47 AM
255	Schools should be funded on a 90/10 split not the current 80/20 split.	9/8/2015 7:38 AM

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256	Salary schedules for small schools cannot compete with AA schools. Small school students are not receiving fair treatment because AA's can pay teachers more.	9/8/2015 7:34 AM
257	It is time to stop pointing fingers and playing politics with our educational delivery systems. Money should be fairly distributed regardless of your mineral rights, tax base or socio-economic base. Our education system has become a pawn in political bantering and this needs to end. We must reinforce our gifted programming while strengthening our special education programs. We have students going through school with ability levels far above what is offered to them due to lack of funding or opportunity. The same goes for students with disabilities, some districts have amazing programs but others have very little due to funding practices. Finally the state needs to start looking at the financial burdens placed on its largest districts. Every effort should be made to make sure a district of 1300 students has the same opportunities as a "richer" district with only one or two hundred students.	9/8/2015 7:33 AM
258	The state needs to keep funding their share and quit passing the burden onto the local tax payers.	9/8/2015 7:27 AM
259	A thorough review of accreditation standards is in order. Asking the question; are we really educating students with what they truly need in today's world? is of paramount importance. The educational system hasn't changed much, but the world has.....	9/8/2015 7:25 AM
260	Certified employee salaries. Rural schools need to be able to compete with bigger school's salary schedules	9/8/2015 7:24 AM
261	Unfunded mandates need to be funded or eliminated. Create standard salary matrix for all staff state wide. Create a state wide school employees health insurance. Make it the same policy and same price if staff is employed in Troy or Ekalaka or Bozeman or Ennis.	9/8/2015 7:21 AM
262	With the school facilities grant program dissolving, the State needs to address school facilities in a manner that makes reasonable progress toward the problems identified in the statewide school facilities study from 2008.	9/8/2015 7:18 AM
263	.	9/8/2015 7:16 AM
264	Assessment systems - please contract with a qualified company for our SBAC system - not Measured Progress.	9/8/2015 7:13 AM
265	Career and Tech Classes	9/8/2015 7:09 AM
266	It is the local control element that dictates what & how curriculum is delivered to meet the accreditation standards, not the Legislature. Funding of facilities and flexibility of those funds is critical.	9/8/2015 6:58 AM
267	Local school boards need the direction of the board of public education. This direction does not take away local control. The majority of school board members are not educational experts. The advice of the board of public education is needed to plot a relevant course.	9/8/2015 6:43 AM
268	Testing for standards needs to be in and of itself re-evaluated. Process based learning demands a more reflective approach to evaluations. Assessment needs to engage the students in the evaluation, listening to the participant rather than just collecting "objective" data.	9/8/2015 4:21 AM
269	I think we need to make sure qualified administrators are hired who have real teaching experience, so they can support teachers based on their experience working with kids on a regular basis, not what they read in a textbook.	9/8/2015 2:18 AM
270	The cost for education has risen for school districts with the need of more advanced technology to adequately prepare students for the work force.	9/7/2015 11:49 PM
271	"At risk" children include the following : gifted and talented, Native American students, children with disabilities, children from abusive/neglected backgrounds, children who are otherwise behind grade level, and children who don't speak English. All need funded programs to help these children succeed.	9/7/2015 11:12 PM
272	State wide insurance	9/7/2015 10:58 PM
273	The ability to recruit and retain competent teachers into education.	9/7/2015 10:39 PM
274	Adequate funding from the state level as well as local level needs to be set in place and ensured. Teachers need to be a significant part of the process of school improvement and curriculum decisions.	9/7/2015 9:20 PM
275	distribute funds equitably so all districts can pay equitably to get and keep great teachers; keep class sizes low; in addition to the above it is essential that all districts have the funds to provide quality educational experiences for all students including music, arts, etc.	9/7/2015 9:13 PM
276	I feel that Administrators should have a minimum of 7 years in the classroom. Currently, I don't believe many of the newer administrators have a feel for what happens in the classroom.	9/7/2015 8:10 PM
277	Need facilities updated, specific needs to urban districts such as Great Falls, technology upgrades, and Title I funds increased	9/7/2015 8:05 PM
278	Funding is always an issue. Properly fund our PUBLIC schools.	9/7/2015 8:00 PM
279	Technology upkeep is a critical issue that is not currently being addressed.	9/7/2015 7:49 PM

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280	recruitment and retention as well as facilities and equipment to properly teach math, science and technology classes In small rural schools it is difficult to have the technologies (STEM) learning because of the costs associated with establishing the programs-- and if you do not retain teachers by paying them a wage that they can live on and support their families without having to take second and third part time jobs, you will never achieve academic success or true follow thru to get students on track and learning and advancing.	9/7/2015 7:36 PM
281	Schools need more money	9/7/2015 7:34 PM
282	School funding for 19 year olds is a MUST!	9/7/2015 7:25 PM
283	It is cheaper to teach the students, than put them in the pen.	9/7/2015 7:01 PM
284	Facilities need to be updated. They are too old and outdated. The state needed to chip in more money.	9/7/2015 6:32 PM
285	A public education system is the great equalizer. Montana's public education system is a very good one and want to keep it that way.	9/7/2015 6:22 PM
286	Qualified, forward thinking, scholarly, inspirational administrators needed. The day of the coach or counselor who needs extra pay applying for administration jobs should be over. Teachers should have direct input into budgets and be treated as the professionals they are. School facilities need to be maintained sufficiently and upgraded.	9/7/2015 6:12 PM
287	Our Sped program is lacking in curriculums, we are over crowded in spaces not conducive to our childrens needs . I.e. loud, florescent lighting, lack of proper rooms and lack of para pros.	9/7/2015 6:03 PM
288	programs for at-risk students,gifted and talented students, and.Indian students	9/7/2015 5:38 PM
289	Adequate school funding is needed to ensure our students get the best educators. I feel Montana loses good teachers to neighboring states that pay better.	9/7/2015 5:34 PM
290	I absolutely care about the needs of all the Kinds of kids listed in this survey. Montana needs to aim for a spot where local districts have control, the state maintains facilities and staffing, and mandates/testing is minimized. Teachers in classrooms can do the best assessments of student growth, for example. The State can identify the most basic benchmarks to make sure rural and urban schools are all giving students a rich education.	9/7/2015 5:24 PM
291	It is very important to require 3 or 4 years of mathematics and of lab based science courses that are funded to help keep student teacher ratios low and have qualified active learning teachers in front of the students.	9/7/2015 5:13 PM
292	Greatest concern: keep our schools public. No funding for charter schools; if private schools ask for credits or money, they must meet the same criteria as all public schools.	9/7/2015 4:53 PM
293	The state needs to pay their share of educating students.	9/7/2015 4:52 PM
294	Number of students should have a say in how schools are funded.	9/7/2015 3:59 PM
295	Treat all schools with fair and balanced funding	9/7/2015 3:58 PM
296	I think funding amounts for 6th graders and class sizes are very important	9/7/2015 3:46 PM
297	Students in our school have long distances to travel to school and it is a hardship for some families to get their kids to school. Our special education program in substandard.	9/7/2015 3:40 PM
298	School facilities need substantial state funds to make the many deplorable facilities safe and suitable for students and modern educational practices.	9/7/2015 3:37 PM
299	Take every great idea for improving student performance, studies show it is the quality of the teaching that really matters. Recruit and retain the best teachers	9/7/2015 3:25 PM
300	All of the above are important.	9/7/2015 3:19 PM
301	Specifically, I hope you will look at the costs affiliated with providing the mandated services for students with Special Needs, and the way providing what is required guts the district for any other population. Specifically, the amount of time each district spends on actual testing and preparation for testing instead of instruction.	9/7/2015 3:09 PM
302	One-size fits all allocation of state funding is inequitable	9/7/2015 3:07 PM
303	Since classroom teachers are responsible for teaching all children, no matter if they are special ed, ESL, gifted, behavior concerns, we need smaller class numbers. The number of assessment systems is a huge concern. Last year trying to take the assessments without the number of computers needed and the problems with taking the tests was so frustrating. When some students answered the questions, took their time, and then their answers were unable to be uploaded...it was truly defeating! Thank goodness the CRT science is still paper and pencil.	9/7/2015 2:55 PM
304	Funding should be equal regardless of zip code.	9/7/2015 2:07 PM
305	Equity in funding across the districts and Montana is vital. Poorer neighborhood schools have little to no access to the same vital resources as schools in more affluent neighborhoods.	9/7/2015 2:00 PM

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306	It is important that we are providing and adequately funding an appropriate education for our most underserved populations. There is a large discrepancy between graduation rates for our students from poverty, special education students, and American Indian students. This is unacceptable.	9/7/2015 1:31 PM
307	There are not enough opportunities for students to excel to a level that they are competitive with students from the east coast and larger cities. In order for students to branch out of montana programs such as biofuels, computer animation, business, chemistry, robotics etc need to be offered on a more in depth level in middle and high school.	9/7/2015 1:28 PM
308	Funding levels over time, the sufficiency (or lack thereof) of existing revenue streams	9/7/2015 12:59 PM
309	The state needs add more funding on their part. Very low compared to surrounding states.	9/7/2015 12:27 PM
310	Montana teachers are some of the lowest paid in the United States. None of the other "programs" matter if you can't recruit and RETAIN high quality teachers.	9/7/2015 12:00 PM
311	I believe that we have basic issues with our schools. As the number of students with significant needs increases, school resources are stretched and we have increased difficulty recruiting and retaining talented teachers. The aging infrastructure of schools is another issue.	9/7/2015 11:57 AM
312	Equity and fair distribution of funds as well as adequate funding from the state are my top priorities.	9/7/2015 11:53 AM
313	Music and arts need to be adequately funded	9/7/2015 11:49 AM
314	There needs to be programs for gifted and talented students and for high functioning special needs students. There's no place in the current public education system for these students.	9/7/2015 11:44 AM
315	Programs for all student groups (American Indian, gifted and talented, English language learners, students with disabilities, etc.) should be considered but not to the detriment of other groups; some groups should not be considered and other groups ignored. Needs of all schools should be considered also.	9/7/2015 11:36 AM
316	The top priority in my opinion is the training and retention of high quality educators. We have a true teaching shortage and it is not going to improve any time soon if we continue the way that we are at the current time. I am a Montanan born and raised, but even I am contemplating a move out of state due to low wages and lack of upward mobility. Also, we need to find ways to increase the number of students and quality of students entering education programs at college. One final issue that should be addressed is making it easier for people who currently work as para-professionals who may not have finished their bachelor's degree to work toward getting their teaching degree if they desire. We have Northern Plains Transition to Teaching for people who have never been in a school system, but have a bachelor's degree. We need some sort of program for people who have been in the school system for years to do the same sort of process. There are a number of exceptional para-professionals in school systems faced with shortages. Make it easier for them to transition to teaching, they are already most of the way there anyway.	9/7/2015 11:34 AM
317	Overloaded classrooms at the primary grade levels are not good learning environments. We don't have extra classrooms to split the larger class size grades into more sections and we don't have enough funding to hire additional teachers, school supplies, textbooks, or furniture to make another classroom usable if we had an extra classroom. Small districts in south west Montana that are capped out on bonding capacity are really in a bind when there is any growth in their area.	9/7/2015 11:31 AM
318	I would also like to see more investment into programs for electives: industrial arts, home economics computers, robotics competition, music, art, drama	9/7/2015 11:26 AM
319	Paying teachers more who are proven to be good teachers, keeping our local values, giving kids in smaller districts equal opportunity for education, sending our tax dollars the state taxes us back to our districts	9/7/2015 11:24 AM
320	Funding our schools to be able to educate our Children should be the number one priority. Having qualified teachers in our districts is also very important and being able to pay them to stay in Montana and not go to surrounding states with better base pay.	9/7/2015 11:10 AM
321	The state needs to pay its fair share for education. Our local mill levy taxes are not enough. Yet, are going to tax us out of our house.	9/7/2015 10:58 AM
322	Finding a system to fairly compensate districts that have large student enrollments.	9/7/2015 10:56 AM
323	SCIENCE inquiry lab (equipment, consumables, Safety, transportation costs to field)...increase rigor and experiences to encourage STEM and further science education (college-bound).	9/7/2015 10:42 AM
324	Fund each district, regardless of size, adequately	9/7/2015 10:38 AM
325	Assistance in funding the construction of buildings to replace antiquated and dangerous structures with new structures. Gifted and Talented is a joke in this state. Underfunded and ignored; yet these students often have the highest drop-out rate and suicide rate. They need challenge at all grade levels and in all areas. In reality, they need their own individual IEP's. Gifted in math does not necessarily mean gifted in the language arts, for example. Pay for what you require!	9/7/2015 10:35 AM

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326	Recognition and support of the need for vocational training -- ELA and reading are being learned in votech , just don't waste votech resources and try to make it into another ELA or core class. STEAM provides jobs, ELA ends up being all talk with no resulting end product.	9/7/2015 10:34 AM
327	If I could click special education funding 5 times I would	9/7/2015 10:33 AM
328	Reduce student to teacher ratio Make parents accountable for their children, terminate parental rights if said parents neglect their responsibility as a parent. Build safe housing for homeless students next to their school.	9/7/2015 10:32 AM
329	Better funding for public school education. The State needs to fully fund public school education to provide upgrades to buildings, better salaries for all educational employees,programs for special education, We do not need charter schools to solve our problems. We need to fully fund our current, high performing public schools.	9/7/2015 10:30 AM
330	Facilities in districts around the state are in need of repair. With many school districts facing failing facilities and struggling to pass bonds, this issue needs to be addressed at a higher level. One aspect that may benefit the process of creating bonds may be creating state level guidelines for school facilities.	9/7/2015 10:24 AM
331	I feel that the school districts need more funding to meet the needs of a ever growing population of students who cannot meet the basic educational goals set by federal standards as well as state standards.	9/7/2015 10:22 AM
332	Do not pass on unfunded mandates.	9/7/2015 10:20 AM
333	Parent involvement is needed to make education seem possible for every child.	9/7/2015 10:19 AM
334	My child requires special education and it is not readily available in our high school!	9/7/2015 10:19 AM
335	Recruiting and retaining qualified teachers and administrators needs to bea top priority especially outside of the "AA" districts. Finding a way to offer adequate compensation, but also just as important is providing support and opportunities to grow professionally.	9/7/2015 10:16 AM
336	Religious and private and charter schools should NOT be funded with taxpayer dollars.	9/7/2015 10:14 AM
337	The state legislature has shifted its share of funding of schools to local property taxes making it nearly impossible for school districts to pass levies for new schools	9/7/2015 10:09 AM
338	Public education is the responsibility of the State. Therefore, the State should be responsible for no less than 75% of the cost of public education.	9/7/2015 10:09 AM
339	It's vitally important to the future of our state and our country that our children receive a quality education. As a former trustee and parent of 4 children, I've watched the necessary funding of our public schools being used as a political football for partisan politics over the years. Funding for our facilities is woefully inadequate. Our districts should not be forced to take out loans to cover basic maintenance. The system of requiring school districts to gain permission from local voters to adequately fund their programs and facilities needs to be reexamined.	9/7/2015 10:08 AM
340	Statewide health insurance options for school district employees	9/7/2015 10:07 AM
341	I think adequate funding to let local school districts handle the quality of education including assessment. The legislature needs to leave the actual education to the professionals.	9/7/2015 10:03 AM
342	School funding is so important to public education. I believe that the voters expect that their tax dollars will go to fund schools; there has been a constant erosion of state funding placing the majority of the burden on local property taxes which has led to unequal funding. I think that situation should be remedied.	9/7/2015 10:01 AM
343	I work on the Fort Peck Reservation where there is such a high drop out rate. I would like to see this addressed.	9/7/2015 9:42 AM
344	We need to keep our small schools and provide them with the funds for good technological upgrades and quaint learning environments. We don't need McSchools. Just very small classes with great teachers assisted with great paraprofessionals	9/5/2015 6:46 PM
345	As a teacher and parent of three students who have gone through our public school system I feel I have much insight into this topic. We have moved within Montana and have seen a great inequality between money available in different districts and feel that it would benefit all the children in Montana to spread the wealth. I also see a growing need for our at risk students to recieve more support as their supports seem to be greater each year. As a teacher who is trying to provide more support each year, but failing because of time and resource constraints, I feel this is crucial to the future of our state. I also see the need however, for our gifted students to be challenged. Now, we teach to the average student, again because of time and resource constraints. I feel that supporting these gifted students is equally as important to the future of Montana. Finally, as a teacher who works an estimated 20 hours weekly, over my contract, I often feel discouraged over the amount of time I work and my pay. I am a passionate, hard working, concerned teacher who loves my job, but I do wonder if I will continue in this field of work because I have a difficult time paying my bills.	9/5/2015 9:40 AM
346	Facilities is a major concern for me as our schools are deteriorating. Accessibility is a large part of that as well.	9/5/2015 8:41 AM

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347	Working to have high expectations for all students - while maintaining respect and consideration for special needs, learning styles and instilling an ability to and a love for learning life long rather than drill and kill	9/4/2015 11:50 PM
348	Adequate funding is always a top priority. Whatever we can do to direct more money into the public school system in Montana is critical. Creating and/or supporting common assessments so that we can determine how are students are doing is vital to maintaining strong schools. Continually assessing programs for excellence is important to me as well.	9/4/2015 7:37 PM
349	I am concerned with the accreditation of our teachers. The rest of the country is moving towards specification in teacher accreditation while we are left with teachers who must be able to teach K-6 or 7-12 which is unrealistic and hurts our children's education. (the above comment I believe address the needs of large schools) Facilities are an issue in Helena they are old buildings.	9/4/2015 4:03 PM
350	I think there should be more funding for schools and specialty programs in the schools. We also need to train and recruit the next generation of teachers.	9/4/2015 3:28 PM
351	Facilities costs are overwhelming to communities. State participation would help immensely. Compensation to attract and retain high quality teachers is fundamental to the success of our schools. There are so many at risk kids and so little money to address their needs, it would help a lot to be able to channel more funds to these kids. The state's share of funding school costs simply needs to be greater.	9/4/2015 3:11 PM
352	Learning disorders are a huge challenge for everyone.	9/4/2015 2:52 PM
353	Our failing infrastructure and available funding to address those needs is critical.	9/4/2015 2:08 PM
354	Montana's school facilities have been seriously underfunded for many years. Many facilities are outdated, unsafe, uncomfortable, and incapable of fostering a sufficient learning environment for the 21st century. I would like to see the Legislature appropriate funding for facilities construction and improvements to assist local governments with these expensive propositions. I also strongly disagree with any Legislative limitations on a local authority's ability to raise additional funds on the local level for either facilities or operational costs. I believe that the State should be providing the necessary funds for a quality education for every student--and not concerning itself with parity beyond that. Finally, I am very concerned with the current environment that focuses so heavily on standardized testing and student achievements as the primary criteria for grading schools and teachers.	9/4/2015 11:53 AM
355	Students both at the top and bottom ends deserve attention to their needs - without taking anything from the average student. Directions are needed from the state but local school boards must be in control. Kinda sounds like I want everything, but all levels of students and their status in education are equally important. Children are our greatest assets.	9/4/2015 11:32 AM
356	The legislatively enacted operational budget cap has put Helena schools in an impossible situation. Our district has experienced growth in parts of our district where there is not adequate school capacity. We must provide a proper school for those children; however we cannot do so without closing other schools due to the budget cap. We cannot staff another school without closing an existing one. Helena has historically supported public education; I am confident we would support expanding capacity where its needed, but parents are reluctant to vote for opening a new school if it means closing their own child's school. This has pit our community in an impossible fight. In the middle of this, one of our schools was closed due to seismic inadequacy. This school has remained closed for three years, trapped in this fight. My children attend this closed school and our closure has been devastating. I support the value of the budget cap, but Helena is and has always been up against it, forcing us to make decisions not envisioned when the cap was passed. Please consider raising the cap to allow our district to meet our needs.	9/4/2015 11:19 AM
357	In order of priority: -Adequacy of the state's share of costs -Facilities -Programs for at-risk students -Needs of "large" urban schools -Student assessment systems Other topics of interest to me are: -Funding for 4 year-olds in kindergarten and for 19 year olds in high school and -Funding for pre-school	9/4/2015 11:18 AM
358	Better food choices: Local, healthy food brought into the cafeteria. Building safety, maintenance and upgrades. Efficiency. Historical preservation.	9/4/2015 10:25 AM
359	As the parent of two gifted students, I am frustrated with the lack of resources available to meet their needs. Montana families are choosing to homeschool their children in record numbers. If our schools cannot provide adequate support for its most gifted students, our overall achievement will fall as more families opt out of public education.	9/4/2015 9:53 AM
360	Maintain neighborhood schools.	9/4/2015 9:41 AM
361	These choices reflect needs by all students in Montana, not specific groups.	9/4/2015 8:56 AM
362	Our schools have not caught up with the 21st century. There is very little Information Literacy being taught. Curriculum is outdated and stale, and there is far, far too much emphasis on worksheets and test-taking. Buildings are crumbling and have little to no security in place. Why aren't we putting resources toward innovating and preparing kids to live in a modern society? I feel like I'm in the 1950s when I have to deal with the elementary schools here.	9/4/2015 8:45 AM
363	Preservation of small (200-300) neighborhood schools and walkable/bikable schools for middle and high schoolers.	9/4/2015 8:35 AM

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364	Schools need additional funding! These are our children!	9/4/2015 8:30 AM
365	There are many infrastructure issues that need to be handled in our district. My concern is that in an effort to fix the facilities issues that other important programs will be cut.	9/4/2015 8:22 AM
366	Retain and pay teachers in line with other states. One of my children accepted a position in Minnesota that offered starting pay \$10,000 more than Montana's offer.	9/4/2015 7:32 AM
367	Infrastructure is an important underpinning of all of the choices I made above. It impacts everything--and we have fallen far behind in keeping our school buildings strong, largely due to the fact that infrastructure is a locally controlled issue and the issues of funding are vastly misunderstood.	9/4/2015 7:02 AM
368	School's need to be properly funded. Stop spending so much time and \$ on private schools. They are private and need to remain separate from "Public" funding. My tax dollars should not be going to fund one cent to a private school. Schools need to stay under the direction of local school boards. Schools need to repair do upkeep on their facilities, no funding for that is a shame. Why would you let your houses fall down? Education is a Pay it Forward plan.. we all earned an education somewhere and the majority of us and our family members received that education from a public school. Tax payers provided that then and every time, as a current tax payer I expect to pay it forward for the education of our future generations. Schools need qualified teachers and admin, we can't get them and when we do have them we can't keep them. We can't compete with reservation schools for pay. I am very disappointed in many of you that sit on this committee. Please so your best to use at least an ounce of common sense.	9/4/2015 6:49 AM
369	We need to pay attention and appropriately educate, which does not always mean to mainstream, children who struggle in school and are at risk for not progressing and not graduating. Too many fall through the cracks and too many have such high needs and issues that it takes away from those who do not have additional needs and who are likely not challenged. While I have run into some excellent teachers I have also dealt with those who put in minimal effort, are not accountable to all their students and who cannot be held accountable due to tenure or lack of leadership by admin.	9/3/2015 9:31 PM
370	Class size affects everything. Too many students in a class affects how much time a teacher can give to a student, whether at risk or gifted. When teachers do not have time to differentiate instruction, kids do not reach their potential and it shows in our test scores.	9/3/2015 8:49 PM
371	Students are over tested. Our facilities are crumbling and the technology in schools leaves a lot to be desired. With adequate funding our students will enjoy an education filled with programs designed by well paid, educated teaching staff.	9/3/2015 8:07 PM
372	Not funding programs for children who are potentially artistic and need that outlet is depriving them of something that allows them to be themselves. It is also not right to test one class but base those results on the next upcoming class. That class didn't take the test. If you are going to do testing, follow the students with the test.	9/3/2015 8:07 PM
373	I didn't see the most important issues...mandatory full day kindergarten and state funded preschool programs. These two issues must be addressed. Our kids are already too far behind to catch up if they wait to go to school until they are seven!	9/3/2015 7:54 PM
374	Smaller schools need help with funds so they can pay teachers and keep them. The local control of school is important because they know the area and the needs for students in this area of Montana as compared to a big city.	9/3/2015 7:31 PM
375	Funding schools so they don't have to cut current benefits.	9/3/2015 6:01 PM
376	Special education and outreach.	9/3/2015 5:13 PM
377	Clerical staff insurance that is affordable!	9/3/2015 2:53 PM
378	I would want to see curriculum that focuses on the basics. Need to get away from political correctness & the social agenda. Students don't know math, science, history (information on our founding founders & our Constitution) because we have our teachers wasting time on things that take time away from educating students on the basics. Also get out of the family business too! We need to get rid the State Board of Public Education & OPI influence & let the local trustees make the curriculum decisions & etc. that are good for our school district. We do not want influence from Washington, D.C. or money hanging over us to take to be influence by curriculum like Common Core which destroys our sovereignty. We are the United States of America, not the United World of Common Core! Give the power back to the teachers, trustees & parents to make the best decision for the students. Need to give money to Eastern Montana & the rural schools so that they can educate their students. The big schools get all the funds & waste it on frivolous things like how to make a smoothie class in Billings. Make clubs fair; if you have a Abortion club, then have a Pro-Life club. Schools are too one-sided or may I say bias! Time to be fair to everyone!	9/3/2015 2:35 PM
379	If you have quality staff they will be able to make the best out of funding issues.	9/3/2015 1:56 PM
380	More resources (money) are needed to continue improving and maintaining Montana"s already outstanding education system.	9/3/2015 1:54 PM

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381	When did necessities needed to run a school classroom have to come from "GO FUND ME" type sites to cover costs? It's the new trend in this country. We need to get our priorities straight.	9/3/2015 1:03 PM
382	My class is disrupted regularly for different forms of standardized testing that occur through the year. Which ones are worth the money and learning time for student achievement. Which ones should be phased out because the cost in time and money does not show a proportionally, appreciable gain.	9/3/2015 12:44 PM
383	At risk students are greatly impacted by thier poverty. Poverty in the home needs to be addressed.	9/3/2015 12:41 PM
384	We are having a difficult time getting new teachers and keeping them.	9/3/2015 12:40 PM
385	I would like to see a high school in east helena. Small schools need better internet connection and distance learning available. That way they have more AP class options and foreign languages. Then locally they can spend money on art and music which needs to be in person.	9/3/2015 12:34 PM
386	At-risk students can/do put other students' learning at risk with the time required of classroom teachers to plan for and address their needs, at-risk student behaviors in classrooms and teacher attention required/demanded by at-risk students.	9/3/2015 11:52 AM
387	We have difficulty in retaining teachers and administrators in our small schools in rural Montana. Our facilities need work. The state needs to provide more money to education. Our children are our future, they should be our highest priority.	9/3/2015 11:01 AM
388	Technology and training.	9/3/2015 9:39 AM
389	I think all students' needs should be met. It seems like their is more funding for Special Education programs compared to our Gifted and Talented children. Every student should be given equal and fair treatment.	9/3/2015 9:31 AM
390	Finding qualified staff must be our number one priority. To reach the maximum potential for all students we must have great/qualified people in our buildings. This is not happening due to many reasons but better pay and oppMelissa good job on ur interview.I todayortunities to move out of the state is one reason. We spend use so many resources on our low level learners that I feel our gifted and talented kids are not getting the opportunities they deserve due to the availability of staff and resources for them. We also must find better programs for those students who may not fit into a traditionally classroom for a variety of reasons.	9/3/2015 9:26 AM
391	Equitable distribution of funds will help most	9/3/2015 9:14 AM
392	Funding is of utmost concern. Districts cannot afford it themselves. Quality of schools and staff will be affected by this	9/3/2015 9:02 AM
393	1. A Gifted and Talented program is nonexistent. The less capable population is rightfully served, but the highly capable population, our potential future problem solvers, is underserved. 2.Distance learning and how it affects our teaching and learning at the K-12 level should be studied. 3. A potential source of cost savings is reduction of transportation services to those who are within walking distance. (Most students can walk a mile in 20 minutes or less.) This cost reduction would confer the added benefits of increased student exercise and decreased fossil fuel consumption. 4. Our reservations and the students on them are a cultural treasure not available in many states. This could eventually be a marketable tourist attraction, if the literary, artistic, spiritual, and cultural heritage on each reservation were maintained or restored. I believe that money invested in Indian pride is well invested for an envisioned Montana whose reservations are vibrant tourist destinations where tribal residents lead lives that are culturally respected while benefiting economically from the tourism spinoffs. A reversal of the exodus of talent from the reservations can possibly begin by our state's legislators dreaming BIG for our seven reservations. Helping our tribal kids feel pride has been a huge benefit of IEFA.	9/3/2015 8:59 AM
394	Per student funding by the state.	9/3/2015 8:34 AM
395	Our district has a need for English classes for those who are in a certain grade but are obviously beyond that level of intelligence.	9/3/2015 8:33 AM
396	Special education in our district does not receive same classroom monies as general education programs, especially at the high school level. Not enough special education training or staffing due to financial constraints	9/3/2015 8:31 AM
397	Eliminate inter-mural sports programs.	9/3/2015 4:14 AM
398	We must get back to providing basic education. Throwing money at schools doesn't solve the problems if our kids aren't learning anything put a political agenda. Funding the basics such as math and science should be our first priority.	9/2/2015 2:45 PM
399	There are too many unnecessary requirements for previously certified teachers, to teach in Montana. This is especially true for rural areas where it is difficult to find qualified staff. This includes MT certified teachers adding endorsements, as well as out of state teachers coming into the state getting their MT certifications.	8/31/2015 3:31 PM
400	As I am sure you agree, children are our future. We need to adequately provide for their education. We have focused SO much lately on the lower functioning students, and the upper ones are getting lost.	8/31/2015 8:49 AM

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401	The overall funding of schools in Montana, the lack of adequate funding, and the overcrowding of schools due to underfunding. Please look at how the overcrowded schools are supposed to adhere to standards and provide an education when their communities vote against levies.	8/31/2015 7:56 AM
402	I did not mark any..	8/30/2015 9:06 PM
403	Schools are the backbone of our communities and need adequate funding to attract and retain staff and polo vide a quality education. Assuring the quality of the education provided is important but local community values need to be a protected.	8/30/2015 8:11 PM
404	Safety is a major concern of mine.	8/30/2015 2:30 PM
405	I believe the state needs to contribute to higher teacher salaries. A state wide teacher salary scale might be a start. All of our teachers are leaving the state for higher salaries and better benefits.	8/30/2015 7:33 AM
406	Our biggest funding challenge as a state is the 80/20 state and federal funding/locally levied money. In a very anti-tax area like the Bitterroot, students and school districts suffer from lack of funding due to the political leanings of the region. If you look at all of Montana's Class A schools' funding levels, you will find Hamilton, Corvallis, and Stecensville (all great schools) firmly at the bottom of the list.	8/29/2015 10:29 PM
407	I find that many schools have difficulties building quality programs when their hands are tied by funding rules/insufficient funding for mandated programs.	8/29/2015 8:51 PM
408	Keeping highly qualified teachers is going to be an issue in the future.	8/29/2015 6:53 PM
409	School infrastructure/repair/replacement	8/29/2015 12:23 PM
410	Adequate basic entitlements for small schools. ANB fluctuations make it very difficult for small schools to maintain consistent budgets from year to year. One of the biggest reasons we have trouble hiring new staff, is our pay scale is way below that of larger disticts. We just can't afford to compete with the budgets we have. Building maintenance is also particularly difficult for many small schools with older buildings. Many of us have buildings that are 75 to 100 years old, or more. (We have buildings that are from the 1800s)	8/28/2015 4:22 PM
411	Of course I am concerned about small, rural schools and distance learning because our community is quite isolated.	8/28/2015 2:26 PM
412	Adequacy of funding must be in the fundamental component of a quality system of education. And, since there is little support for school facility infrastructure from the state that is a priority just because of its need statewide.	8/28/2015 2:24 PM
413	The big issue with recruitment/retention of teachers in small schools centers on the pay issue. Today's students typically graduate with \$20,000+ in student loans. When they look for jobs and consider small rural districts - a \$25,000 salary is not enough to help them pay bills and pay off their student loans. Additionally, some small schools are not even offering full health insurance to new teachers, or are only giving them a couple hundred dollars toward health insurance. Why would any new teaching candidate go further into debt to teach in a small isolated community - especially when he/she can make more money at Starbucks and get full benefits there. The mentality that these low salaries are "good enough" for new or young teachers is just wrong- and now we are seeing that being borne out as rural districts are unable to hire qualified candidates. Recruitment is only one piece of the teacher shortage - the other piece is compensation.	8/28/2015 1:41 PM
414	The complexity of school funding should be narrowed to help formulate more equitable distribution of funds.	8/28/2015 1:32 PM
415	Having 504 school districts in MT is ridiculous. Create one district per county and equitable distribution rules based on infrastructure costs, operational costs, and per student needs as the final factor. Small schools still have infrastructure and operational costs. By reducing the number of districts, padded administrative costs for 504 districts would be down to 56. The overhead for Superintendents, their administrative staff and other ancillary costs are not needed in the smaller districts. If real change is to happen, then look to district consolidation on a county basis, introduce a best practice approach to the county districts, and eliminate paying per mile costs for bus transportation. Reward the bus providers for efficiency. I wish change were really going to happen but my overall thought is that this is just more rhetoric from the politicians. The sacred 504 districts will remain, superintendents will continue to be overly paid, and teachers will continue to be blamed for the problems. Bottom line is the good old boy system is alive and well in MT and that is not a good thing. Real change is difficult.	8/28/2015 12:59 PM
416	I think the Federal Govt. is involved in making the choices local school boards should be making! Get rid of Common Core--it is costly and will have a negative affect on our students.	8/28/2015 11:32 AM
417	Aging facilities need to be addressed.	8/28/2015 11:28 AM
418	I think schools need to be scrutinizing the content of our textbooks making sure we are teaching about our constitution and the greatness of our Country, making sure the information is correct and making sure our students understand the greatness of our Country and quit pandering to all the other cultures that seem to be invading us.	8/28/2015 11:23 AM
419	With the legislature pulling funding for Quality Schools, our facilities needs are critical--also there is a need to have avenues of support for at risk students--we lost 3 students to suicide this summer	8/28/2015 11:18 AM

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420	My biggest priority would be at risk youth. Right now many kids slip through the cracks by not qualifying for services like Title 1 or special ed. A lot of the programs that help these students are after school programs and those programs are insufficiently funded with grants. Grants are also a very unstable way to fund any sort of long term project.	8/28/2015 11:18 AM
421	We struggled to find qualified teachers at both the elementary and secondary level this year. The biggest concerns for candidates were housing availability and affordability, and salary. Our district is on par with the rest of Montana, but is low compared to other states. Of course we don't have the draw of big towns with shopping, entertainment, and medical services, so the ability to travel is a concern as well.	8/28/2015 10:44 AM
422	All education programs specified by the standards need to be fully funded.	8/28/2015 10:17 AM
423	Please consider reviewing and limiting the amount of reports that are required by the legislation. it is simply to much for small school districts and takes time away from the goal of student education.	8/28/2015 10:04 AM
424	To much reliance on local property taxes. Not enough money for gifted students. Too much money spent on special education students	8/28/2015 9:52 AM
425	I would also like to add in "programs for gifted and talented children." Adequacy of the state's share of the costs crosses many of these categories. Inadequate facilities is our biggest issue at present, but closely followed by special ed/special needs issues. All schools are seeing increasing cases of high needs special education students whose needs are both beyond our current capabilities and resources as well as creating safety and educational challenges to other students and staff members.	8/28/2015 9:33 AM
426	Other funding issues: 1. Cost of living increases 2. Insurance costs - change to allow districts to assess permissively like transportation. 3. Provide additional funding for building maintenance and upkeep.	8/28/2015 9:28 AM
427	There continues to be inadequacy of funding between large and small districts. A more equitable solution needs to be found. The taxpayer from a large district should not have to be penalized for living in an urban area.	8/28/2015 9:27 AM
428	Technology!	8/28/2015 9:19 AM
429	Special Education cost continue to rise as does its population. The State (and Feds for that matter) need to realize this an begin to assist local districts in funding it! (Adequacy of state's share and programs for disabled students). Local control and its preservation is what sets Montana apart...let's keep it that way. Buildings and bodies (teachers) to fill them continue to be an issue as does infrastructure all across Montana. Safe modern schools and retaining highly qualified teachers to work in them is a problem that can no longer be "kicked down the road".	8/28/2015 9:07 AM
430	A re-look at special education funding, both district-level and cooperative, is a must.	8/28/2015 9:04 AM
431	Increase reserves and allow fund transfers into building reserve or flex funds with funds remaining at the end of a fiscal year.	8/28/2015 9:02 AM
432	The existing and looming shortfall of specialized teachers and special education specialists in our schools is alarming. The training, recruitment and retention of quality educators and the equitable location of such staff is vital. This is directly tied to increased and equitable funding.	8/28/2015 8:55 AM
433	Recruitment of new staff is and will continue to be the most important issue for small rural disticts. These districts typically have a lower salary and are less attractive to potential educators due to their location and size.	8/28/2015 8:05 AM
434	Basic education first!	8/28/2015 8:04 AM
435	Recruitment and retention is a huge issue. Unfunded mandates take away from other priorities. How to fairly handle the extreme growth in parts of Montana and extreme decline enrollment in the rural areas. We must begin talking about the consolidation of the very small districts. The state must lead this charge. I am a small town guy, but it is ridiculous to see these towns with high schools with enrollments of 30 or less. I just don't see how local pride is more valuable than a good education. The locals are living in a box, they don't realize just how far behind they have fallen.	8/28/2015 7:50 AM
436	Montana makes it too difficult for otherwise qualified superintendents to come here and transition.	8/28/2015 7:31 AM
437	The larger districts receive far less money on a per student basis when compared to smaller districts. The previous argument has been economy of scale, however that argument simply lacks fact. This could be addressed by revising the decriment (which hurts largers districts) or fund on a per student basis. I think it is important to fund 6th grade students at the same level at 7th and 8th grade students. I am concerned about the lack of funding for CTE. We are far behind the surrounding states in providing funding for CTE. I am concerned about the lack of rigor available to our studnets. I would like to increase funding for Honors programs, STEM/STEAM, Project Lead the Way, AP courses and Dual Credit courses.	8/27/2015 8:52 PM
438	State-wide minimum salary schedule for teachers. State funding to support salary schedule. Improve state funding process for education.	8/27/2015 8:27 PM
439	Schools need funding for smaller schools.	8/27/2015 7:59 PM

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440	Prior to the new Montana Constitution, Montana funded 80% of district budgets under the "Foundation Plan". We are not even close to that now, and are trying to make up the difference with Federal monies that erode local control of education. I realize that Federal programs place an onus on local boards to find funding, and so we need to utilize monies from that source, but we should not be trying to use those funds to cover shortfalls in basic district budgets. The end result of "No Child Left Behind", and making AYP, has been to create a system where we focus on the bottom 1/3 of students, and do not adequately serve the top 1/3	8/27/2015 6:31 PM
441	Urban schools if large seem to lose the kids that need the extra help. There are many kids in my daughters class that come to school starving. Not hungry, STARVING. There is no way children can think when all they are worried about is if there going to have food when they get home. Class sizes seem to be overblown and need to be made smaller, or give the teachers helpers. I volunteer and luckily I have one day off during the week so I feel I can make a difference. There definitely needs to be an accelerated class available for students, my son was doing middle school math last year when he was in the 4th grade, only because the teacher was incredibly on the ball and saw his potential and suggested a website. Other than that website there was nothing at the school. Luckily at our school we have incredible highly qualified incredibly caring teachers. I am amazed that they stay at this school when it seems that every year there are more and more needy children attending, hungry, needing love, attention, encouragement and so many other things. It is rough seeing kids go home when you know they are not going home to an ideal situation and they see that everyday.	8/27/2015 5:43 PM
442	Statewide salary schedule; Statewide insurance pool; recruitment and retention for the education profession--we are in a crisis situation.	8/27/2015 5:10 PM
443	Small rural districts have a hard time retaining young teachers because we cannot compete with pay. These districts often have high poverty as well, which impacts revenue.	8/27/2015 4:53 PM
444	I would like the state to look at how oil and gas money has impacted the mills in the Bakken. We are required to fill our budget with these funds but have no safety net should the the oil and gas revenues stop.	8/27/2015 4:43 PM
445	More funding for music classes in the small schools. Small schools through out Montana do not have music teachers. Other small schools do not have adequate funding to supply students with instruments.	8/27/2015 3:27 PM
446	Access to quality music and art programs to develop well-rounded students prepared for life beyond testing	8/27/2015 12:47 PM
447	All of the options listed above are extremely important. Adequacy and equity remain as over-arching priorities that, if met properly, would resolve most items on the list. Having said that, our state's school buildings and related property are in abysmal condition due to aging, funding options, and not having it viewed as high priorities by past decision makers (Legislatures)!	8/27/2015 12:40 PM
448	Consolidate small districts to reduce cost of administration and related district expenses.	8/27/2015 12:28 PM
449	As a music teacher, I would like to see the state fund schools equally. Some schools receive more money per student and are able to fund special programs such as music that other schools are unable to do. Every child in Montana deserves a diverse and quality education which includes the arts, physical education, technology education, and other subjects in addition to the core.	8/27/2015 11:59 AM
450	One reason I retired after 32 years was having to buy more and more of the supplies for my classroom. My raise didn't come close to covering the cost of the supplies. Teachers grow weary hearing there isn't any money this year.	8/27/2015 10:14 AM
451	Standards and requirements drive most of the other issues. Personnel and infrastructure are the high cost items. Local levies are effected.	8/27/2015 9:58 AM
452	Montana should avoid federal programs such as "no child left behind" and especially "common core" which usually result in teaching to a test rather than teaching children knowledge and the ability to use it.	8/27/2015 9:41 AM
453	Cutting music, art, and PE programs are not helping our students! We need better funding to these programs!	8/27/2015 9:38 AM
454	the smaller schools do get hammered by isolation and associated costs. The result is underpaid teachers and aides which results in turnover because of this. Pay a fair salary to keep those teachers. When i advised students at MSU I was sad to say to many of them look to Wyoming as a starting place as they wisely used money to hire and keep teachers. 46,000.00 base as compared to many small districts that still start a teachre in the mid 20's.	8/27/2015 9:19 AM
455	Classroom specific funding.	8/27/2015 9:12 AM

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456	<p>Educational LEADERSHIP is of high priority to get the best out of our education dollars. Low job satisfaction among teachers and staff because of poor school leadership skills in general, along with favoritism, reliance on brown-nosing, convoluted and disguised budget activity, secrecy, nepotism, administrators looking after their own children first and foremost, ignoring problems, lack of seeking input from staff and faculty, poor vision, caring for one program over another, failure to educate board members on proper behavior and legal and moral guidelines, and self-serving decision processes are huge detriments to wise use of our education funding dollars. Add to that the status quo that assuredly displays a reluctance to mentor, orient, properly evaluate and assure top quality teachers. The blame administrators wrongly give for having some staff members that they admit are not up to standard is tenure. The tenure excuse is inaccurate and is merely that administrator's excuse for his own shortcomings of failure to execute the proper procedures. The crucial proper procedures include implementing an improvement plan that must be met, or that teacher's contract is not renewed, plain and simple. To not follow this procedure is to let down our students. But alas, it is easier to hide one's head in the sand, avoid controversy and blame tenure. Poor vision, tunnel vision, one track goals and self-serving favoritism tendencies among school leaders are detrimental to the goal of a well-rounded education. Students who don't fall into the favored categories of this type of administration suffer in silence and most often are not even aware of the shortcomings inflicted on them by the status quo of a leadership with narrow vision. (Please consider that I am discussing a relatively small school system and this may not be as prevalent in a very large district. But also note that most school systems in Montana are in that relatively small system category.)</p>	8/27/2015 8:51 AM
457	<p>The Legislature's fulfillment of its funding duty under Article X, section 1(3) for "programs for gifted and talented children" has been woefully negligent. By the time \$250,000/yr. is distributed to schools and RESA's, schools end up with what amounts to a drop in the bucket compared to what they need to adequately implement, fund, and operate programs for gifted and talented children. Any school in Montana that has such a program has made a sizeable commitment of local dollars to do so - which is why so few (VERY few) Montana schools have these programs. Nearly all Montana schools officially do nothing for these students and there is no consequence to them for not having a program in place to ensure the needs of these exceptional learners are met. Yet it is a required aspect of our great state's accreditation standards. In my district, which has made a 35-year commitment of local dollars to ensure the presence of a gifted program, the gifted program (and probably other programs) is now on the chopping block because it is an unfunded mandate and our district is facing a huge shortfall of funds when the tribe takes over Kerr Dam (a loss of \$400,000 in school funds from property tax dollars that the tribe won't have to pay.) It is terribly easy in Montana for schools and districts to neglect our most advanced students - because the state provides nearly no funding for it and because the state provides essentially no oversight ensuring it is happening. Not that Montana schools want the state breathing down our necks about this or anything else, but somehow we in Montana need to figure out a way to ensure that our gifted learners are not left in the dust. They deserve to learn in school, too, but the lack of a gifted program typically means they are being "taught" material they have already mastered. That is not LEARNING. A wealth of research shows that the gifted are more likely to drop out of school without adequate challenge, are the students who show the "least" academic growth (when not given advanced opportunities and when only given grade level material at a grade level pace), and are the population of students that teachers know the least about in terms of how to spot them, how to stretch them, and how to meet their learning needs. We pull our hair out over the students who can't or won't (which we should), yet when it comes to students who can and want to, we put road blocks in their way by not allowing early entrance, by misunderstanding the huge benefits of acceleration (for students who CAN), and by assuming that all students need the same thing on the same day at the same pace. Good heavens, there's a reason we don't force them to all wear the same size shoes. Their feet are different. Well, so are their brains. It's a reality of our humanness that some will be outliers in each direction. But the gifted learners in Montana more often than not don't get to see what it means to "develop the full educational potential of each person" because they are left reading a book in the back of the room while the rest of the class does what the gifted student mastered two years ago. These advanced learners should be academically stretched, too, not left to their own devices in the back of the room. The Legislature could do something to help by adequately funding and enforcing this accreditation mandate. (Plus it's the right thing to do! ALL kids should be "learning" in school, of all places!)</p>	8/27/2015 8:48 AM
458	<p>Our gifted students are being lost with NO support and learn to be mediocre at best or drop out from boredom. For a better future we need to empower these kids and keep them challenged and engaged. Critical thinking is totally lacking in elementary level.</p>	8/27/2015 3:24 AM
459	<p>New school buildings</p>	8/26/2015 3:04 PM
460	<p>The school district has been forced to cut the budget due to the impact of insurance legislation. They will be forced to make more cuts next year for the same reason. How does a district find and retain quality educators, especially in rural districts, when they cannot keep up with cost of living increases?</p>	8/26/2015 6:39 AM
461	<p>More intensive intervention needs to be made available for our at-risk students who do not meet guidelines for Special Education. Research-based, short term programs that need to be followed and assessed.</p>	8/25/2015 9:32 PM
462	<p>Give back a bigger percentage of the 100 percent of are oil revenue that the state took from us</p>	8/25/2015 8:04 PM
463	<p>Facilities need to be addressed state wide! Right now our best and brightest are leaving our state to continue their working careers in other states.</p>	8/25/2015 3:36 PM

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464	Basic screenings for hearing, vision, dental, early childhood, should be mandatory in each and every district. Equitable teacher salary is needed across the state; pay schedules should be clear when educators sign their teaching contract, not having to wait. IEFA funding and ISA funding supports MCCS if used as such, but PL communities need to be in place and consistent for new teachers and all teachers to access resources (school library, OPI online sites, etc.). All students and teachers benefit from IEFA by not only historical information, but contemporary issues which infuse critical engagement.	8/25/2015 3:35 PM
465	School facilities should also be a priority.	8/25/2015 2:17 PM
466	assure funding for art and music which enriches all students and can make a positive impact on the groups noted above	8/25/2015 2:04 PM
467	The schools are badly in need of facility improvements.	8/25/2015 10:24 AM
468	Large urban districts do not receive an equitable share of state funding.	8/25/2015 10:20 AM
469	Equitable funding without a reduction in funding as population of students grows	8/25/2015 9:54 AM
470	The facilities need to be maintained. The teachers need to be compensated at a competitive level. The gap between administrators and teachers needs to be closed. The system needs to be streamlined and the educational system needs to be refocused on core subjects. I have children that are beyond normal development milestones and they will be tagged as troublemakers in the current educational system because they will be under-challenged. We should set high expectations and push children to excel rather than catering to the lowest common denominator.	8/25/2015 9:37 AM
471	Hiring and retaining highly qualified teachers and administrators is key to the future of Montana schools. Also, providing the needed supports for special needs and at-risk students makes it possible for those teachers and administrators to meet standards for all students. A rigorous curriculum means nothing without the ability to execute on goals. The needed supports should be a top priority budget-wise.	8/25/2015 9:32 AM
472	Increased salaries for teachers, reimbursement for higher ed and masters degrees.	8/25/2015 9:27 AM
473	School District 2, Billings, has far more students than the next largest "large, urban" school. While it's important to ensure the small rural schools have adequate funding, the current formula doesn't address the needs of the largest urban school district. While I'd love to see funds support additional gifted students, the needs of at-risk students spill into the rest of the classroom. My children are both good/average students, but I've seen how the distractions and needs of the at-risk children can take away from time for the "average" students. A state study showed a higher rate of ACEs (Adverse Childhood Experiences) in Montana than in other parts of the country. I think it's important to train educators on how to effectively deal with children who have a high ACE score to avoid retraumatizing them and to provide a safe environment where they can flourish. From the business community perspective, it's vital to keep students in school and to help them graduate. I think it's important to communicate the long-term consequences of short-term budgeting decisions which might impact services to help students graduate. I think the School Funding Commission should explore an online education option as an alternative to encourage graduate for extremely at-risk students.	8/25/2015 9:06 AM
474	Small Isolate schools have a difficult time attracting teachers. Some schools have one science, English and math teacher for 7-12. The education they receive is limited by the ability to offer more than the basic classes. On line courses are a great option . they not only offer content but train a student in the riggers of motivation on their own with no peers and in house teacher. Parents in isolated areas have home school as their only option if the school is not a good fit. There are very few support systems in place for any mental health issues or helping kids function in a dysfunctional school. When a kid graduates from a class c high school they are a year behind when they go to college. They have little opportunity for AP classes and do not have the option for elective classes. In the case of having the same teacher for a subject for 6 years what teacher /student relationship can maintain 6 years worth of growth and appreciation of what the other brings to the class room for 6 years . If you develop a bad relationship I have to wonder if the optimal education opportunity is available to that student. and what teacher can teach seventh grade science, earth science , biology, chemistry , physics and advanced biology at a level of proficiency that a student could get in a large urban school? In my opinion the distribution of oil and gas money from producing counties has hurt rural schools, good for the state bad for those living in the oil patch.	8/25/2015 8:42 AM
475	I believe we need to do a much better job recruiting and retaining excellent teachers. While I know it is important to have good administrators as well, too many excellent teachers are moving into administrative roles, which I cannot fault them for, as the pay is much better. I believe the biggest influence on our children's education is the teacher in the classroom with them and we need to do everything we can not only to get them there but to keep them there.	8/25/2015 8:39 AM
476	The current state funding system provides fewer dollars per student in larger districts, forcing them to have more student per classroom. About 50 SD2 elementary classrooms exceeded accreditation max last school year.	8/25/2015 8:06 AM
477	Currently, the funding formula is inadequate and unequal for large urban school districts	8/25/2015 5:45 AM
478	State funding should increase; too much funding relies on passing mill levies.	8/25/2015 4:20 AM
479	Local Districts struggle since the state doesn't pay its share.	8/24/2015 11:14 PM

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480	NCLB has put the focus on students meeting minimum requirements. Advanced students are often ignored. They need equitable attention and funding so they are challenged in school. Without funding to upgrade failing facilities, many schools are literally falling apart. My classroom will be up to 90 degrees for several weeks of the year--but old electrical systems don't allow for A.C. units--even if the school could afford the units. It is an unhealthy environment for the staff and students, and certainly not conducive to effective learning. The classroom across the hall went the entire winter with out a heater (students wore coats and huddled close to space heaters that were brought in) after it broke down. It was so old no parts were available, an expensive new unit had to be purchased out of the general budget and it took months to arrive. Infrastructure monies need to be available to districts for building maintenance and repairs.	8/24/2015 10:39 PM
481	Distribution of state funds should be by student not by district. Its ridiculous the disparity between the money per student going to the tiny rural districts compared to the urban areas and this needs to be fixed immediately. Proper funding of our schools is a must and given the State Supreme Courts rulings over the past decade this should have been sorted out long ago. This has to be a priority of this commission.	8/24/2015 10:37 PM
482	The well rounded quality education of all students is very important to their future. This should include a commitment to the arts education of each child through music, art and poetry for self expression. I have lived in Montana my entire life and I am grateful for the education I received in the Great Falls Public Schools. Their commitment to music education has had a positive influence on my life.	8/24/2015 10:23 PM
483	We cannot continue to expect special needs studens to be forced to measure up academicy to grade level students for funding. To group everyone together is not fair to the educator, students or taxpayers.	8/24/2015 9:49 PM
484	Having moved recently from Wyoming, in an appalled by the lack of support for struggling children, over crowded classrooms, and the poor physical state of the schools in my area.	8/24/2015 9:43 PM
485	Montana schools will need much stronger legislative support to create schools that prepare our students to compete with neighboring states and on a global scale.	8/24/2015 9:35 PM
486	The state needs to take a look at the dyslexic population of students. They need to be identified and an Orton Gillingham system needs to be implemented to teach those with dyslexia in a manner that they are able to learn and become successful. 1 in 5 people in the world's population have dyslexia, yet nothing is done in the Montana school system to identify this group of individuals and teach them in a way that they can learn. They get passed on from year to year as they struggle, doing sub par work and not learning a thing. These kids are labled lazy, disruptive and/or trouble makers when really they are just tired of being frustrated and sitting in a classroom year after year and experience nothing but failure after failure. These kids are smart, they have potential and they are being done a serious disservice. You would not ask a child who could not walk to run a race so why would you ask a kid who cannot learn the way a non-dyslexic does to sit in a classroom day after day, struggle, become frustrated, experience daily failure and develop a negative self image?	8/24/2015 8:59 PM
487	assuring funds are spent responsibly, where needed and as needed with much research and collaboration done to ensure this with strategic planning and preparation; assure funds are not wastefully spent and are accounted for to ensure this; raises for educators - even consider "pay for performance" to encourage our best to stay and our worst to leave	8/24/2015 8:42 PM
488	The needs of all students to participate -- especially through small urban schools ie neighborhood, magnet, and open boundaries. 100% completion rate, including the kids in corrections. Income tax credit funding Use the inviolate public school fund as it was originally intended Eliminate local property taxes for all budgeted funds Fund every K12 student at the national average (that being the base budget -- the 80% level)	8/24/2015 8:35 PM
489	Decrement funding for large districts is not fair or equitable and needs to be changed	8/24/2015 8:11 PM
490	Need to create a culture of respect and responsibility that increases student achievement hand self worth to society	8/24/2015 7:31 PM
491	Number one is too large classrooms with 25 plus children. Thus, children that need extra help are left behind. They are shuffled aside.	8/24/2015 7:10 PM
492	The highest priority is equally distributing state funds	8/24/2015 7:08 PM
493	State needs to provide ADEQUATE funding to all student needs with help in setting up and maintaining appropriate facilities and physical plants	8/24/2015 6:22 PM
494	The prevalence and intensity of mental health concerns for both students and family systems, combined with growing research into the correlation between strong emotional intelligence and cognitive functioning require a paradigm shift in thinking about a wide range of traditional educational concerns -- especially the funding available for student to teacher and student to school counselor ratios. Individualizing instruction is not enough. Individualizing positive and empowering emotional contact does not have a technological solution. It is a change that only additional human resources can adequately address.	8/24/2015 6:02 PM
495	Lack of funding in past years has led to deferred maintenance issues. Significant one-time funds from state surplus would be beneficial to address these issues. Also unfunded mandates - technology needed for testing, etc.	8/24/2015 5:41 PM

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496	Retention of teachers so they aren't lost to other states. We spend a lot of money on sped kids but let gifted kids fall through the cracks.	8/24/2015 5:38 PM
497	I believe it is important to look at the needs of all students, whatever their ability may be and whatever their ethnic status may be.	8/24/2015 5:36 PM
498	Technology & online learning are the future. Any reassessment needs to look at the most recent methods using technology and a cost/benefit analysis. Funding this need now will save \$\$ in the future.	8/24/2015 5:31 PM
499	Keeping good teachers in our state is #1. They are the ones who spend more time each day than we as parents do and they need to be the best. I also think that each district has their own unique needs and challenges so funds need to be divided evenly by the number of students they have and they need to have control over using some of those funds as they need.	8/24/2015 4:43 PM
500	Too much money is spent on administrators and not on students and teachers.	8/24/2015 4:09 PM
501	Adult Education	8/24/2015 3:50 PM
502	Local needs vary and School Boards can help with those decisions, but the OPI must remain strong to be sure quality standards are in place and upheld.	8/24/2015 3:29 PM
503	.	8/24/2015 3:21 PM
504	Jobs for Montana"s Graduates (JMG) and CTE programs	8/24/2015 2:49 PM
505	It's difficult to narrow my choices down to five because all of these issues are important.	8/24/2015 2:46 PM
506	Adequate facilities and resources for learning are important as is local (district) control over the structure and specifics of the schools. Kids must be given the opportunities to thrive and learn while being measured in a manner that doesn't limit student development.	8/24/2015 1:05 PM
507	Priorities for schools should be for teachers to teach and students to learn. This requires good and well-trained teachers, modern technology, adequate facilities. Math, Science, writing and technology use are top priorities. Art, music, speech and debate should also be funded. Physical education and health are important. I am a huge fan of team sports and both of my children play club sports not supported by the school system. Students learn a great deal from playing team sports, but teachers' salaries, math, science, computers and facilities funding should always be prioritized over the football team. Just like in our own private budgets, the mortgage, food on the table and the utility bill get paid first. Then some money goes into the savings account for a rainy day. After all of that we go to the movies, if there is some cash left over. School funding shouldn't be much different.	8/24/2015 12:47 PM
508	To retain high quality teachers we need to raise their pay.	8/24/2015 12:24 PM
509	State funding is critical for our schools to run efficiently. We have a dedicated professional staff that is functioning in an outdated facility with severe need for upgrading and scarce funding. The staff is also underpaid by any standard, local, state and nationally. Retaining quality educators is challenging.	8/24/2015 12:21 PM
510	There is so much focus on special needs students and those with learning disabilities, which is great. I'd love to see an increased focus on students who have been identified as gifted or talented. Teachers need to be given more training and support to be able to challenge these students and meet their needs just as they are given for lower performing students.	8/24/2015 12:16 PM
511	School seem to receive monies through the state, grants and i think they could better utilize those funds towards facility upgrades.	8/24/2015 11:25 AM
512	Special education costs are becoming disproportionate and affecting the limited resources of the general fund budgets	8/24/2015 10:39 AM
513	State funding is important in order to keep the smaller districts operating. Rural Montana needs to be looked at just as much as the big school districts around the state. Raising teacher salaries in our state might help our state to be able to recruit highly qualified teachers from leaving the state because of salary rates being higher in other states.	8/24/2015 10:34 AM
514	The state funding system should be based on financial need and quality definitions. It needs to support both urban and rural schools, including those on tribal lands, in a manner that looks at the costs and resources of the local communities. To support all students to be successful learners requires a broad look at competencies, facilities and the opportunities with distance learning that integrates a seamless education system incorporating higher education providing financial resources too.	8/24/2015 10:15 AM
515	Education for gifted and talented students has never been prioritized for Montana students, leaving a patchwork system that depends entirely on local districts. The districts in turn rely quite heavily on the initiative of individual educators, combined with parent and community volunteers. The "system" results in tremendous inequality of opportunity for kids who NEED accommodation. Gifted kids learn differently and deserve accommodation just as much as kids who have other kinds of learning issues.	8/24/2015 10:10 AM

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516	Schools are not being funded adequately by the State. When gambling was introduced to the state 20+ years ago All proceeds were supposed to go to the Education Fund. Perhaps that should be reexamined.	8/24/2015 10:08 AM
517	We must fund and promote quality public education . Kids are our future.	8/24/2015 10:07 AM
518	I would word my priorities differently. My concerns are the use of the decrement policy, inflationary costs for special education, health insurance for teachers (recruitment), and most importantly Quality Schools Program (not working).	8/24/2015 10:02 AM
519	As a design professional and the parent of two students, I've seen first hand what impact the legislature NOT passing the Quality Schools Grants for the next 2 years is having on the schools. I've assessed a number of schools throughout the state and have seen the poor quality of basic systems like boilers due to the age of these systems. The school districts work hard with what they have and do the best they can, but usually lack the financial resources to stay ahead of their maintenance needs. It was VERY disheartening to see the legislature's short-sightedness in not funding the QSG program.	8/24/2015 9:57 AM
520	Greater state funding for school facilities. Many Montana school districts have or are contemplating significant local levy proposals to rebuild or repair outdated, inefficient, and dis-functional school facilities. Montana, like Wyoming, needs to step up and provide a program where state funds are used to build/repair local school facilities. In taking a larger role in funding school facilities, Montana will give local property taxpayers a break on what school districts are requesting in local levies.	8/24/2015 9:45 AM
521	Having good infrastructure, well paid teachers and equitable funding mechanisms is critical to sustaining a high quality education system.	8/24/2015 9:45 AM
522	Schools are required to do things with no implimentation money or continued money. If required, be sure that it is adequately funded. Special education is killing our district. Fund it adequately. Be sure that you are including enough money for school districts to repair and maintain the district facilities.	8/24/2015 9:40 AM
523	School Facility needs and Teacher recruitment and retention are my highest priorities	8/24/2015 9:23 AM
524	The needs of a small, rural school include offering competitive salaries and retaining good teachers/principals; turn over is extremely time consuming / costly to the learning outcome of the facility. You can't operate a quality school in a vacuum...the health of the community as a whole also impacts goals and staff retention (housing and other services). I would also include after-school or out-of-school time programs that support the well being of our students and supplement in school learning...critical for working parents in a state that pays extremely low wages under the premise of quality of living.	8/24/2015 9:21 AM
525	Funding through State Programs (Quality Schools) is no where near enough for rural schools in Montana. Grossly under funded. Safe Routes to Schools needs to be funded separately and not part of Quality Schools.	8/24/2015 9:21 AM
526	Learning options for non-traditional learners, including the encouragement of entrepreneurship as a means of earning a living.	8/24/2015 9:12 AM
527	The state needs to fund education. People don't make enough money for all the mill levies our school district keeps raising.	8/24/2015 9:07 AM
528	stop giving money to growth hungry gallatin bozeman	8/24/2015 8:40 AM
529	It would be wonderful if gifted children in rural areas had more opportunities to collaborate and learn with other gifted children from around the state -- through curriculum modifications and/or distance learning, etc.	8/24/2015 8:35 AM
530	Teachers are what make a school great. Programs for all abilities (gifted, at risk, and disabled) are critical to the success of students. School can't be a one-size fits all solution--kids need to be challenged as appropriate to keep them engaged and interested, especially gifted students. Also less focus on test scores and more focus on engagement, teamwork, how to learn and apply information.	8/24/2015 8:30 AM
531	Technology needs to be kept up to date.	8/24/2015 8:28 AM
532	We live in a school district with no student transportation, however we work in a neighboring school district- so although I pay taxes for the district I live in- it is completely indefeasible that my children attend school there. Also the small country schools really are lacking in quality educators and I feel the students that attend these schools are really missing out on any type of quality education.	8/24/2015 8:17 AM
533	Intitally a district should develop curriculumm that will meeet accreditation standards. Then, address an assessment system that will identify student acheivement and need, which will assist in the development of programs that affect both gifted and talented along with at risk students. Then, the need falls on recruitment and rentention of qualified staff that will fit the system in place.	8/24/2015 7:58 AM
534	Stop catering the lowest common denominator and stop wasting school money of state level bureaucracies and funnel as much as possible to local schools, where the students actually attend school.	8/24/2015 7:44 AM

School Funding Survey

535	TO MAKE SURE THAT SCHOOLS ARE ADEQUATELY FUNDED AND THAT FUNDS ARE MOST EFFECTIVELY SPENT IN THE LOCAL DISTRICT TO MINIMIZE THE NEED TO ASK FOR LEVIES AND BONDS WHICH KEEP RAISING OUT PROPERTY TAXES	8/24/2015 7:39 AM
536	Excellence	8/24/2015 7:22 AM
537	Adequate state share - the state legislature needs to stop cost-shifting the burden onto local taxpayers. this is unacceptable.	8/24/2015 7:06 AM
538	Montana needs to implement a sales tax so that it can adequately fund our schools. Or restructure the tax revenue from oil and energy profits to go to the schools similar to Wyoming.	8/24/2015 12:11 AM
539	Focus on all components of student health - physical activity, nutrition, behavior, and mental health.	8/23/2015 11:31 PM
540	Funding arts(music, drama & fine arts) as core subjects is a priority. Recruitment & retention of teachers is why I checked that item. The survey should not have included "administrators" in that item.	8/23/2015 11:00 PM
541	The current distance learning system is last-Century "technology." We should have fully interactive, real-time videoconference capability. and our courses should come from anywhere in the State or nation, or world, for that matter. The teacher's union arbitrarily limits distance learning options by imposing in-state union rules that do not apply to the Internet. Accreditation standards are union dominated, too. They have little to do with education and much to do with union self-preservation. Same with "teacher recruitment and retention." That's code for higher pay, more benefits, and no performance measurement. There's plenty of teaching talent in Montana, if we were to eliminate the barriers to entry erected by the union and its complex of sympathizers.	8/23/2015 10:16 PM
542	Funding is the key to a quality education. All the other issues can be provided for with adequate funding.	8/23/2015 9:12 PM
543	I would have selected "Equitable distribution of state funds to districts" except that is so vague, I don't really understand what it means. My selections are based upon concrete goals our district has been able to work on, but rarely have the funding to work as hard as they would like to.	8/23/2015 8:01 PM
544	I don't really feel strongly about any of these over any others. I tried to remain unbiased, but I found myself leaning towards things that would benefit my kids.	8/23/2015 7:10 PM
545	We need to find a better way to recruit and retain teachers and administrators in smaller schools.	8/23/2015 4:47 PM
546	Montana school buildings are falling apart. That is shameful. Adequate facilities are the foundation of all educational planning.	8/23/2015 3:40 PM
547	Equal pay for all teachers state wide. A Billings teacher should be paid the same as a Roundup teacher. The salary base, steps and lanes should be the same state wide!	8/23/2015 3:33 PM
548	It is essential to the state's future that we do a better job of addressing the needs of at-risk students, including those who live on Indian reservations.	8/23/2015 3:12 PM
549	From the inside looking out, it seemed to me that assessment programs have become the number 1 assessment of children's abilities. Teacher input and student motivation no longer hold water. Ridiculous! Many children and adults are not "dot filler inners", yet we excelled in the classroom and within our communities because we were/are motivated, hard working, and doers. I also saw gifted and talented programs pushed to the background over those that serviced struggling students. Once again, motivated doers are pushed to the wayside by unmotivated children with malfunctioning family lives, etc. Sometimes it seems America isn't focusing on the young people that have the capacity to save/lead our communities and country. We pour far more hours and dollars into children caught in negative, repetitive family cycles. The federal and state "have-tos" make "local control" a far more difficult task, but Sunburst Schools do a pretty great job of leading the way in Montana. We get a lot of press coverage because of our successes. However, we don't get federal/state financial assistance because of our successes. Struggling schools, once again, get the money poured in. It would be nice to get financial recognition from our fed/state resources for actually "getting it right" now and then.	8/23/2015 11:44 AM
550	The state has an obligation to provide a quality education through which funding for facilities, quality teachers and teacher pay are of utmost important.	8/23/2015 11:32 AM
551	Need to make certain emphasis is on ensuring administrators are qualified for their positions including having completed all required certifications for specific positions.	8/23/2015 11:23 AM
552	I believe that Montana lags behind many states in terms of their commitment to and funding of public education. We lag behind about 80% of the other states in terms of Teacher salaries. We do not invest adequately in updating our schools and the associated infrastructure. We don't insure that every school-large or tiny has the tools and technology to educate all students adequately to prepare them for 21st century careers and challenges.	8/23/2015 11:09 AM
553	There should be a single pay scale for all teachers in MT. Smaller schools would benefit from a larger pool of candidates. Create 1 district per county to eliminate administrative overlap and waste. Quite paying bus providers on a per mile basis and require them to optimize their routes to better serve the students and save money.	8/23/2015 10:41 AM

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554	The state should depend less on the local property tax payer and use more general fund money to support K-12 education.	8/23/2015 9:39 AM
555	Special Education is important, but mandated. It is keeping the interest of the other end of the spectrum that is often overlooked and yet with independent studies is easily and inexpensively done.	8/23/2015 9:09 AM
556	Unless young people are encouraged by the prospect of a livable wage, a decent, not paltry, defined retirement program what would be the impetus for pursuing a teaching career?	8/23/2015 8:39 AM
557	School funding is my top concern; making sure schools have adequate resources to do their job. My second concern is making sure all students are supported with adequate services for whatever they need to learn, particularly low-income students.	8/23/2015 8:35 AM
558	Our facilities are inadequate in many ways: indoor climate, space utilization, tech needs, to name a few. Perhaps the greatest discrepancy is the communication gap with our community. They need to understand that the old-style school with desks bolted to the floor in rows does not serve today's children, who in large part are needier in so many ways. The community needs to know that that old sort-and-select style of education allowed students with various learning styles and abilities to fall through the cracks. Today we are serving every student, and we need the facilities that will help us do that.	8/23/2015 7:55 AM
559	Schools on the western half of the state that are impacted by coal Transportation should get an equal Amount of investment from coal, oil and gas funds from areas on the eastern part of the state.	8/23/2015 7:47 AM
560	I see equity in funding to be a huge problem in our state. Not only between large/small schools but east/west and reservation schools/ non reservation. Technically reservations are not under state jurisdiction and the residents do not pay state taxes. Maybe the federal gov should be paying all of that and the state should worry about areas the residents are paying taxes to support the schools.	8/23/2015 7:23 AM
561	Specifically, funding issues, state should invest a great deal more in recruitment and retention of teachers.	8/23/2015 7:18 AM
562	The State must increase its funding of public schools. Local taxpayers cannot continue to carry the funding burden nor can they afford to completely fund school systems, which is direction we are headed. Also, more funding needs to be directed to understand served populations and for students who may struggle in school	8/23/2015 7:16 AM
563	Need to control costs	8/23/2015 6:17 AM
564	We also need to provide customized solutions to Indian and other minority students.	8/22/2015 11:43 PM
565	Retention of highly qualified teachers. It is coming to the entire state of Montana a shortage of good teachers. This is the most important issue facing the state right now.	8/22/2015 10:10 PM
566	Inadequate and crumbling school buildings and grounds in need of major repairs to protect the safety of students, staff, and the public in light of the inability to pass mill levies for basic health and safety issues.	8/22/2015 10:05 PM
567	The disparity between costs for personnel and those available for facility maintenance and fixed costs for energy etc. has grown to the point that facilities and student needs are beginning to suffer. In 1995 labor costs, including retirees was 72% of the Helena budget; now that cost is 92%.	8/22/2015 9:38 PM
568	infrastructure -- funding for repairing facilities and building new facilities	8/22/2015 9:27 PM
569	Schools need adequate resources spread fairly to hire and keep quality staff and to maintain safe schools. DO NOT DIVERT TAX MONEY TO PRIVATE SCHOOLS OR GIVE TAX BREAKS FOR THEM. Fund public schools!	8/22/2015 8:39 PM
570	Funding for public education while increasing the past few years is still woefully inadequate. Facilities are aging and especially in rural areas are badly in need of repair and upgrading. We are blessed with excellent teachers in Montana, but they are underpaid for the long hours and dedication that they exercise in their work.	8/22/2015 8:26 PM
571	Montana has high quality schools. We need to preserve them. A cap on district funding by the state for mill levies has put most districts in a funding crunch. That should be important. Also Funding by the state is inadequate and makes unequal funding of programs impossible.	8/22/2015 7:39 PM
572	as much attention as is put to students with disabilities/at-risk, under privileged... I feel the GIFTED and TALENTED are the ones being ignored and short changed. They deserve as much attention to a quality education as any other faction. People feel that they can "fend" for themselves... lets help them SOAR!	8/22/2015 7:25 PM
573	We are suffering from declining enrollment and inadequate funding. We are robbing "Peter to Pay Paul" and something has to give.	8/22/2015 7:06 PM
574	The use of the internet for expanded educational opportunities at all levels. Also, there needs to be much better opportunities in entrepreneurship education if the schools are to provide the necessary skills for personal development and success as well as economic development for the state.	8/22/2015 5:20 PM
575	Support of early education (pre-school)	8/22/2015 5:00 PM

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576	Adequacy of state's share of the costs	8/22/2015 4:50 PM
577	Gifted program needs more funding	8/22/2015 4:46 PM
578	all schools abd all students (no matter what level) should be treated equally	8/22/2015 4:32 PM
579	Gifted and talented program is smaller schools.	8/22/2015 3:51 PM
580	Education of students would be successful if high quality educators were allowed to use their creativity and ingenuity to create a challenging and productive classroom environment. Teaching is an art: it is not a prescriptive system that bureaucracy can mandate. Money is spent outside of the classroom for professionals who set up programs and training sessions that teachers must attend. That sounds great, but education today has a hierarchy of people outside of the school and the classroom whose salaries and expenses take away from money that could be used to put well paid professionals in the classroom. Every few years educators are required to shift the focus to someone's new and brilliant idea about improving education. I cannot tell you how many times in the last ten years I have gone to trainings to change the curriculum only to be asked to do it again two years later.	8/22/2015 3:29 PM
581	More needs to be spent per student. Teacher salaries need to be higher. Arts needs to be funded better.	8/22/2015 2:54 PM
582	More adequate state funding from general fund, not dependent on district variation in property taxes or well-off parents. Protection of Common Core standards for Montana students-- the most solid, evidence-based change in education in 40 years of research	8/22/2015 2:48 PM
583	While Montana has had a tradition of quality schools and educators, much has been lost no thanks to legislatures which find little value in public education but would rather try to insinuate private and charter schools into the equation. I believe that those special interests must be defeated and that we must return Montana to its former high standard of education, educators, and accreditation.	8/22/2015 2:28 PM
584	The items above seem to be debated without end: it appears we're not able to adequately fund our schools without a court challenge or threat of a lawsuit; our educational standards and student assessment / testing is constantly challenged - to what end?	8/22/2015 2:23 PM
585	I believe local control is fundamental to the educational future of our children but it is essential that consolidation or expansion of school districts is voted on by ALL affected parties and not just a singular district. Due to deferred maintenance over a period of years, public school buildings are no longer physically suitable or safe for our students who may be taller, larger than previous generations at their age level. Indian Education for All helps bridge the gap between Native American and non-Native students and facilitates a culture of respecting other peoples. The cost of not doing is borne by our prisons, welfare programs and community engagement.	8/22/2015 2:22 PM
586	High risk students will totally deplete resources if their needs are not addressed.	8/22/2015 2:01 PM
587	Please remember that public education is the great equalizer. If people choose to send their child to a private school there should be no monetary affect on public education.	8/22/2015 1:58 PM
588	Montana's school facilities are aging and often inadequate for the students who attend. Technology is inadequately distributed across the state and so students have unequal access to the tools and skills necessary for college and career readiness. In addition, schools struggle to recruit and retain teachers who can deliver the instruction needed for student success. Some of this has to do with geography and some with the salary and benefits offered to Montana teachers.	8/22/2015 1:49 PM
589	State funding share inadequate and falling	8/22/2015 1:49 PM
590	The lack of funding	8/22/2015 1:30 PM
591	Increased spending on education. Montana doesn't need to always be at the bottom when it comes to funding education.	8/22/2015 1:28 PM
592	Just teach the basics to all kids, and make sure the rural schools have adequate funding and resources.	8/22/2015 1:26 PM
593	If you have high standards and employ quality folks to meet or exceed those standards you have to be willing to pay for the best. Do that and let those benefits "trickle down"!	8/22/2015 1:07 PM
594	It has been my impression that the school system is consistently underfunded, and as a result every school year is a bare bones budget, and the Districts do the best they can to survive another year. I would like to see more funding so that schools can be more proactive in planning for a quality school experience for children. As it stands, new programs are often funded with local donations or one time grants, a tenuous situation at best. Also, the huge 150+ million school bond on the ballot this fall is what happens when school districts only have enough money to be reactive, instead of plan for the future; the deferred maintenance adds up, and when a demographic increase happens, there is no flexibility built in to accomodate it, due to lack of funds.	8/22/2015 12:58 PM
595	Still not sure why I have to pay for other people's kids to learn. Maybe parents should take a more active role and teach their little shits some respect	8/22/2015 12:53 PM

School Funding Survey

596	All levels of student's abilities need to be addressed and funded	8/22/2015 12:45 PM
597	I would like to see a funding mechanism and ability for communities such as east helena to create their own high school district if their citizens agreed to pay their portion of school construction startup and operational costs.	8/22/2015 12:43 PM
598	I believe that recruiting/retaining quality teachers is the biggest challenge-especially for small rural schools. Fewer and fewer students are entering teacher education programs in our colleges, and many "baby boomers" are ready to retire. This is going to be a crisis in the very near future. Our students will suffer greatly from not having highly qualified professionals to teach them. Somehow, teaching has to become a profession that young people will be eager to pursue.	8/22/2015 12:30 PM
599	Counseling Services Adult to Child ratios One-on-one time for students that require a little extra attention.	8/22/2015 12:15 PM
600	Montana needs to be more flexible in establishing distance learning options to reduce the duplicative expenses associated with facilities and faculty.	8/22/2015 12:14 PM
601	Reducing administration, specifically superintendents and their staff to less than 70. Moving that money to teacher salaries and industrial arts programs.	8/22/2015 12:05 PM
602	Seniors should not pay school taxes, as they are being taxed out of their homes. We must educate those students who are willing & capable and the emphasis should be on them...not lower IQ's, illegal aliens or hand-capped. Administrative costs need to be decreased as it takes away from the children.	8/22/2015 11:36 AM
603	Equitable funding per student	8/22/2015 11:28 AM
604	Having grown up in a small school district in Montana & now raising my children in Billings, it is obvious that the school funding system was set up for small districts. Also, it was set up in a time when education was not as expensive as it is now. This has resulted amount of funding covered by the state continuing to shrink while the cost of education rises - forcing more Local mill levies. Local mill levies are an easy target for people to directly voice their dislike for higher taxes by voting no. The funding system has to be updated to account for the current economic & sociologic situation we are in.	8/22/2015 11:27 AM
605	Funding must be adequate Teacher pay must be increased Funding for at risk and gifted must be kept American Indian education for all	8/22/2015 11:18 AM
606	The provision of a high-quality public education for all students is essential for the health of our democracy and the growth of our economy. Given that, we need to make sure that our public schools are adequately funded enough to meet the needs of today's students. This is particularly important for our low income population. As a citizenry we are committed to providing a free, quality basic education for all of our children. Are we meeting that obligation? How do we define a basic education? Most importantly, are we certain that our poorest children have access to the resources they need to be productive adults? We are among the richest and most advanced countries in the world, our schools ought to reflect that. This means high quality standards, teachers and curriculum with supports for divergent/disadvantaged learners. Additionally, Montana's school funding system is complicated/antiquated and does nothing to address the deteriorating school buildings we see throughout our state. There is an abundance of research available about what works and what doesn't works with regard to school funding and education in general, let's use it in conjunction with our own creativity to develop a system that brings us into the 21st century and meets the needs of all of our students.	8/22/2015 11:12 AM
607	Keep art in our schools! Music, theater, speech/debate, art all contribute to students who can think for themselves.	8/22/2015 11:06 AM
608	Minimum standards need to be higher. All children can learn if taught appropriately.	8/22/2015 11:02 AM
609	The funding from the state needs to keepup with inflation. Prior legislatures tend to not want to fund public education adequately.	8/22/2015 10:58 AM
610	Assuring that the 95 mandatory mill levy is paid by ALL property tax payers including oil and gas companies	8/22/2015 10:53 AM
611	Funding for career & technical education programs	8/22/2015 10:51 AM
612	Build the basic academic programs using qualified teachers who are attracted to good paying environments.	8/22/2015 10:51 AM
613	Quality education is a result of quality instruction, which requires that we attract and retain the best teachers.	8/22/2015 10:49 AM
614	The mental health of our students is deteriorating across the board. Districts need help in funding and helping these students & families.	8/22/2015 10:48 AM
615	A full data analysis system needs to be implemented so that all (administrators, educators, students, parents etc. can proactively manage their efforts to better collaborate for education excellence. Experiential learning must be implemented system wide as soon as possible.	8/22/2015 10:42 AM
616	It has been a problem for many years in Montana for teachers to work for so little pay compared to other states. We need our state tax dollars coming back to our district.	8/22/2015 10:40 AM

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617	Hire top quality teachers, and high quality education would happen	8/22/2015 10:39 AM
618	<p>We are already required by law to equitably distribute funding amongst the state's schools, so I would hope that the mechanisms to assure that accomplishment are established. There is inadequate funding of schools, at least in Helena, as indicated by the recent condemnation of buildings. Many schools are decades behind the times, creating challenges and inefficiencies with their operations. Teachers and students are interrupted constantly in their work by systems and technology that break down, adding to everyone's stress level and preventing teaching and learning. Lesson plans that are thoughtfully prepared cannot be easily completed due to these interruptions that help create an apathetic affect on the part of seasoned teachers to even try any new and innovative units if they require any faith in technology. Teachers and students must accept the feeling of being second-class citizens as we struggle through technological break-downs and facility short-comings. Curriculum standards have changed to the degree that educators continue to grapple with ways in which to meet the goals. Common Core Standards have presented us with excellent opportunities in the expectations we hold nationwide as well as ways in which we can achieve those expectations by working together nationally. Such programs as "Engage New York" are superb examples of collaboration amongst large groups of educators to create an easily accessible and dynamic program to achieve our new standards. In the meantime, districts continue to spend large sums of money on commercially published programs that have short life expectancies and never seem to adequately address the needs of either students or teachers. Professional Development for both administrators and teachers has always been a documented necessity but continually falls short of the mark. Accreditation standards by our state's higher education institutions leave areas for improvement and even OPI's expectations of incoming and seasoned teachers show areas in need for improvement (ie: levels of expertise in dealing with special needs and behavioral techniques). We are increasingly dealing with complex issues with children presenting special needs as well as children coming from high-risk environments. We see them entering the system by kindergarten and schools are working on "survival mode." In too many cases, elementary schools are simply preparing children to display appropriate behaviors as they leave for middle school, which creates academic deficits. We are aware of better instructional practices that might improve learning and behavior but seem unable to implement due to cost, facility constraints, administrative and educator inflexibility, ignorance, attendance and behavioral outbursts. As previously stated, higher-education accreditation and professional development opportunities must be improved in order to achieve higher expectations of our administrators and educators. We are at a point in time when many of our seasoned employees are retiring and we are replacing them with less experienced personnel. Districts are challenged to find administrators with adequate experience that allows them to "hit the ground running." I believe the Helena School District is a prime example of the complications encountered by these challenges and the resulting inefficiencies and failures. Regular and more accountable auditing is necessary in order to assure that our schools are functioning at their best.</p>	8/22/2015 10:22 AM
619	Montana school facilities are an embarrassment. Our infrastructure has been ignored far too long. With all of the special needs our students come to school with, the resources required to enable them to become productive citizens are enormous. Schools are inadequately funded to address the needs of our students. Our success depends on our having excellent teachers and administrators.	8/22/2015 10:05 AM
620	Facilities. Are in bad shape. In Missoula we will be asked to approve a \$158 million bond to improve school facilities and Internet access obviously needed to save \$ on utilities, stop emergency shut downs because of facility failures and allow students to access the latest technologies.	8/22/2015 9:54 AM
621	Our current school system is often hampered by funding issues.	8/22/2015 9:40 AM
622	Special education should be added to the statutory formula funding. Funding for at risk students, particularly Indian students, should be increased. Equitable funding for all students is a cherished Montana tradition.	8/22/2015 9:37 AM
623	We are having problems recruiting and retaining teachers. Salaries for our teachers have been frozen for 6 years. Health insurance costs need to be addressed. We need a state wide insurance pool of all school employees to spread the risk and keep costs affordable for smaller schools.	8/22/2015 9:01 AM
624	All student in Montana should have equitable access to technology. The state should fund 1:1 devices for all k-12 students	8/22/2015 8:51 AM
625	Present law does not give schools needed funding, even with levy funding schools are forced to cut programs, teachers, and support staff. Many support staff have hours cut to avoid paying benefits. This is wrong!	8/22/2015 8:48 AM
626	Teaching of the arts needs to be taken much more seriously and funded.	8/22/2015 8:45 AM
627	Lack of money for technology for testing purposes.	8/22/2015 8:45 AM
628	There are outrageous and unjust inequities in school funding and teacher salaries across our state. Students from one school to the next have radically different facilities and access to technology. Rural schools are losing enrollment and urban schools can't keep up with increases.	8/22/2015 8:40 AM
629	Top priority: adequacy of state's contribution. Example: we have a leaky roof and a coal-powered boiler system, two pieces of infrastructure that need addressing. Our budget is insufficient. Need help.	8/22/2015 8:40 AM
630	Maintaining local control should be of paramount importance.	8/22/2015 8:38 AM

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631	Budgeting for long term facility maintenance as a private business must do. Not coming to the public for a special levy because a boiler or roof must be replaced. Money needs to be set aside out of annual budgets to cover maintenance needs. Roofs will need to be repaired or replaced in X years, so set aside money annually so that the funds will be there in X years.	8/22/2015 8:35 AM
632	As a Parent I am highly concerned that our local school district has become completely driven by test scores and this has negatively affected all aspects of the learning environment. Decisions are not being made based on what's best for the kids for the teachers or community is purely based on Can we "beat" other schools of the same size in Montana on test scores. Among many of the negative outcomes is the loss of specialized education for those students needing extra help for academic or socioeconomic reasons.	8/22/2015 8:32 AM
633	Equal funding so that educators can make a decent living	8/22/2015 8:32 AM
634	The infrastructure of our schools is crumbling. We are teaching to national testing standards as opposed to what is important for our economy. We need to get a less complicated, more equitable system to fund our schools. In addition, we need to start teaching more tech ed in our schools.	8/22/2015 8:23 AM
635	Our community (Helena) is at the top of it's spending cap. Leaving us no money for facilities. We need to raise the spending cap.	8/22/2015 8:09 AM
636	There are very clear haves and have nots among our schools. Even schools within the same district. What can the state government do to address that? There are also far too many districts.	8/22/2015 8:06 AM
637	Equitable funding is probably my biggest concern. Don't just look at the "AA" schools. Although they are small the "C" schools out number the "AA's" and yet are ignored the most.	8/22/2015 8:01 AM
638	I believe that adequacy of school funding is the most important issue. Without adequate funding it is difficult or impossible to recruit and retain the best personnel and to implement and maintain the programs that meet the needs of all children.	8/22/2015 7:58 AM
639	The arts and physical education dual credit enrollment	8/22/2015 7:57 AM
640	School funding should be at the state level.	8/22/2015 7:37 AM
641	The state must bear a greater share of the funding of schools.	8/22/2015 7:37 AM
642	No public money for charter schools.	8/22/2015 7:37 AM
643	Public schools and teachers need more money!!!! It's the way forward in terms of growing an educated economically viable and nature (thereby lots of tourists!) preserved state.	8/22/2015 7:35 AM
644	Our schools are severely underfunded. I am glad to pay more in taxes to get my future doctor educated.	8/22/2015 7:28 AM
645	Choices above speak for themselves. If I could choose six I would add "preservation of local control." But in addition to these choices, I would add "state support school district capital construction."	8/22/2015 7:14 AM
646	We need infrastructure! The Helena School District's have not built a new school since 1978. Jim Darcy School (in the north valley) is woefully overcrowded. Valley kids matter too! Help us get the infrastructure we need to support our kids.	8/22/2015 7:00 AM
647	We are broke. You have turned us into turnips. We deliberately left out some answers above many taxpayers would select. Your survey is therefore bogus	8/21/2015 9:23 PM
648	Gifted education	8/20/2015 6:37 PM
649	We need more training for educators, and quality, up to date programs for Gifted and Talented children as well as Twice Exceptional children (those with a learning disability, a diagnosis of behavioral disability in addition to being gifted.) Schools and staff need to be able to attend to the specific needs for the optimum success of each individual child. One size fits all is not the case.	8/20/2015 5:01 PM

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650	The highest priority for schools, in general, is to keep local input and control as a top concern. This is true in rural Montana... and true of any cities. The schools which succeed have a "neighborhood" approach. They are inherently "local" by nature. Fallout from the consolidation frenzy of the 1970's - 2000's has been studied by many organizations/think tanks and the verdict is in. Consolidation does not generally save money or result in more or better educated students. Bigger is not better. Consolidation fragments - and even destroys - communities. Consolidation results in even more isolation for students and community members in rural Montana. With the internet and other resources... there is absolutely no need to pull communities apart to educate anyone. I have seen far too many perfectly good buildings that once housed vibrant educational facilities sitting silent and empty. There is no "community center" or "revitalization project" or "art center" that can ever replace a vital school in any rural town. A school is more than a sum of its parts. As you wrest local control away from the people, the very fabric of society weakens... the Main Streets falter and community spirit wanes. Rural studies throughout the great plains and into the intermountain west have shown certain institutions to be absolutely vital to towns. One of the vital institutions listed isa school. Most of Montana is defined as rural - even frontier. I truly urge you to take this into consideration as you do the work of your commission.	8/20/2015 2:37 PM
651	The public school environment is emotionally/socially unsafe for some children (especially gifted/sensitive) and is not a good learning environment for the social and emotional development of above average or gifted students who will find them in a more civil environment post bach, masters etc....	8/20/2015 1:07 PM
652	I had to pull my gifted Asperger's child from the public school system because he did not have enough social support to navigate middle school. My nuerotypical gifted child is still in the public school system and is not being appropriately challenged, but is doing fine socially.	8/20/2015 12:31 PM
653	Funding for language and arts.	8/20/2015 12:03 PM
654	Funding for gifted education is completely inadequate and needs to be addressed immediately. Training is desperately needed for teachers and staff to learn about and address the needs of twice exceptional students (those who are both gifted and have special needs). Both gifted and twice exceptional students are severely at risk for dropping out.	8/20/2015 11:32 AM
655	Must address Montanan's investment in school facilities by infusing state funds into local communities to care for school buildings. Must address the educator recruitment and retention. The national mantra to demean public educators and the public education system has filtered to MT and we have less young adults entering education as a profession. This area must be addressed or the quality of the education offered to MT children will suffer. Funding Special Education adequately will raise the tide for all school programs and provide quality programming for all students.	8/20/2015 9:49 AM
656	Crumbling facilities	8/19/2015 10:10 PM
657	Retention of Montana Teachers as many leave for jobs of higher pay in other states. Cannot offer a solution, fairly complicated!	8/19/2015 9:48 PM
658	I don't know how state funding works, but would like to see funds allotted by each student. Not by the size of the district.	8/19/2015 8:24 PM
659	Keep small, rural schools open. More, smaller schools rather than big mega schools, at all grade levels.	8/19/2015 5:19 PM
660	Having quality teachers and quality programs with local control.	8/19/2015 5:09 PM
661	Why are Indian school children continually lagging behind other schools in the state?	8/19/2015 4:04 PM
662	I checked the 3rd box; that in no way indicates that I want Common Core or any such thing. Reasonable standards are a must, but not Common Core type standards.	8/19/2015 3:31 PM
663	Tenure is allowing the retention of poor teachers. We need to provide for removing poor teachers. We also need to find a way to allow great, knowledgeable folks to teach in schools and not make them go through stringent requirements. The goal should be good teachers, period!	8/19/2015 2:39 PM
664	revisit the definition of a quality basic education	8/19/2015 2:35 PM
665	Funding is a huge issue. I would like to see state law change so developers have to consider options for land for schools or partial funding of schools as part of their development submissions.	8/19/2015 2:18 PM
666	Teachers pay is to low, Class size, children with disabilities	8/19/2015 2:15 PM
667	About 1/4 of Billings Public schools' students are difficult to educate. (learning and physical disabilities/parental neglect) These students NEED smaller class sizes, so they get the attention they need. Decrements in the funding formula forces these students into classrooms with large student numbers. Decrement should start AFTER difficult to educate students are funded fully.	8/19/2015 1:52 PM
668	Back to basics	8/19/2015 1:47 PM

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669	Preservation of local control of schools in each district by local boards of trustees. I believe the locals understand what the school district needs in our area.	8/19/2015 1:33 PM
670	I believe we need to capitalize on the gifted and advanced students we have here in Montana. They are bored, but attention and resources are only for at risk or failing students.	8/19/2015 12:24 PM
671	#1 issue is the inability to transfer money from one year to the next. When we have a big maintenance item come due with evidence of failure it is impossible to be responsible and safe funds to pay for the repair. Examples are roofs or a boiler in our case.	8/19/2015 12:23 PM
672	Wasting money on too many on staff that are not teachers.	8/19/2015 12:18 PM
673	The system is so consumed with outside or national interests driving the education system to be aligned with a self serving goal bypassing basic education to cater to the special interest groups profiting on the education system in America. School boards are administratively hamstrung by OPI and State mandates or control. The funding using the carrot and stick program must be trashed.	8/19/2015 11:59 AM
674	Need for alternative education - charter schools, etc.	8/19/2015 11:52 AM
675	Equal funding and programs to make sure students are learning.	8/19/2015 11:39 AM
676	I'd like the group to look at whether or not some of the rural schools should continue to be operated in light of small student numbers.	8/19/2015 11:34 AM
677	Continuing impacts of oil without continuing funds to meet impacts.	8/19/2015 11:12 AM

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Q5 What other input do you have for the School Funding Interim Commission?

Answered: 503 Skipped: 890

#	Responses	Date
1	Please talk to teachers and Administrators and LISTEN to us and HEAR what we say.	9/9/2015 9:43 PM
2	Please be fair to small and large districts in funding. ALL children deserve a fair and excellent education. All communities deserve a well run education system.	9/9/2015 9:43 PM
3	Facilities and technology infrastructure should be separate topics as they each merit necessary state resources.	9/9/2015 9:22 PM
4	Make sure that religion plays the role it should, as a historical, cultural subject not as a moral code.	9/9/2015 9:07 PM
5	Thank you for your work	9/9/2015 8:37 PM
6	Let the professionals at OPI and in the schools determine curriculum and special programs needed. Provide the funding to insure recruitment and retention of the very best teachers and provide the very best technology and facilities throughout the state, urban and rural. Thank you.	9/9/2015 8:24 PM
7	I sincerely want to thank you for your time and effort to address school funding in Montana and hope you will help bring Montana into a more competitive place nationally. I look forward to learning more about how I might support your efforts!! All the best!!	9/9/2015 7:58 PM
8	Montana's High Tech industry is growing at 8 times all other industries together in the state, but cannot find the kind of talent they need. This drastically diminishes growth that can benefit our state economy. We need to MAKE GIFTED SERVICES FOR ADVANCED ACADEMIC AND ARTISTIC STUDENTS A PRIORITY! Gifted students who are provided appropriate educational services: 1-Earn doctorates at 50x the overall rate 2-Produce products and publish at a higher rate than average 3-Gifted students not receiving appropriate educational services drop out of school at 50-100% higher rate than the general population of students. 4-Teachers are typically ill-prepared to meet the challenges and instructional needs of gifted students 5-Pre-service teacher preparation in gifted education is imperative	9/9/2015 7:02 PM
9	Please, please please put aside the politics, don't let this be just a thinly veiled attempt to get taxpayer money to private schools.	9/9/2015 6:15 PM
10	I am a retired teacher, not an administrator. But it seems that school districts who do not comply with accreditation standards continue to operate with little consequences. As a teacher, I did not have a rule that I could not follow up on. Schools need support, both financial & professional development.	9/9/2015 5:52 PM
11	We are preparing out students for the world of the future, so I believe strongly in the use of technology, especially for rural schools.	9/9/2015 5:29 PM
12	Until the legislature/interested parties moves forward with a revision of school operational funding formulas, many districts can not move ahead with plans for updated facilities and more effective intervention/prevention programs.	9/9/2015 5:09 PM
13	Home schooling should be regulated or somehow monitored and measured.	9/9/2015 4:35 PM
14	We have an outstanding public school system, which should continue to be supported. We must, however, find a way to address the facilities needs throughout the State. As it does its work, the School Funding Commission must not intrude on the independent constitutional authority of the Board of Education to establish accreditation standards, teacher qualifications, etc. Any effort to improperly intrude into those areas will likely end up defeating the work of the Commission, in whole or in part. Thank you.	9/9/2015 2:58 PM
15	We need to reconsider the decrement formula. This places larger schools at a disadvantage by funding students at a lower rate.	9/9/2015 2:30 PM
16	Good luck - it's not an easy job, but please retain focus on quality of education above all for best results.	9/9/2015 1:00 PM
17	How to secure funds for building improvements across the state. Our infrastructure is rapidly decaying and needs updating.	9/9/2015 12:45 PM
18	I am a proud Republican but even I can see that this committee is weighted with people that are against public schools and/or for charters, vouchers, etc. and I think that is shameful.	9/9/2015 12:44 PM
19	I believe that globisation is here and remote districts in Montana are not funded enough to offer students the opportunities to be parts of this vast new world. We need to realize that these children REALLY ARE OUR FUTURE. Are we content to be just backwoods communities or are we ready to face and fund the future?	9/9/2015 12:06 PM

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20	Institute proven programs such as MBI that encourage positive student interaction and universal expectations.	9/9/2015 12:03 PM
21	May I suggest reading the book, "The Core - Teaching Your Child the Foundations of Classical Education" by Leigh A. Bortins? It is an excellent place to begin reforming our schools. It is also extremely do-able by the dedicated teachers we have in place. Thank you!	9/9/2015 11:39 AM
22	School infrastructure.	9/9/2015 11:37 AM
23	Data reporting has reached epidemic milestones and for what purpose. Be realistic in the information that addresses critical questions versus the gathering of data for data's sake. Testing of students is of the same and serves little purpose if the data is months old and not received prior to the start of school..Interventions require immediate feedback.	9/9/2015 10:51 AM
24	The state is not living up to the expectations of the public as far as funding public education. This should be the state's #1 priority at EVERY legislative session.	9/9/2015 10:51 AM
25	The current school system is not working, Im apposedd to spending more money down the drain. I am in favor of vouchers so parents can chose what their kids are taught. Without parents consent, sex education does not belong in grade schools or even middle schools. We can't give an aspirin but can fill them with hormones and throw away moral compass.	9/9/2015 10:50 AM
26	Please keep moving forward with more stringent admission standards to education degree programs in the Montana University system.	9/9/2015 10:48 AM
27	Please put the large and small school politics aside and invest in each child. Treat them all as you would treat your own children...favor not one over the other.	9/9/2015 10:18 AM
28	How ironic that a boarding house for our Native students would be a great solution. But it would and they would love it.	9/9/2015 10:16 AM
29	Help with collaboration of students	9/9/2015 9:54 AM
30	Facilities funding statewide has been put on hold for as long as I have been a trustee and needs to be addressed.	9/9/2015 8:47 AM
31	The One-Time funding for facilities was really appreciated. It would be nice to have it on a bi-annual basis. Thank you for reviewing and considering the information provided.	9/9/2015 8:31 AM
32	Please reconsider the Quality Schools Grants as without them many schools will cease to exist both structurally and literally.	9/9/2015 8:08 AM
33	I do not envy you in your work, this is a large task with big implications for our state. I feel the funding based so heavily on student numbers is not as effective as it once was. Determining a the cost of a required staff to give the courses and options needed for accreditation purposes should have some bearing.	9/9/2015 7:43 AM
34	Do away with the TOE, Teams report.	9/9/2015 7:32 AM
35	public education is vital for the students in Montana and no funding should be cut and more funding needs to be injected into the public schools. It is great that there are other options for students like immersion and private schools but no funding should be taken away from public schools to help fund them. Public Schools provide education for all types of students and does not require certain stipulations in order for the students to attend.	9/9/2015 6:53 AM
36	I am concerned for the teachers and the decisions of the school board are not being made regardless of the community concerns	9/9/2015 6:42 AM
37	I don't understand the out of state (North Dakota) students (which are out of district) get free transportation and education on the backs of the Montana taxpayer. The state of ND should assist with those costs. They have enough oil tax money to do so.	9/9/2015 6:24 AM
38	To realize how important it is to support smaller rural schools and realize the benefits they have in their communities.	9/9/2015 6:15 AM
39	Please challenge your preconceived notions about gifted children (I.e. That they come from wealthy families or they have it made and don't need any help). Most are untrue.	9/8/2015 11:44 PM
40	Charter schools should be considered.	9/8/2015 10:09 PM
41	Montana is so diverse in all the schools in the state due population, location and the number of students who are served. It is our responsibility to balance the needs of these different areas to the best of our ability.	9/8/2015 9:07 PM
42	No comment at this time.	9/8/2015 9:01 PM
43	Thank you for your service on this important task.	9/8/2015 8:37 PM
44	Higher education should be included and called a K-20 system for all students to learn and prosper.	9/8/2015 8:11 PM
45	Fund every student in this state equally. Period!	9/8/2015 8:00 PM

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46	Please remember, there is NO FREE education in Montana, it's all paid for by the taxpayer and the more free you try to push you will receive more and more pushback by us taxpayers!	9/8/2015 7:32 PM
47	Fair and equitable funding, special attention to schools in lowest income areas, isolated rural areas.	9/8/2015 7:30 PM
48	Looking into funding pre-K would also be a great asset and would help with our at-risk kiddos.	9/8/2015 6:38 PM
49	Flexibility has been a recurring theme from school districts. I encourage the Commission to keep that in mind at all levels. Public education needs to have the permission and the resources to truly offer a 21st Century Education. Please keep the focus on the students as you consider all the possibilities.	9/8/2015 6:18 PM
50	Do not divert funds from public education to private schools. Public education is the great equalizer and must be prioritized.	9/8/2015 5:20 PM
51	Technology is not the whole answer - teaching and learning take place when actual human beings embrace the art and science of education; we are still in the people business, not the technology business. Educational people matter - pay them	9/8/2015 4:53 PM
52	As enrollment increases, our buildings cannot withstand the population. Help us find ways to better fund building sources!	9/8/2015 4:40 PM
53	The Commission must have at least one, if not more, teachers on it than business and financial people.	9/8/2015 4:24 PM
54	Preschool main priority for reservation schools	9/8/2015 4:24 PM
55	Districts that are rural and do not have a strong economic base in the district find it necessary to depend heavily on tax payers. It would be good if rural school without an industry would be considered by this commission.	9/8/2015 4:10 PM
56	Maybe it's time to close down the schools who are populated only by foreign exchange students. I think the legislature needs to gather some courage and start establishing more county wide schools when there are several schools close together. Transportation is not as difficult in this day as it was 50 years ago. People travel all the time.	9/8/2015 3:54 PM
57	While I understand that reducing OPI will cut jobs, please understand that doing that saves local schools money. Parents are desperate for improvement. Please make the wise choice.	9/8/2015 3:38 PM
58	Thank you for your hard work. It is noticed and appreciated.	9/8/2015 3:34 PM
59	School Boards have to much control!	9/8/2015 3:31 PM
60	Do NOT take public funds for any Private schools. I am not oppose to private schools. I am oppose to using public funds for public schools. You can't enhance private schools to the detriment of the public schools. Other states have done this and rave about their private schools and show how bad their public schools are. Everyone is than paying to send kids to a private school. It does not help the economy to take money from parents and put into the school systems. Could be used other places. Private means private. They should own their own funding - hence the purpose of being private. There should be no tax credits for private students either. You have retired folks and others no longer affiliated with public schools, but are tax payers. It is the purpose of public schools. We all pay to ensure we have future educated and valuable workforce, and society. Going to private school is not an out for supporting public schools.	9/8/2015 3:28 PM
61	We need to be sure Montana teacher salaries are competitive with nearby state. Losing good teachers to other states is not in our students' best interest.	9/8/2015 3:28 PM
62	Let's make education a priority and not put it on the back burner.	9/8/2015 2:59 PM
63	I strongly suggest the School Funding Interim Commission look at an equitable funding system that eliminates the a local "voted" levy for operation and maintenance of schools. This should be made to be similar to what cities and counties already do in relationship their budgets. Also, I believe the Commission needs to look at allowing school districts the same power afforded cities and counties in a permissive levy for health insurance premiums. I do not understand why school districts are treated so differently from cities and counties.	9/8/2015 2:35 PM
64	I think we have too many smaller districts. Adm. is top heavy in many counties. Smaller districts take money from the larger districts.	9/8/2015 2:27 PM
65	When a teacher in a small rural school can qualify for food stamps for their family....things have to change for education in Montana	9/8/2015 2:16 PM
66	Trying to encourage students to go into education as a profession	9/8/2015 2:10 PM
67	Fund schools like the rest of the states fund schools. We should be better than Wyoming and North Dakota!	9/8/2015 2:01 PM
68	We need teacher's aids for teachers who are dealing with high demanding students in the classes so the teacher will not burn out. For those teachers who have lost their passion in teaching we need something to reevaluate their qualifications to stay in their positions.	9/8/2015 1:55 PM

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69	State and local tax dollars should be used for public education only.	9/8/2015 1:50 PM
70	It's time for a comprehensive study of a better way to fund our schools. We continue to receive money from the legislature based upon lobbying efforts rather than sound educational reasoning. The state has shifted financial responsibility to local taxpayers. We have no mechanism in place to address poor facilities conditions.	9/8/2015 1:46 PM
71	Gifted and Talented Ed is woefully undersupported. Also, in MCPS, some schools have foreign language and others don't. This doesn't seem fair. In the 21st century, all kids should at least be exposed to foreign language and culture. Why music 2x every week, art 1x per month, minimal science, and no foreign language? Who makes these decisions? Why is music given so much importance?	9/8/2015 1:45 PM
72	not sure	9/8/2015 1:34 PM
73	Schools need about 400-1,000 million dollars in facility improvements. The legislature needs to fund these investments in public schools infrastructure.	9/8/2015 1:32 PM
74	It is important to make sure schools are adequately funded with the rising cost of curriculum and maintaining safe, clean, quality schools there is never enough money to do this.	9/8/2015 1:25 PM
75	All of these aspects can be better supplied if there was more school choice.	9/8/2015 1:23 PM
76	to be fully aware of the ever increasing cost of educating our kids and the impact of poverty, drugs and a lack of home support in many cases. this places many burdens on our schools beyond traditional education.	9/8/2015 12:55 PM
77	There never is enough money, but our children's education and preparation for becoming contributors to society is my priority.	9/8/2015 12:37 PM
78	Programs for the gifted in rural areas are seriously needed even if they are costly	9/8/2015 12:35 PM
79	Please please please realize that education is the only industry making sacrifices at the cost of our children. Teachers are buying students food and clothes out of our pocket. Classrooms are holding fundraisers to buy supplies. These issues are political nonsense. Fund us.	9/8/2015 12:32 PM
80	Keep growth equitable for all districts. Rural to AA districts all struggle with funding.	9/8/2015 12:22 PM
81	NO MORE TAXES - USE PROVIDED FUNDS WISELY - ACCOUNT FOR THE SAME	9/8/2015 12:15 PM
82	Save money when it comes to testing and spend less on athletics. It seems that so much time is spent each semester on standardized testing that we as students have no time to adequately learn the information we need to excel. Also, there are so many things for the schools to use funds on other than sports, such as SCHOOLING CHILDREN. It is true that athletics provide a way for students to stay healthy, but more than likely those who need the exercise and comradery most are cut from teams. Meanwhile there are incredible activities that engage students minds that are recognized little to none. Forensics, art and international clubs, NHS, BPA and all music programs are often funded little to none and the students involved, including myself, must work out in freezing Montana winters to try and sell things in order to fundraise for SCHOOL PROGRAMS. Meanwhile, athletics are handed everything they need on a silver plater -- new uniforms yearly, new equipment as needed, front page recognition in every venue -- while the arts are pushed aside: band uniforms and choir robes decades old and often unwashed for years, equipment falling apart and being held together with duct tape and will power, and little to no recognition in any way. Similarly, lab equipment in the science rooms is trashed unless bought by the teachers own money, textbooks are falling apart at the seems, and the heating and cooling systems are constantly broken. But oh yes, that's right, sports and testing is what public education is all about. Yes I am bitter. I'm bitter because my education and the formation of my well-rounded world view means nothing to school funding. I can never learn if not taught.	9/8/2015 12:07 PM
83	I certainly hope that this commission will actually do something about the problems that we have. While I'm sure that you will hear lots of other beefs from around the state, NOTHING will change education in Montana more drastically than providing decent pay to teachers. The funding has to be there to provide enough pay to keep/bring in the best and brightest teachers here in Montana.	9/8/2015 12:03 PM
84	N/A.	9/8/2015 12:00 PM
85	I feel that the students with the least rights and least rewards are our top end students. These students will no doubt be major positive contributing factors in society yet they get pushed aside and left as is because they are not causing problems, or lowering the school's test scores. Which brings me to another point: testing. The amount of time, energy, and money that is wasted on testing is ridiculous! Students are subject to countless hours of testing and practice for testing that could be more wisely spent learning something new. Test scores don't necessarily reveal everything either - some students are great "test takers" and others not so much.	9/8/2015 11:55 AM
86	Thank you for doing this and taking on this big challenge. Good luck!	9/8/2015 11:53 AM

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87	The common core fear is completely over exaggerated. Teachers still have freedom to teach and the standards are much clearer and well thought out. That said, I am in favor of standardized testing, but less often. Perhaps twice in grade school, once in middle school and once in high school would be sufficient for standardized assessments. Currently, we do not have the technological resources to efficiently test all the students and as a result it significantly impacts our instruction for a SIX WEEK period.	9/8/2015 11:53 AM
88	School budgeting should be simplified. The piecemeal system with all of the components is confusing to school staff let alone the taxpayer.	9/8/2015 11:53 AM
89	Special attention must be paid to Professional Development, in the face of improving educational delivery and learning to collaborate in twenty-first century workplaces. This attention should extend to our university system, so we are training our teacher candidates with best practices. They should leave the college setting with an understanding of most effective learning experiences, and how to put those methods to work in their own classrooms.	9/8/2015 11:52 AM
90	For school facilities funding please look at Wyoming as a model.	9/8/2015 11:50 AM
91	School funding should really be used for helping students i think because there are a lot of students the need extra things or help and can't get it.	9/8/2015 11:50 AM
92	Thank you.	9/8/2015 11:50 AM
93	Please consider including specialists in these decisions, i.e. School counselors, music teachers, speech, special education. Often times the classroom teachers are allowed lots of input and the specialists are the ones dealing with these specialty groups where no funding is provided.	9/8/2015 11:44 AM
94	to have more fun.	9/8/2015 11:44 AM
95	nothing	9/8/2015 11:40 AM
96	That the students should sell something to help out	9/8/2015 11:39 AM
97	none	9/8/2015 11:39 AM
98	none	9/8/2015 11:39 AM
99	distance learning technologies could be used to cover education over large distances.	9/8/2015 11:26 AM
100	It is important that the state provides adequate and equitable funding across all communities.	9/8/2015 11:18 AM
101	State share of educational costs need to be increased relative to other state budgets funded. As a percent of the total spending by the state, education is not funded proportionate to what it was 20 years ago.	9/8/2015 11:12 AM
102	They must address facilities and the need for safe places for students to learn.	9/8/2015 11:08 AM
103	Help the arts survive	9/8/2015 11:07 AM
104	Look at district boundaries. If a district exists solely to decrease the taxes of a few, it is time to consolidate and make management efficient. Districts with 4 students need to have a hard look.	9/8/2015 11:05 AM
105	Please consider assisting districts with adequate school facilities.	9/8/2015 10:54 AM
106	No charters, vouchers or tax credits for nonpublic schools.	9/8/2015 10:47 AM
107	Follow the Constitution in regards to funding streams for non-public schools.	9/8/2015 10:43 AM
108	I think we all get overwhelmed with such an increase of reports and surveys. So much duplication. Simplify, simplify!!	9/8/2015 10:33 AM
109	We must develop a better system to fund schools for establishing up to date infrastructure. Our schools are falling down and learning environments are not appropriate for the needs and demands on staff and students. Let's get some money from the state allocated toward rebuilding and maintaining our schools.	9/8/2015 10:31 AM
110	Please give our schools more funding. The state of Montana does not give our schools enough funds to be great places of education.	9/8/2015 10:28 AM
111	Our Public Schools deserve to have the maximum resources available to ensure they are providing a quality education for all students. Our future depends on our ability to provide an excellent education to our children, enabling them to be successful citizens.	9/8/2015 10:27 AM
112	Let's not continue to pay for testing systems that have little to no value. Why don't we use ACT for our standardized test? There is a valid reason for students to take this test as it is used for entering college. Currently students have no reason to put effort into a test like Smarter Balance.	9/8/2015 10:24 AM
113	Provide funds with the least amount of restrictions on how the funds can be spent. Flexibility is key.	9/8/2015 10:15 AM

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114	I'm a big proponent for improving rural school access to adequate broadband solutions for student/staff internet access. It seems there is help coming, via ESH committee, but they need to look at the costs ISPs are presenting to schools to upgrade, e.g. we're moving from 2x20 DSL at \$265/mo to 45mb DS-3 connection at \$900/mo (both post e-Rate costs). Shocker.	9/8/2015 10:15 AM
115	Would like to see the Commission take a long look at how State and National standards are applied in schools and what resources are allocated to compliance.	9/8/2015 10:13 AM
116	Make sure we don't equalize downward when we address school funding. And paying professional salaries to teachers is the best way to improve quality education.	9/8/2015 10:03 AM
117	Some of the main issues in providing an quality education in Frenchtown include: severe decreases in taxable value due to the closing a large pulp mill in the district, the economy, ability to provide capital improvements for decaying facilities, retain quality teachers with a stabilized budget and covering the expenses required under the Federal requirement of quality education for all.	9/8/2015 10:00 AM
118	It seems that crazy amounts of money go for sports (facilities and travel) that involve so few students. And the insane constant upgrade of technology doesn't seem to get anywhere near payback as far as developing mature, reasoning students.	9/8/2015 9:59 AM
119	Teacher professional development is critical in bringing current research in effective instructional practices into classrooms. To be effective, it must be embedded in practice, sustained, and link directly to teacher performance in the classroom. A huge barrier to providing effective professional development that directly achieves district objectives for improvement at this time is the lack of adequate Pupil Instruction Related (PIR) time. Currently the state provides 2 days for teachers to attend the MEA conference, 1.5 days of parent teacher conferences, and 3.5 days for all other purposes. The other purposes include preparatory planning of schedules and building routines, teacher meetings to plan for student services, etc. To be effective, at least 5 days should be available without students present for the purpose of district level professional development and development of programs. No business would expect employee training and collaborative development of programs to occur outside the employee's regular work day. It is not effective to expect teachers to participate in program development subsequent to a full day of teaching. Nor is it fair to students to pull the teacher from the classroom and leave a substitute teacher for the day. Teachers are the single biggest impact on a child's education. Teachers need TIME to develop their own capacities and expertise; TIME to collaborate to develop quality, equitable learning experiences for students; and TIME to develop the district level programs. Without teachers working professionally together, no meaningful change and improvement can occur. Teacher time costs money. Exhortations from politicians and others to do better while still educators remain trapped in a 100 year old system ring false. The way we think about teachers, classrooms, and students must change significantly if we are to meet current challenges.	9/8/2015 9:55 AM
120	Class sizes need to be smaller and more funding needs to be provided so we can hire more teachers. The school buildings need more maintenance, but many schools lack the funds to maintain them.	9/8/2015 9:52 AM
121	Consider increasing the pay for highly qualified teachers.	9/8/2015 9:52 AM
122	Protect the public school system. Please don't promote tax credits and vouchers that would erode the great school systems already in place, in Montana	9/8/2015 9:49 AM
123	A pay scale that is even throughout the state would be beneficial to our rural areas.	9/8/2015 9:49 AM
124	Look at all schools, and not just the bigger schools.	9/8/2015 9:49 AM
125	Schools need to be funded in a manner that makes it so the children can learn.	9/8/2015 9:45 AM
126	High paying jobs are essential!	9/8/2015 9:43 AM
127	The Commission should recognize all of the good that is going on in our public schools and work to make it better through state action.	9/8/2015 9:39 AM
128	Why offer a grant (Quality Schools Grant) and then not fund the schools that were chosen to receive the grant. Each school that was to receive the grant had put hours of prep work and wages into the application.	9/8/2015 9:37 AM
129	I would encourage you to develop a solution (revenue source, funding, sustainable plan, etc...) for the long term, not to just get through the next legislative session.	9/8/2015 9:36 AM
130	Get away from the charter component. Seriously, do you due diligence and look at those institutions and how they are failing when they are running on their own. Do we have issues currently in public ed? Certainly - does health care have issues? Do farmers have issues? Does politics have issues? Yes to all of them, but support public education and let's work together to improve. Why do only certain districts receive impact aid? Is it improving the education? What about spreading some of the monies around so we can recruit and retain great educators? Thank you.	9/8/2015 9:30 AM
131	Please focus on the students.	9/8/2015 9:29 AM

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132	Small schools, while not serving the majority of the state, are the life blood of the state. Farming and ranching communities are what continue to make our state prosperous, and without these small schools the larger ones will only continue to grow and not offer what the state needs.	9/8/2015 9:29 AM
133	Examine the possibility of creating a permissive tax to cover health care costs for school districts. Increasing costs and the requirement to provide insurance for classified employees is crippling districts. If this cost could be shared with the state and local tax payers, general funds could go to instruction where it should be applied.	9/8/2015 9:28 AM
134	The definition of basic education must include all that is needed for our graduates to compete in a global economy and not just progressing through a curriculum that is taught with outdated materials and low levels of technology.	9/8/2015 9:28 AM
135	You are rapidly losing a generation of teachers and administrators that did what ever they could to get the job done. You are going to have to pay this new generation of teachers and administrators more to have them even consider a job in education.	9/8/2015 9:21 AM
136	Health Insurance cost and facilities are two of our greatest financial challenges.	9/8/2015 9:18 AM
137	We need more money on our districts. Abolish the budget equalization act and let districts make up the difference as voted by the local tax payers	9/8/2015 9:16 AM
138	We have got to find a way to recruit good people into the teaching profession, and pay them well enough to stay with it. Too much is expected of our schools to entrust our classrooms with people who have scraped by, or got into the profession because they cannot do anything else to survive.	9/8/2015 9:08 AM
139	Imagine a school where the teachers are the facilitators and have access to "experts" in all fields of study that are relevant to everyday life. These "experts" could travel from school to school providing in depth discussion/education on their field of study while the teachers provide the in room discussions and activities to go along with the expert presentation. This could include building rockets, building computers, learning about trees/nature outside with rangers...the list goes on and on. Schools don't have to be so stagnant. We have a chance to change our teaching methods and make the curriculum more fluid for the changing needs of each classroom and student. Also, I find the amount of student assessments disturbing. To prepare all year for a test that may take as long as a month is too much. That time could be better spent learning and growing in different ways, not just to prepare for assessments. Thank you.	9/8/2015 9:07 AM
140	Need for more interaction in the politics for secured rural.school funding .	9/8/2015 9:07 AM
141	Class sizes for accreditation are too small. It is difficult to afford teachers with class sizes too small.	9/8/2015 9:04 AM
142	Technology is a great tool for our Educators, we need to keep our sights on the fact that our Educators are more important than any technology that is present. We can put 30 students in a classroom with a facilitator and have them do online courses, what do they get out of it when they have a question that the facilitator cannot answer and they have to wait for the online teacher to respond to their question. Considering they may be 1 of 200 students that the online teacher is trying to help I fail to see how this is helping our students succeed.	9/8/2015 9:01 AM
143	Maintaining local control is important to each school district. Every community/school district has it's own unique "personality" and must be able to make decisions as to what is best for their local students.	9/8/2015 8:59 AM
144	Like other states, Montana's education institutions are becoming so entrenched by money interests that we have had political problems making the smallest changes to systems that really need to be updated. I believe we need to bring Montanans together (like the Constitutional Convention 1972) to discuss the future of education in Montana and to set new directions. Yes, I know that monied interests and the interests of the home schoolers will be on the table... but that is what democracy is. I sat at the education table in the Civic Center in Helena in 1972 and over the years since, have been pleased with the forward thinking of those who participated. Thank you for this opportunity to share my ideas. I am on the school board at East Glacier Park Elementary. (46 students in our school).	9/8/2015 8:58 AM
145	Nothing was ever done though a lot of money was spent identifying infrastructure needs across the state. All money was pulled from Quality Schools, leaving absolutely nothing to meet needs.	9/8/2015 8:58 AM
146	You must address infrastructure and capital improvement needs of each district. Funds must be committed to each district annually to be used for repairs, maintenance, health and safety. Not through a grant process. A well maintained school improves the entire districts property values.	9/8/2015 8:56 AM
147	We are losing good teachers for a variety of reasons including pay and behavior. Technology is wonderful but we need to look at the next generation of kids that are growing up with all this technology and are not learning the basic social skills such as conversations and making friends. Recess and social times are even more critical now.	9/8/2015 8:53 AM
148	We have a good education system in Montana but we need more resources. Thank you	9/8/2015 8:46 AM
149	The State needs to support schools equitably. The bigger schools get the lion's share of funding for programs	9/8/2015 8:42 AM

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150	The disparity in salary between class C schools and the B's and A's is huge. The number of college graduates going into teaching is on the decline for a number of reason, salary being a significant one as they struggle to pay students loans and live on a teacher salary. The profession has also come under unfair and dishonest criticism, making a difficult job harder yet.	9/8/2015 8:41 AM
151	Publc schooling allows for everyone to receive an education. I believe that private schooling is a matter of mind rather than the quality of education.	9/8/2015 8:40 AM
152	Take a good look at how Montana pay compares to the rest of the USA.	9/8/2015 8:40 AM
153	Preserving an equal opportunity for ALL Montana students to receive a solid educational foundation is critically important. This cannot be done without adequate funding or without qualified teachers.	9/8/2015 8:40 AM
154	YOU should have done your job during the session. Shame on the Right Wing Republicans! Public school and Public Health are NOT Party Line issues. Shame on you.	9/8/2015 8:40 AM
155	I think the salaries of all teachers around the whole state should be the same. The state should have a set amount for teachers.	9/8/2015 8:36 AM
156	I would like to see that the rural schools are able to continue, they are the back bone of the this state and they are often forgotten.	9/8/2015 8:35 AM
157	Good luck	9/8/2015 8:34 AM
158	We need to value our teachers and pay them a salary commensurate to their position.	9/8/2015 8:32 AM
159	This commission is not charged with saving money. This commission is charged with effectively funding public education. Education is one of the most inefficient endeavors we can undertake. It's inefficient because we are dealing with people, their background, their unique qualities that differ from student to student and staff member to staff member. This inefficiency is not an indicator of a lack of effectiveness. It is the contrary. It is within the inefficiencies that we meet student needs. It's in the inefficiency that we take seriously the research that tells us to form educational practices around the student. While educators have trimmed and streamlined our budgets, we have hit a point in which we must accept how education best operates and fund according to those needs. In this manner, we can effectively match educational needs with funds that meet those needs. This is the process by which education becomes more effective and in being more effective, we also become more efficient. Tim Johnson, Superintendent, Corvallis School District #1	9/8/2015 8:31 AM
160	The issue of oil industry problems and windfalls needs to be addressed. Those of us in the east are still dealing with the fallout from the oil exploration and production with very little effort from our legislators to help with our infrastructure. A standard for school infrastructure quality should be developed and adhered to for the safety of our children. Left to the local boards or voters the improvement of school structures may not happen.	9/8/2015 8:31 AM
161	Not sure how you fix this, but when a school loses 20 students that is a ton of money, but in reality the loss of students isn't enough to cut a teacher or a program.	9/8/2015 8:30 AM
162	It is very difficult to recruit and keep quality teachers to our area. We need funding to continue trying to do this and to pay them adequately!	9/8/2015 8:29 AM
163	There should be a new funding system that allows for the state to set a base standard....per district, per school, per classroom, per teacher, per student. Then the local school boards should be able to have move autonomy for permissive levies for transportation (which they already have), plus health insurance, plus technology, and then a permissive levy to hire and pay for all the classified staff, too.	9/8/2015 8:29 AM
164	There are too many unfunded mandates coming from Helena and federal government. These need to be funded more equitably which in turn reduces the burden on local schools and spreads this among the entire state.	9/8/2015 8:25 AM
165	The state should create a line item in school budgets to direct funds for school safety and safety training. The ability to move money around from other funds is helpful, but money should be directly allocated to keep schools and the children they serve safe and secure.	9/8/2015 8:21 AM
166	Do what you said you were going to do and fix the system.	9/8/2015 8:19 AM
167	none	9/8/2015 8:19 AM
168	Local control and decisions by the elected board of trustees is important to the vision of public education. It is important to maintain this local control.	9/8/2015 8:17 AM
169	Please don't be partisan.	9/8/2015 8:12 AM
170	None	9/8/2015 8:11 AM
171	STOP PASSING UNCONSTITUTIONAL BILLS AND WASTING TIME ON INAPPROPRIATE TOPICS. KEEP PERSONAL RELIGIOUS VIEWS OUT OF GOVERNMENT.	9/8/2015 8:08 AM

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172	Remember our obligation is to provide educational opportunities to ALL children.	9/8/2015 8:03 AM
173	The need to support and fund public education. We don't need other schools outside public schools we need to improve our public schools by funding them.	9/8/2015 8:03 AM
174	Rather than find ways to cut funding, I would hope that the Commission will look at ways to increase funding in an equitable fashion for all school districts.	9/8/2015 8:03 AM
175	Please come to schools, meet practitioners and hear what is really happening - and what the needs are.	9/8/2015 8:03 AM
176	Additional funds should be used to fix accreditation problems, etc first before going to pay raises.	9/8/2015 8:01 AM
177	Recruiting teachers and keeping them is also very difficult for our small rural schools.	9/8/2015 7:56 AM
178	Smaller districts, as stated above, face unique challenges in the staffing and administrative requirements. The state could mandate some of those districts to consolidate to save funds not only at the state but also the local level.	9/8/2015 7:56 AM
179	Do not fund religious schools. We are not the Middle East.	9/8/2015 7:47 AM
180	:You need to take a good look at how more and more cost for special ed is falling on local schools.	9/8/2015 7:38 AM
181	We have an immediate need for finding ways to keep our teachers in the state of Montana. We are losing to many GREAT teachers to other states with higher pay.	9/8/2015 7:34 AM
182	K-12 SHIP and statewide health insurance were good ideas. Health insurance continues to be a major problem.	9/8/2015 7:34 AM
183	Be fair and look at issues with open minds. This isn't us against them, which seems to always override any common sense approaches to problem solving these days.	9/8/2015 7:33 AM
184	If public funding is going to go to charter schools, the charter schools need to follow the same laws as public schools.	9/8/2015 7:27 AM
185	Simplify the formula.	9/8/2015 7:21 AM
186	The system as currently designed has been found by the court to be constitutionally adequate and equitable, with some potential problem spots identified in findings 119-121 of Judge Sherlock's opinion. Other than ensuring the ongoing adequacy of the state's share, addressing facilities and making sure that there is progress toward the areas of concern in Judge Sherlock's opinion from 2007, the Commission should avoid tinkering with the structure or definition to avoid the risk of disrupting the constitutionality of the system in its current form.	9/8/2015 7:18 AM
187	All kids should have access to free lunches and breakfasts through the schools this way none fall through the cracks and every kids can be confident in getting a few meals a day.	9/8/2015 7:16 AM
188	I would like the Legislature to consider consolidation of Independent Elementary schools to a high school district OR remove the moratorium on new high schools and allow local taxpayers to decide if the need for expansion is in the best interest of their communities. It should NOT be the Legislature that controls how a community develops/grows. There are enough checks & balances in the system that guide the process. I would also like to remind the Interim committee of their constitutional obligation that public dollars are NOT to be divided to non-public, non-accountable entities. This committee has a built-in bias established based on those appointed to serve. I hope that bias is left at the door during this committee's work. I'm a taxpayer and believe public schools are the foundation of our democracy, and the continued attempt to erode that foundation will waste precious resources through the courts.	9/8/2015 6:58 AM
189	More focus on helping school districts build new buildings and/or repair existing buildings.	9/8/2015 6:43 AM
190	As a rural state, legislators need to address ways to bring updated and relevant technology into classrooms for students to incorporate into their daily learning.	9/8/2015 4:21 AM
191	There is a definite shortage of funding for schools and college students especially in the areas of science, math, and special education, are not going into education due to poor pay and job advancement. They are having to pay more to go to colleges and the colleges are extending the amount of time required to finish programs.	9/7/2015 11:49 PM
192	Learn to work together, find consensus, support the children of Montana with substantial funding. Leave the politics at home!	9/7/2015 11:12 PM
193	None	9/7/2015 10:58 PM
194	Make your work on this Commission matter for all citizens of Montana	9/7/2015 10:39 PM
195	We need less testing or select one test all students will take state wide. We have to many tests that are low-achieving students have to take.	9/7/2015 9:46 PM
196	Higher education funding is not up to standards. The continuing high cost of higher Ed is eliminating many from higher Ed.	9/7/2015 9:33 PM

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197	It is important we pay teachers commensurate with what we expect them to do if we want to attract the best and the brightest. It is also imperative that new teachers be supported from the get go and everyone should plan for success and not expect or wait on the sidelines for failure.	9/7/2015 9:20 PM
198	I also worry that with the emphasis on testing and particularly math and reading, we are leaving out the important components of a well rounded citizen by not placing equal emphasis on the other academics (Social Studies, Science, the other Language Arts, and the Creative Arts. An additional concern is the negativity that surrounds public schools and teachers. I feel we need to do a better job of highlighting the successes of a public education and acknowledging the quality teachers in Montana.	9/7/2015 8:10 PM
199	We need a new funding mechanism that takes into account oil money in the east, tourism, and a possible state sales tax!	9/7/2015 8:05 PM
200	Pay attention to how charter schools are failing or at the very least doing no better than our public schools which serve all children. Why start over from scratch when we can just put our money into improving our existing public schools. There is no magic here. Fund our schools!	9/7/2015 8:00 PM
201	Unless wages can be brought up so that teachers can live on them (not a Cadillac lifestyle but one where you aren't rolling pennies and nickels and dimes at the end of every month so that you can go and buy milk and eggs for your children while you go hungry, you will never attract much more than either mediocre teachers. Only teachers who are really devoted and love the children and love to teach put up with starvation.	9/7/2015 7:36 PM
202	Please adequately fund schools	9/7/2015 7:34 PM
203	FAIR!!! Equal and fair have different meanings. When it comes to school funding, it must be fair, not necessarily equal. MT is diverse with diverse needs. Treat school districts fairly, NOT equally!	9/7/2015 7:25 PM
204	Lets get this right this time !!!!!	9/7/2015 7:01 PM
205	Charter schools are not an option. Invest in what we have. Please consider consolidation not expansion of K 12 districts.	9/7/2015 6:32 PM
206	Very concerned about the national trend to use public education funds for private schools. Accreditation standards are extremely important and private schools are not held to these standards. NO funding should be considered at all for them.	9/7/2015 6:22 PM
207	Money for our totle programs. They have become a joke.	9/7/2015 6:03 PM
208	Please look at our public school funding with objective and positive thoughts.	9/7/2015 5:38 PM
209	Will my teacher's retirement be intact when I retire in a few years?	9/7/2015 5:34 PM
210	Please listen to local teachers and families.	9/7/2015 5:24 PM
211	Take care of and respect the public employees that work in our public schools	9/7/2015 3:58 PM
212	I think it would be worthwhile to look at educational outcomes per state at of spending. What programs are really achieving the best results for all students, at risk students and districts as a whole.	9/7/2015 3:46 PM
213	It's time to put the welfare of all our kids ahead of incarceration and lower taxes. We do not begin to meet the Constitutional standard of quality and equal Educational Opportunity.	9/7/2015 3:37 PM
214	Charter schools take public money away from our public schools. Instead, focus on hiring the best, and put them in our public classrooms.	9/7/2015 3:25 PM
215	Need to stop decline in state's share of education funding.	9/7/2015 3:19 PM
216	I cannot imagine how you hope to accomplish anything meaningful by late Sep 2015. Maybe that was a typo and it should have read 2016...	9/7/2015 3:09 PM
217	Last year I had 28 4th graders. The number right at accreditation. It was so difficult to really meet all of their needs. Even just the amount of space available in our room was difficult, let alone the other conditions. Please consider lowering the numbers even by just two. It could have really helped all of the kids.	9/7/2015 2:55 PM
218	Something needs to be done to improve recruitment and retention of quality educators. The shortage of good teachers and administrators is becoming painfully evident!	9/7/2015 2:07 PM
219	The state needs to look at consolidating smaller school districts in the state to ensure quality education for all. If they can co-op for sports they can co-op for the educational needs of their students.	9/7/2015 1:31 PM
220	While I understand there are significant need among the special need and at risk population, consider the students who are also trying to be competitive in the college admissions market.	9/7/2015 1:28 PM
221	Good luck. Tough nut to crack.	9/7/2015 12:35 PM

School Funding Survey

222	The is to fund a public education with our taxes and not tax creits for non public education.	9/7/2015 12:27 PM
223	Spend time in schools, learn about the challenges schools are facing across the state, listen carefully.	9/7/2015 11:57 AM
224	I believe music and fine arts deserve more attention and funding at all levels. Our gifted students get lost in the mix so often and have to go outside of the school system to get what they need.	9/7/2015 11:53 AM
225	Varsity sports should not be funded with public education money - only educational programs and intermural sports everyone can participate in.	9/7/2015 11:44 AM
226	Remember, teachers teach the future generation of this state. If we want a future, we need to keep quality teachers. We are failing miserably at this.	9/7/2015 11:34 AM
227	I would like to see more funding for after school study hall and other activities	9/7/2015 11:26 AM
228	we also need to keep the school buildings safe and up to date	9/7/2015 11:03 AM
229	State funding for health care (our premium is a chunk of our 'salary benefit'...surely state-wide public schools could get a better price , which would be an increase to salaries & retain good teachers.	9/7/2015 10:42 AM
230	Look at student loan pay down for new teachers in any school district, especially small ones. Give these kids a fighting chance.	9/7/2015 10:38 AM
231	Field trips should be included in the transportation funding. They are an extremely important part of the curriculum. Field trips enhance the application of educational principals in different areas and enable the student to make choices regarding their future. Fund public school education to the fullest. Many years ago, Montana was first in educational funding (1900). In the 1970's, we were still in the top 25 states. Now we are dead last in the Northwest and in the bottom 5 in the country.	9/7/2015 10:35 AM
232	Why are Career skills and training to produce jobs and careers not even mentioned in this survey? You are totally missing the point of NECESSARY and QUALITY education.	9/7/2015 10:34 AM
233	Remind the beancounters that there is nothing so unequal as the equal treatment of unequals.	9/7/2015 10:32 AM
234	Montana public education is alive and well. We have great schools and provide our students with the skills to function in our changing world. Charter schools are NOT the answer to our educational problems. Please fully fund our public schools. Do not use tax dollars to fund private charter schools.	9/7/2015 10:30 AM
235	Listen to the people and be fair.	9/7/2015 10:22 AM
236	Visit the schools and see how we try to make good use of our limited dollars.	9/7/2015 10:20 AM
237	Extra funding for schools in need.	9/7/2015 10:19 AM
238	How do I know out school is using this funding like it should be?	9/7/2015 10:19 AM
239	Equitable public education needs to become a priority for policy makers not a bargaining chip for private interests.	9/7/2015 10:16 AM
240	Be aware that legislation has been passed that could shift public funds to private schools that do not have to comply with state standards	9/7/2015 10:09 AM
241	The over emphasis of testing not only in this state but the entire country is detrimental to to education of our students.	9/7/2015 10:09 AM
242	Teacher salaries need to be increased. Montana teachers are among the poorest paid teachers in the nation.	9/7/2015 10:09 AM
243	Please remember that it is clearly written in the Montana constitution that no tax dollars can fund religious activities. Charter schools have been tried in the courts in other states and have been shown to be unconstitutional. Please support our public schools.	9/7/2015 10:08 AM
244	I believe we should be funding gifted and talented programs at a state level. Billions of dollars are spent on special ed. and a fraction of that number on the very students who will, one day, be our doctors, educators, lawyers, business leaders, etc. I'm not saying there should be less aid given to the disabled and disadvantaged, but I think more should be given to our best and brightest students. With an equalization of funding between local and state, all students should be better off.	9/7/2015 10:01 AM
245	It would be beneficial if ALL who enjoyed the benefits of public school could help fund the schools instead of just people who are able to purchase homes and pay property tax!	9/7/2015 9:49 AM
246	I would like to see another way to fund our school. With so much tribal land in our district, it is hard to get money to fund the needs of our school. It is nearly impossible to pass mill levies in our town. I think this needs to addressed somehow.	9/7/2015 9:42 AM
247	Stop pushing the McSchools and fund appropriate upgrades that keep schools in local neighborhoods and decrease bussing.	9/5/2015 6:46 PM

School Funding Survey

248	Come visit schools in larger cities and small towns. See for yourself what needs are not being met. We welcome you to our schools!	9/5/2015 8:41 AM
249	I am a strong advocate for "at-risk" students and would like to increase graduation rates among this group.	9/4/2015 7:37 PM
250	I am disappointed you are not looking at funding for Early Childhood Education. We are one of 8 states that does not fund Early Childhood. Let's get on board-pay now or pay much more later!!!!	9/4/2015 4:03 PM
251	We cannot afford to spend our scarce funding of public schools on voucher programs or any other scheme that diverts funding to religious institutions or to other organizations who wish to profit from educating kids. With our sparse population, we need to use public funding for public schools. It is fine if parents wish to make other choices. They simply need to pay for the other choices themselves.	9/4/2015 3:11 PM
252	Do not take away music, art and similar programs in favor of just athletics. When these kids are 50, athleticism will not affect their lives as much as the other.	9/4/2015 11:32 AM
253	This is not about funding, but I wanted to make it known to those involved in all discussions about Montana's public schools that we despite the difficulties my own children are experiencing due to school closure and displacement, the quality of their education is excellent.	9/4/2015 11:19 AM
254	Expand montessori program to accommodate those who want it.	9/4/2015 10:25 AM
255	While I love the concept of local, neighborhood schools, I would like the commission to promote consistency across schools. Even if richer schools provide better programs, there should be a mechanism in place for all students to benefit from the best programs (charter schools, magnet programs, etc.)	9/4/2015 9:53 AM
256	We need to focus on modernizing our education system. Schools need better after-school options as the majority of parents work outside the home. In order for our kids to compete we need innovative education techniques and advanced STEM programs, not more worksheets and emphasis on passing standardized tests.	9/4/2015 8:45 AM
257	Teachers, students and staff's needs are more important than large fancy offices for administrators. They already make large salaries. They should not be permitted to take over small neighborhood schools for offices or to market existing school buildings as real estate.	9/4/2015 8:35 AM
258	I care less about tying funding to high test scores than I care about money getting where it is most needed. Failing test scores do not necessarily reflect bad teachers - though they can - they may also reflect at-risk populations are present in the district. Technology is also lagging behind in many areas not just distance learning. In order for all students to be competitive earners as adults they need real technological immersion by trained educators. It would be good to prioritize technology and consider it basic education.	9/4/2015 8:22 AM
259	School districts cannot cure the poverty that affects student learning and achievement. School funding is essential to changing the world. Each student should go out into the world equipped with knowledge, hope and civic/service responsibility and pride; thereby improving their lives and the communities in which they live.	9/4/2015 7:32 AM
260	Do your job and take care of our kids! These students are the base of our future. You all have elected positions.. listen to everyone not just those with deep pockets.	9/4/2015 6:49 AM
261	None. Thanks for asking.	9/3/2015 9:31 PM
262	Salaries need to be competitive for teachers and administrators so we can recruit and retain good people. Technology needs to be a rule, not an exception in classrooms. Kids need to be prepared for the future, and running things like we did 20 years ago with a slightly increased budget does not cut it.	9/3/2015 8:49 PM
263	Funding needs to be done for extra curricular activists such as music, art, etc.	9/3/2015 8:07 PM
264	Education for our students is very important and should be fair to everyone.	9/3/2015 7:31 PM
265	Please make education a priority when it comes to spending.	9/3/2015 6:01 PM
266	Clerical staff insurance that is affordable.	9/3/2015 2:53 PM
267	Quit spending my taxpayers money on the social agenda. Start saving money to pay for building repairs instead of using that money for frivolous things. The taxpayers are tapped out!	9/3/2015 2:35 PM
268	Find a way at the state and federal level to making college education more affordable.Find a way to make it free for everyone.	9/3/2015 1:54 PM
269	Money spent to give our kids a solid education (not based on the Business Model of evaluation that cannot account for human variables when determining success--there are better, more accurate measures) will save paying for state and federal support programs for grown adults that test well, but in reality, aren't qualified to do a thing. More education that actually prepares them for work! Not all are college bound.	9/3/2015 1:03 PM

School Funding Survey

270	Gifted and talented should have more enrichment, not a special, secluded program, but more exposure at a higher, fast paced level.	9/3/2015 12:41 PM
271	I support public education. I support our teachers and administrator in doing the best job that they can with our children. The state of Montana does not fund education to the degree to which they should. It is difficult for us to retain teachers, many teachers leave the state of Montana because the pay is lower here. We need infrastructure in our small schools. We need safety for our students. And we need support for the arts. Public education is necessary to bring people out of the cycle of poverty and help produce good taxpayers for the future. It is very short sighted to not provide for public education. Do not give tax credits for other types of education, it takes away from those who need it most and cripples our public education system. Please consider the disadvantages of small schools -- the AA schools have more resources and more students to spread costs over. Remember how much more it costs when you don't have the volume. The quality of your education should not be dependent on living in a more urban area.	9/3/2015 11:01 AM
272	Increased pay for highly qualified teachers, specialists, and those working with at-risk populations.	9/3/2015 9:37 AM
273	With the growing number of at risk students we must find programs/resources to help them be successful. But this can not solely rely on the student. The parents must take part in stabilizing their home and be taught that education is important. If we are to break the "cycle" we must get them involved even if that means placing pressure on the programs that they qualify for.	9/3/2015 9:26 AM
274	NO INCENTIVES FOR HIGH TEST SCORES! THIS ONLY MAKES TOXIC ENVIRONMENTS AND ENCOURAGES CHEATING!!!	9/3/2015 9:14 AM
275	Why do we not want to protect our future by giving quality education to our young? We should hold this as our highest priority	9/3/2015 9:02 AM
276	Thank you for soliciting our opinions.	9/3/2015 8:59 AM
277	Facilitates maintenance and upkeep with the aging schools in our state.	9/3/2015 8:34 AM
278	Good luck in your endeavors.	9/3/2015 8:33 AM
279	Our district drastically needs programs for at risk students and those students who are not on the college track. Training and transition programs need to be implemented	9/3/2015 8:31 AM
280	Outlaw teachers' unions.	9/3/2015 4:14 AM
281	Most districts in the state (all but the big 7) have difficulty recruiting and retaining teachers. This could be helped by having a higher salary base to offer staff. They are attracted to both WY and ND, neighboring states with higher salary scales across the board.	8/31/2015 3:31 PM
282	The State has SEVERELY backed away from their responsibility. It's time to get back in to the picture.	8/31/2015 8:49 AM
283	None..Unless of course you would like me to refer to the Teaching Staff & their comments to 5 Boy's about how they should just drop out of school. ..Which 4 out of the 5 did drop out & 1 Fought to Continue on to Graduation..WHICH I AM VERY PROUD TO SAY HE DID GRADUATE EITHER LAST YR/THE YR BEFORE !!	8/30/2015 9:06 PM
284	Funding needs to be equitable and the affect on districts of all size needs to be studied before changes are implemented. As an example - It is a misnomer that all schools in the east were benefactors of the concentric circle distribution of oil and gas money.	8/30/2015 8:11 PM
285	Thank you for what you do. I know you can never please everyone and I appreciate your time.	8/30/2015 2:30 PM
286	There needs to be a good pre-school program	8/30/2015 1:47 PM
287	Address teacher salaries and benefits to keep our Montana teachers here in Montana.	8/30/2015 7:33 AM
288	School funding is an investment for the future of our state, not a cost or an expense. It is so much better to educate our students than incarcerate them.	8/29/2015 6:53 PM
289	Make education a priority in the state.	8/29/2015 12:23 PM
290	In addition to addressing the fundamental need for adequate funding, addressing efforts by non-public school supporters to privatizing public education must be managed proactively. With the passage of SB 410 keeping public schools public will be a dog fight and reacting to bad legislation is difficult. For example, schools that have the ability to create alternative settings also have the ability to make those settings public charter schools. If those public charter schools were in existence today using existing school law, a large part of justification for a new law to create public charter schools outside of BOPE jurisdiction would have been gone making that cornerstone of the privatization issue mute.	8/28/2015 2:24 PM

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291	I believe that we need to give our small schools more money to help our gifted and talented student, they seem to be left out and not worked with. They are not able to achieve their potential. Staff is so focused on working with the Special Ed students and problem students that these children with potential get left behind. They get board then start getting in trouble and get labeled as a problem student when really they just haven't been challenged.	8/28/2015 1:45 PM
292	You'll get what you pay for - time to invest in better starting salaries all across Montana - especially in the small rural schools.	8/28/2015 1:41 PM
293	Efficiency of student assessment models.	8/28/2015 1:32 PM
294	There should be a single pay scale for all teachers in MT. Smaller schools would benefit from a larger pool of candidates. Create 1 district per county to eliminate administrative overlap and waste. Quit paying bus providers on a per mile basis. Require them to evaluate their routes and schedules to better serve the students and save money. Currently they are rewarded by the mile. Cut out the miles, save fuel, save costs.	8/28/2015 12:59 PM
295	I do not see the need for these small school districts to have to hire full-time superintendents, I think one superintendent could serve more than one school district in an area and one business office with a little help could do payroll and account payables for more than one school. Even the larger schools have excessive layers of administration.	8/28/2015 11:23 AM
296	There needs to be attention to support for special education--the extreme range of student needs and our inability to meet some of these specialized needs in our classrooms	8/28/2015 11:18 AM
297	There needs to be a push to make education a more appealing career choice. Salaries have not kept up with inflation and local schools can do nothing about it because of constraints by the state. The state needs to be much more active in 'protecting' teachers and employees from public misinformation and the bashing of schools in the media and by the government. We have fantastic teachers doing important work who may or may not be supported in their own schools, but are certainly not being outside of them.	8/28/2015 10:44 AM
298	Special education needs to be fully funded.	8/28/2015 10:17 AM
299	Please remember each of your schools is an independent district and each decision you make effects us differently. Carefully consider each decision and talk to your school districts before you make a decision.	8/28/2015 10:04 AM
300	Something needs to be done to increase salaries for teachers. We are still looking for five teachers. We have several teaching in areas they are not certified.	8/28/2015 9:52 AM
301	Thank you for your time and effort in trying to make headway in meeting the enormous but critical needs of Montana's public schools!	8/28/2015 9:33 AM
302	Montana schools are some of the best in the nation. Let's make it a goal to keep them that way. School choice seems to be a big issue with some legislators but Montana already has a system in place that allows for such. I am a product of a Montana K-12 school district and have three degrees from its university system. I have been out of state but came back. 38 years as an educator has taught me one thing for sure, Montanan's can compete anywhere! There is no place like home.	8/28/2015 9:07 AM
303	Special education funding has not kept pace with funding of general ed and is sorely lacking so as to impact education for all. The formula for special education cooperative funding is antiquated.	8/28/2015 9:04 AM
304	I attended a interim meeting in Billings and shared my input at that time.	8/28/2015 9:02 AM
305	Please put you politics aside and recognize that we as a society have a vested interest in the public education of our children. They will be our neighbors and leaders of the future.	8/28/2015 8:55 AM
306	Most school districts in MT are using old and out dated facilities. As they age, they require large amounts of money to repair or remodel. We have to start looking at ways to update our buildings, we can't keep patching forever.	8/28/2015 7:50 AM
307	An individual who is fully qualified to be a Superintendent in California and holds two master's and completed coursework for an Ed.D. in Organizational Leadership should not have to serve as an intern and take 5 classes that are comparable to classes offered in administrative coursework outside the university due to state regulations and procedures	8/28/2015 7:31 AM
308	Perhaps this is the time to look to Wyoming for their Educational Model. They saved money overall by reducing the number of schools districts, increasing administrative efficiencies, transferring the facilities responsibilities from the local taxpayer to the state, lowering student to teacher ratios, raising teachers salaries, and increasing rigorous course offerings. A recent article ranked Wyoming #6 in the best places for teachers to live and work.	8/27/2015 8:52 PM
309	We are not going to attract more students into the teaching profession until we pay more. Montana has the lowest average starting salary for teachers in the country. Quality of life issues are only attractive if you can pay the bills. Until we attract more students into teaching, we will continue to have a teacher shortage state-wide, but even more so in "B" and "C" districts.	8/27/2015 8:27 PM

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310	Students K-12 should be a privilege, if they disrupt or do not want to learn, they should be dismissed to a state school set up of the like. There is too much time and money spent on disciplining.	8/27/2015 7:59 PM
311	If there was any kind of small encouragement that could be given out to family members that volunteer on a regular basis maybe more would volunteer.	8/27/2015 5:43 PM
312	We need to focus on educating students--we are being inundated with requests for information with limited feedback on how it helps our students, teachers, or District.	8/27/2015 5:10 PM
313	Have you considered counting special needs students as more than 1 student for ANB?	8/27/2015 4:43 PM
314	Please invest in our students. They are not an additional cost; they are our future!	8/27/2015 12:47 PM
315	Do your best! The present and future students (and citizenry) deserve nothing less than your best efforts....please put partisan politics off to the side in these important deliberations.	8/27/2015 12:40 PM
316	Get rid of the decrement.	8/27/2015 12:28 PM
317	Investing in our future is vitally important. Educated citizens are less likely to need other state-funded services. Students who stay in a quality education program are less likely to commit crimes. Please make sure that Montana puts our state's children at the top of the list for all funding decisions.	8/27/2015 11:59 AM
318	Music education	8/27/2015 10:14 AM
319	The reserve funds are not being used by school districts as they were intended. Local levies are done on "emergency" basis because reserves are not there.	8/27/2015 9:58 AM
320	It would be good if school fine arts programs were funded to the degree extra-curricular athletic programs were, including transportation.	8/27/2015 9:41 AM
321	In the Medieval period Plato and Aristotle believed that a public education system that stressed gymnastic to discipline the body and music to discipline the mind could create the "right" kind of person. Please keep funding our music programs! Especially in the smaller schools!	8/27/2015 9:38 AM
322	look at the coop concept of purchasing and supplies for schools. Buying power does affect cost.	8/27/2015 9:19 AM
323	Time on task is a constant challenge to "Attendance Matters" with lame/weak attendance policy and expectations compounded by an overabundance of MHSA activities that pull large portions of students from the classroom on an overreaching regular basis throughout the year. (Added to that problem might be a system that allows numerous days off for prom dress shopping, cattle branding, and other "personal leave" types of issues.) Classroom progress suffers not just for the missing students, but also from the class slowing down to facilitate the overwhelming number of student hours lost to poorly scheduled activities. (e.g. golf always on weekdays, and often cross-country, and the list goes on.)	8/27/2015 8:51 AM
324	The state should include facility standards in its rules along with a general fund source of funds to assist in modernizing our state's school facilities.	8/27/2015 7:28 AM
325	Let's teach our children and future voting citizens to think logically, know how to seek viable objective information and WANT to have an impact!	8/27/2015 3:24 AM
326	Invest in a vibrant public school system for all rather than in privatization for some	8/26/2015 3:04 PM
327	Zip code should not impact funding. A student is a student and has educational needs no matter where they live.	8/26/2015 6:39 AM
328	Public schools in our community do an excellent job. I am sure that is true with the rest of the state. Instead of focusing on charter schools, let's put our money into smaller classrooms, neighborhood schools, poor performing schools (why) and address those issues. If our salaries are to be based on results, your salary should be based on your results.	8/25/2015 9:32 PM
329	Why is are Gov. trying to push preschool funding when he isn't supporting our k-12 funding we get less every year eastern Montana never gets the funds they should be getting.	8/25/2015 8:04 PM
330	Current technology pulls students into effective and disciplined learning - immediately; how is it that some districts have funding for classroom ipads and some districts do not? Immediate access to knowledge allows students to problem solve immediately, share knowledge immediately, and collaborate on such things as the MCCS for Mathematic Practices, research, MT Indian poet videos and everything that students want to know to relate to their world of constructing knowledge.	8/25/2015 3:35 PM
331	not relevant at this time, but I strongly oppose charter school development or school voucher programs	8/25/2015 2:04 PM
332	Kent Kultgen is useless. He is a terrible advocate for all of Helena's schools--have witnessed this time and time again while attending the school board meetings. Very disappointing.	8/25/2015 10:24 AM

School Funding Survey

333	Consolidation of K-8 districts adjacent to large urban districts in Kalispell, Missoula, Helena, Great Falls, Butte, Bozeman and Billings	8/25/2015 10:20 AM
334	We need to increase our career technical education funding	8/25/2015 9:54 AM
335	Why is the commission even looking at Native American students. These are populations that are associated with sovereign nations and should not be funded further by the taxpayers of the state. Focus on the majority, not the minority. Focus on core education, not the extraneous touchy, feel subjects.	8/25/2015 9:37 AM
336	Teachers need more funds for classroom supplies, or some sort of reimbursement for spending their own money.	8/25/2015 9:27 AM
337	1. Don't cut corners, look at the long term goals and need of this state. 2. Home schooling is a wonderful right for families. Montana should have a system in place that requires state standards testing. SO employers have confidence in hiring Home school students. 3. Montana Colleges and Universities should be a focus of your efforts as that is the source of the k-12 teachers. 4. An incentive program and extra training for teachers going to small isolated schools, and cultural training for teachers who work on reservations would be helpful in recruiting and retaining teachers. 5. Indian Education For all is a very great thing Montana should be proud of. 6.This culture is changing rapidly we need to be forward thinking about the needs of students in the future, flexibility and innovation are important in all schools reward innovation and excellence. STEM is popular now but really we need to also remember the importance of liberal arts, studies continue to show the importance of liberal arts background even in tech fields. 7. Don't be limited by your own questions push past what you know and your opinions and push past your own limits, and the way you edit information coming in from past success. Be Open to New solutions be brave.	8/25/2015 8:42 AM
338	State should fund basic quality education for all children, instead of pushing the cost onto local districts, thus creating disparity between districts	8/25/2015 8:06 AM
339	There is a very real need for support for early childhood (pre-Kindergarten)programs.	8/24/2015 11:14 PM
340	It is so important to give each child an equal chance to be a successful student regardless of his or her early background. There are children who have never been read a book before they enter kindergarten. They do not have a chance to compete against children who have had multiple learning opportunities in their homes prior to entering school. I know dollars would be wisely spent on early childhood education for students and their families to equalize these differences. Young children are "sponges" for learning at this age and experiences at these young preschool ages impact their education throughout their lives. If there is any way of making preschool available to all children, I know we should do it.	8/24/2015 10:23 PM
341	Please create a special needs school so these poor children do not have to suffer the jeers and taunts of their peers.	8/24/2015 9:49 PM
342	Funding should be based on district size and the needs of each district. a smaller school district should not be getting the same amount of money as a larger school district from the state.	8/24/2015 9:48 PM
343	The children of Montana deserve better than what they are getting. Shame on this state for the poor state of the schools in my area.	8/24/2015 9:43 PM
344	There is no more essential investment for Montana and our country than education. Looking for ways to withhold funding from education is the absolute opposite of a conservative agenda for a legislature that wants to create jobs, reduce unemployment and create a sustainable economy.	8/24/2015 9:35 PM
345	In an effort to attract and retain the best educators, we need to show our teachers they are valued by providing raises that are not an insult like .5% each year for two years. This doesn't even keep up with the cost of living increase. If we want the best and brightest students, we need the best and brightest teachers and this comes at a price. Pay us what we are worth!	8/24/2015 8:42 PM
346	Allow every school to have a school board if the community wants.	8/24/2015 8:35 PM
347	Our school facilities are old and run down, and need to be better funded by the state	8/24/2015 8:11 PM
348	Dire need to retain highly qualified instructors and administrators	8/24/2015 7:31 PM
349	There are so many needs in our school systems. We live in two counties and I feel getting more qualified teachers to help correct the over crowding.	8/24/2015 7:10 PM
350	Districts should receive funding based on the number of students. Schools should be funded more equally based on enrollment.	8/24/2015 7:08 PM
351	We need to move away from the concept of Mil Levy voting to fund our schools. It is inequitable and serves to provide "fringe" elements to express their disdain for high taxation a forum to vote against funding at the expense of education and teachers/ This state offers pathetic salaries and retirement/health benefits for teachers and retirees from teaching. A different and more equitable way of funding statewide education needs to be enacted...perhaps with the initiation of the taboo topic of having a state sales tax. How can Montana, with a population of only one million people, fund education based only on property taxes?	8/24/2015 6:22 PM

School Funding Survey

352	We need money to pay staff that keeps up with or beats inflation.	8/24/2015 5:41 PM
353	To comply with mandatory testing schools need more computers and the infrastructure to run them!	8/24/2015 5:38 PM
354	Revisit how school transportation is provided. Supervised walking & biking is working in other states, could work here and save money if school transportation law is amended.	8/24/2015 5:31 PM
355	The state should help fund k-12 education so we have an educated population.	8/24/2015 4:09 PM
356	STEM is not the be all and end all. The arts and vocational programs all help everyone succeed. Our son took a course his senior year at Bozeman High to produce weekly film/video show called Hawks TV. He went on to Geography and GIS (geographic information systems) and is now a complete tech guy with a degree from UM and a very tech well paid job in Missoula. All from that singing in choir, and Hawks TV, and tennis that helped him feel successful as well as challenged to "do" something with the knowledge he was gaining.	8/24/2015 3:29 PM
357	.	8/24/2015 3:21 PM
358	I do not agree with state dollars going to charter schools and voucher programs and I think home schooled students accountability and testing requirements.	8/24/2015 2:49 PM
359	I don't envy your job! Thanks.	8/24/2015 2:46 PM
360	I do not agree with giving state dollars to charter schools and vouchers!	8/24/2015 2:33 PM
361	Any guidance/advice for local districts who are struggling with planning and/or decision making would be helpful. Resources, expertise, proven solutions, etc.	8/24/2015 1:05 PM
362	You completely missed the Flathead County-Glacier HS options on your drop down list.	8/24/2015 12:47 PM
363	We need technological upgrades, facilities upgrades and I also advocate the school food program and would like to see additional funding go toward free meals for families in need, for breakfast, lunch, after-school snack program as well as summer feeding. Kids can't learn when they are hungry.	8/24/2015 12:21 PM
364	Make sure schools are using money for facility upgrades. Make sure all schools get \$ for for facility upgrades. Teachers are paid well for 10 months. Their work is improtant. Their contract should be a yearly contract and they should work 12 months a year. Therefore that would elimnate hiring teachers for the summer and save on costs for other upgrades. I would like to see these positions become full time.	8/24/2015 11:25 AM
365	We do not have a statewide assessment system that works. Pay for a functioning system or stop forcing testing on schools.	8/24/2015 10:39 AM
366	To remember to look at all of the school districts within the state when making decisions for the entire state. I feel it is important for Montana to offer a higher wage for teachers in order to insure that we get highly qualified incoming teachers in our districts.	8/24/2015 10:34 AM
367	Consider the state resources invested in pre-school through college. How can they be streamlined to benefit our children - those that need a bit more help and those that excel beyond grade level. Try not to be provincial in your thinking and focus on the state/local fights. Try not to let the advocacy groups create unnecessary fights about urban and rural students. Support public education and don't get off track with resources to private options. Try to see this as an investment for our state's future.	8/24/2015 10:15 AM
368	I would pay more in taxes (state and local) to fund schools across the state. There is nothing more important to the future of Montana than its public schools.	8/24/2015 10:10 AM
369	Stop coal companies from cheating the state out of tax revenue buy selling from one company to another company(that the coal company both owns) and get FAIR market tax on the resources. Close the scam.	8/24/2015 10:08 AM
370	I don't believe tax dollars should go to private and charter schools. The public education system is a key foundation of our society.	8/24/2015 10:07 AM
371	I hope that the Commission will focus on specific issues that affect equality of opportunity. Concerns about paperwork and reporting should be addressed in a different existing committee.	8/24/2015 10:02 AM
372	The Commission needs to be reminded that it must consider the needs of all those children who enter our public schools.	8/24/2015 9:45 AM
373	School funding assistance from resources such as the lottery funds could be a good source to assist with continuing education. All students graduating from high school could be provided the same opportunity to attend college by funding them with these resources. The qualifier would be students would need to maintain a "B" average to receive the scholarship. There is a direct link between a better educated population and earning potential resulting in a higher quality of life. There are several states that are using this model and have found it to be a positive enhancement to improving the social status of residents.	8/24/2015 9:45 AM

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374	The infrastructure needs to be funded. Children often attend school in dilapidated, worn out, unsafe facilities and education programs are underfunded!	8/24/2015 9:42 AM
375	We're a small rural school district. Please fund transportation to include students within the three mile radius. It is unsafe for our students to walk along these rural roads with heavy traffic.	8/24/2015 9:40 AM
376	This commission should focus on the needs of public schools that are under the direct supervision of the locally elected school board. It should NOT spend any time discussing charters, vouchers, or other schemes that would divest local school boards of their authority to govern their schools.	8/24/2015 9:23 AM
377	I appreciate the opportunity to complete a questionnaire and highly recommend that you target school board members as well as principals/teachers.	8/24/2015 9:21 AM
378	Having an appointed Committee will hopefully allow those members to see how much help financially many rural schools need. As long as those member have a hands on approach to visit the small towns in MT.	8/24/2015 9:21 AM
379	Nothing else at this time.	8/24/2015 9:12 AM
380	Why are you putting our small businesses at a competitive disadvantage compared to other states? When you saddle us with the tax burden that continual tax increases bring, how are we to stay in business? Use my tax money to fund education and stop wasting it. Right now we have a \$400 million surplus. Why is that sitting there collecting dust? God, you people make me sick.	8/24/2015 9:07 AM
381	Thanks for your work on making Montana schools better for our kids.	8/24/2015 8:30 AM
382	a) Simplification of the distribution of funds should be a high consideration. b) consideration should be given to School Trust Land funds--more of that should go direct to school districts. One idea is to have a cap of those dollars that go in to the general fund and once that cap is reached, any additional funds will be distributed direct to schools.	8/24/2015 7:59 AM
383	Additionally there should be funding that will assist with marketing the value of education that students are receiving to encourage parent involvement.	8/24/2015 7:58 AM
384	Scholarships for undergrads that are going into education. It is challenging to get good teachers when they graduate from college with huge debt to try to repay on a teacher salary.	8/24/2015 7:56 AM
385	GET RID OF COMMON CORE AND DEVELOP STANDARDS AND CONTENT FOR MONTANA BY MONTANA...COMMON CORE VIOLATES THE CONSTITUTION AND SIDELINES STATE RIGHTS.	8/24/2015 7:39 AM
386	What happened to all of the Lottery \$\$\$?? Why does MT have a 30% lotto adm costs when the average per state is 13-15%?	8/24/2015 7:26 AM
387	None	8/24/2015 7:22 AM
388	its time to do right by schools if we want kids to have a future. The last legislature did an appalling job.	8/24/2015 7:06 AM
389	See above. Montana needs to start putting schools and education as more of a priority, it seems our senators and congressmen have their priorities backwards. Montana needs to find a broader tax base to fund the schools instead of the property taxes of the citizens, some of which don't even have children in the school system! If we had a sales tax, that revenue could go to infrastructure, roads etc. so that there was more left over to use for the schools, police, fire etc...	8/24/2015 12:11 AM
390	thanks for continuing to recognize that ensuring every Montanan has access to quality, comprehensive education is the most important way to keep our state healthy, wealthy, and wise.	8/23/2015 11:31 PM
391	Be careful about who and how many students are defined as "disabled." In my opinion, the ADD, ADHD etc diagnoses and medications may be out of control.	8/23/2015 11:00 PM
392	We should extend the school year to full year. The short school year is a vestige of 20th Century. If we are to compete in a world economy, there's no reason to cut short our school year. We already pay our teachers and staff full year salaries, so OPEX would increase only marginally to keep facilities open.	8/23/2015 10:16 PM
393	The state needs to get back up to the levels of funding they promised and not on the backs of property tax owners who are picking up the state's slack.	8/23/2015 9:12 PM
394	Don't make it the solution so complicated that the districts have to dedicate a staff position to ascertaining more funding. How does that help our kids learn?	8/23/2015 8:01 PM
395	It seems there are always new ways we need to spend the money schools have. The new needs are seldom fully funded and thus current programs, teacher salaries and basic maintenance needs get less funding. Most schools simply need more money than what is currently available.	8/23/2015 6:59 PM
396	Is there a better way of funding the school systems at the state level, similar to what Wyoming does?	8/23/2015 4:47 PM

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397	Montana has long had solid academic preparation. Funding to support high quality staff is key to positive student performance.	8/23/2015 3:40 PM
398	Montana can afford to contribute more state funding to schools. It is in all of our best interests.	8/23/2015 3:12 PM
399	Talk to the teachers around Montana. Get a feel on the REAL pulse of education in our rural towns. DO NOT place all the data on the input of administrators. They are NOT IN THE TRENCHES. I heard stories from Browning staff on boxes upon boxes of unopened computers, etc. never utilized. That stinks when, true story, once upon a time, we weren't even allowed as a K-1-2 staff in our schools to buy a bulk order of crayons that was worth \$49. All in all, after having taught in four school systems in Montana, we do amazingly well, in spite of the hoop jumping, funding discrepancies, etc. We have pretty solid families and stable communities to support us. Good luck, Commission, on the accuracy of your report! :) Thanks.	8/23/2015 11:44 AM
400	Some emphasis on job training for students who have no interest in college but intend to graduate directly into the workforce	8/23/2015 11:23 AM
401	Please try and get this right. Education is essential for all of our futures	8/23/2015 11:09 AM
402	Having 504 school districts in MT is ridiculous. Create one district per county and equitable distribution rules based on infrastructure costs, operational costs, and per student needs as the final factor. Small schools still have infrastructure and operational costs. By reducing the number of districts, padded administrative costs for 504 districts would be down to 56. The overhead for the Superintendents, their administrative staff and other ancillary costs are not needed in the smaller districts. Not to mention once a superintendent leaves a district they seem to have some deal to continue to pay for their benefits which continues to burden a district in perpetuity. If real change is to happen, then look to district consolidation on a county basis, introduce a best practice approach to the county districts, and eliminate paying per mile costs for bus transportation. Reward the bus providers for efficiency. I wish change were really going to happen but my overall thought is that this is just more rhetoric from the politicians. The sacred 504 districts will remain, superintendents will continue to be overly paid, and teachers will continue to be blamed for the problems. Bottom line is the good old boy system is alive and well in MT and tough change is difficult.	8/23/2015 10:41 AM
403	Don't try to bit off to much of the apple (don't try to "fix" the whole problem).	8/23/2015 9:39 AM
404	Leave the politics out of it and look at the long run big picture. Leaving kids in their own neighborhood where after school interactions don't involve transportation is a healthier lifestyle. Smaller schools don't isolate the various ages, but require interaction between them and lead to better relationships.	8/23/2015 9:09 AM
405	Our IEFA program is inadequately funded, although in HSD#1 the Indian Ed tutors are a real help. When we had Indian Ed tutors - which we no longer do - those coaches helped all teachers and children learn about and respect tribal cultures.	8/23/2015 7:55 AM
406	The state needs to invest more money in education to alleviate local taxpayers investments. The state needs to support infrastructure And repair to our old buildings and fund preK education.	8/23/2015 7:47 AM
407	Again. Let's find a way to get those schools funded equally. Also, I understand the Indian Ed for all in our curriculum. Will this better prepare our students for life? Maybe but if you are putting specific curriculum areas on a survey let's put them all from math to pe. I would like to see the needs of all students on this survey. If our state supt. were Irish would we also have the needs of Irish children on here?	8/23/2015 7:23 AM
408	Funding should be considered as an investment in the number one resource we have, our children.	8/23/2015 7:18 AM
409	Public education is the cornerstone of a highly functioning/productive society. Please, find a way to financially support it at a high level. Montana schools do a lot with a little. If our budgets were bigger we could be a leading example for the rest of the country. Thanks!	8/23/2015 7:16 AM
410	The future belongs to the county and state that educates best! They win by attracting the folks who want the best schools possible for their children and bring good paying jobs to the area with then via attraction of talent and small start ups.	8/22/2015 11:43 PM
411	Funding education is an investment in our future and not an expense or a cost. It is much cheaper to fund the education system of the state of Montana then to build and fund prisons, welfare system, unemployment benefits and other things. We must prepare our students for the 21st century in a very robust way. We should give the students every chance to succeed in the 21st century.	8/22/2015 10:10 PM
412	Student needs and adequate facilities are needed along with the recruitment and retention of qualified employees. The housing situation is a major problem in the community.	8/22/2015 10:05 PM
413	Facilities in every large district are in dire need of needed maintenance and or outright replacement. With the always guaranteed and ever increasing labor costs, how will these needs be taken care of?	8/22/2015 9:38 PM

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414	I am concerned by the funding structure the legislature has passed that places the school funding reliance on natural resources extraction. With the future uncertainty of coal and oil/gas, it is shortsighted to place the funding of our critical public education needs on an industry that is destined to decline and subject to boom/bust cycles in dizzying speed. It would be much wiser to build a trust fund that would grow into a size that would generate sustainable funding into the future. Many states do this. The federal government should also be tapped to provide substantial funding support for local schools with no attached strings. Thanks you for allowing input for this important study.	8/22/2015 8:26 PM
415	M grandchildren are in primary school. It seems many classes are over crowded and more needs to be done to insure smaller size classes.	8/22/2015 7:39 PM
416	Too much attention is being placed on testing... and "teaching to the tests"... a lot of information is being lost in the shuffle. Real life skills and basic ethics and values... and American common sense...	8/22/2015 7:25 PM
417	I believe that a successful government is one which does not necessarily keep taxes low, but one that meets the needs of her people.	8/22/2015 7:06 PM
418	Music and the arts have been shown to be critical elements in childhood brain development. When budgets are stressed the first options should not be to cut music and the arts, these must be understand to be integral and essential to a good education.	8/22/2015 5:20 PM
419	Support of Montana's public school system is vital to the economic health of our state.	8/22/2015 5:00 PM
420	You have to look at the changing costs of educating students which includes changes in federal funds, increases in students with disabilities, low teacher pay, decreased enrollment in smaller schools and the aging facilities. There is not enough tax revenue to adequately fund education and where there is a surplus there is waste such as luxurious charter buses for sports teams which could help pay a teacher's salary elsewhere. When areas lose a major tax payer - education suffers.	8/22/2015 4:50 PM
421	Funding of the school system overall needs to be dastically boosted	8/22/2015 4:46 PM
422	Open your eyes to what is really going on, be non-biased, and act accordingly for the good of ALL	8/22/2015 4:32 PM
423	Money doesn't solve problems, involved parents can help make our schools better.	8/22/2015 3:51 PM
424	Consider the salaries of the CEO's and realize that if those expenses are minimized, there is more money available for other business (education) expenses. Take a look at top end management costs and figure out how to put that money where it can actually do some good.	8/22/2015 3:29 PM
425	More needs to be spent per student. Teacher salaries need to be higher. Arts needs to be funded better.	8/22/2015 2:54 PM
426	Try to affect public opinion/attitudes with more information that is digestible, esp. on consequences of funding choices	8/22/2015 2:48 PM
427	I believe that the needs of the children with disabilities is more than served; it's time to put some money also into gifted and talented programs as well as into pre-K programs.	8/22/2015 2:28 PM
428	Please develop a plan to adequately fund our schools - ALL of our schools - to remove the need for future lawsuits. At a minimum, this plan should address school funding for the next 10 to 25 years if not longer.	8/22/2015 2:23 PM
429	Hold the Federal Government's feet to the fire for funding Federal Educational mandates. If they demand it, they should pay their fair share for providing special services to any student requiring support or intervention.	8/22/2015 2:22 PM
430	Funds schools more adequately. Current funding levels do not allow Montana to have the best schools possible. Fund infrastructure too - like a Wyoming model.	8/22/2015 2:01 PM
431	Many of our schools are not in good condition physically. Remember to fund them appropriately.	8/22/2015 1:58 PM
432	None	8/22/2015 1:49 PM
433	Adequate funding for education more than pays for itself. Investing in the future through education is important.	8/22/2015 1:28 PM
434	Keep the taxes down!	8/22/2015 1:26 PM
435	MT exports more graduates than natural resources. If our children have to make a living away from Montana they must be able to not only compete but excel. That means: unless you create industries to employ MT graduates in the state, you must provide an education that allows them to succeed outside out the state!	8/22/2015 1:07 PM
436	My children travel to Idaho and Washington state for traveling sports; more often than not, tournaments are played at schools in those locations. The schools in Idaho and Washington are much better facilities than the norm in Montana. (exempting out Glacier High School in Kalispell and Chief Joseph Middle School in Bozeman.)	8/22/2015 12:58 PM
437	Quit subsidizing trailer park trash to have more and more children	8/22/2015 12:53 PM
438	The state legislatures have shifted too much of school funding to the local districts leaving little room for funding needed improvements through levies	8/22/2015 12:45 PM

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439	The schools need more operation costs to provide for fair and equitable pay throughout the state. A state teacher pay plan would get rid of many of the pay disparities though out the state and provide for easier bargaining for the local districts. State pay would have to step up for that to happen.	8/22/2015 12:43 PM
440	Your decisions will have such far-reaching impact-please keep the best interests of our students in mind. Public education is there for ALL students, not just the gifted, or the wealthy, or the easy to teach. Please make our public schools top priority.	8/22/2015 12:30 PM
441	Anti-bully campaigns still a threat Suicide Prevention Resources - Education (important). I work for www.letstalkbillings.org if interested in more information.	8/22/2015 12:15 PM
442	Provide opt out for homeschool families, rather than paying for tax funded education and their own curriculum.	8/22/2015 12:14 PM
443	Do not intriduce extreme liberal programs from controversial associations as was attempted in helena a few years ago.	8/22/2015 12:05 PM
444	Special needs children should be educated separately and the gifts that they have should be enhanced. Too much pressure is put on the handicapped and regular students by being integrated.	8/22/2015 11:36 AM
445	The school system today is not the same one I grew up in. Less middle & upper class individuals are having children & they are having them in smaller numbers. The majority of children now are living in single parent situations where their parents were never married or became divorced. This is a huge change for school systems to deal with. Living with a single parent puts children at risk for living below the poverty line and that usually has a correlation with learning issues at school. The positive aspect of better diagnosing learning disabilities & delays also comes with a higher. price tag. Please look at the funding system for our schools and be open to additional ways we can find them ex: sales tax or other additional revenue stream. The cost of education has gotten too high and the risks of not finding them properly are too great.	8/22/2015 11:27 AM
446	We need a funding model that is predictable and legislature needs to stop blatantly ignoring the gifted education mandate.	8/22/2015 11:23 AM
447	Funding for arts	8/22/2015 11:18 AM
448	Put partisan/ideological biases aside to objectively look at school funding in Montana. Talk to educators, visit our poorest schools and read the research as you consider your task.	8/22/2015 11:12 AM
449	Parents ought to be expected to participate in their child's education - that includes being welcomed into schools and to be able to monitor their child's classroom on occasion and in the least disruptive manner.	8/22/2015 11:02 AM
450	The state needs to stop shifting funding on local districts. Funding from the state needs to be seen has an investment in local communities & economic development as well as the future of Montana	8/22/2015 10:51 AM
451	Still need to reduce the number of districts statewide.	8/22/2015 10:51 AM
452	Charter schools and other efforts to siphon funding from our PUBLIC educational system only weakens the quality for every one.	8/22/2015 10:49 AM
453	The Commission needs to step inside multiple classrooms to see what it's REALLY like before enacting policies that affect a lot of people.	8/22/2015 10:48 AM
454	data, data, data. Montana is not even close to maximizing the value of the data that we have already.	8/22/2015 10:42 AM
455	Those schools in oil based economies should have a bigger share of the oil taxes	8/22/2015 10:40 AM
456	We are losing our top teachers to WA and WY. That MUST be stopped by offering competitive salaries.	8/22/2015 10:39 AM
457	Do not even discuss diverting resources from public schools to private schools. Our population can not adequately support private schools and if we try, it will be at the expense of public schools. Our public schools need every dollar we can come up with to appropriately address our students' needs. There is adequate choice within our public schools to address every child's needs unless parents choose to have their child in a religious school. If that is the case, that is their choice and they get to fund that choice.	8/22/2015 10:05 AM
458	No tax dollars for private schools. We can't afford i . Those schools can use a sliding scale and fundraisers. Public school parents do plenty fundraising activities already.	8/22/2015 9:54 AM
459	A building/facilities fund like Wyoming would really help.	8/22/2015 9:44 AM
460	Please review the previous assessment systems and consider allowing schools to select their own assessment tools.	8/22/2015 9:40 AM
461	Don't skimp on the education of our children.	8/22/2015 9:37 AM
462	Montana's public schools are among the best in the nation, despite poor funding. Please help us make them even better	8/22/2015 8:48 AM
463	Please find a way to allocate more funding and teacher salaries toward arts funding.	8/22/2015 8:45 AM

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464	Find a way to make funding fair and equitable. Get rid of the property tax based system. There needs to be a set amount of money distributed equally among all public schools.	8/22/2015 8:40 AM
465	Please evaluate and prioritize the true "basic" needs in order to keep costs and taxes down.	8/22/2015 8:38 AM
466	If the residents in a school district will not finance their school system, from teacher salaries to facility maintenance the problem is theirs, not that of the state.	8/22/2015 8:35 AM
467	21st-century learning should look much different than the classroom environment we learned in. Technology is a rapidly changing and readily available. Most kids in the late grade school years know more about technology than the average adult. We need to make sure that school districts in Montana are integrating technology in all parts of their curriculum. That being said I see technology being used in my children's classroom as a way to do mass standardized testing multiple times a year. I would like to see that end, it is of no help to my children.	8/22/2015 8:32 AM
468	Stop taking funds away from schools	8/22/2015 8:32 AM
469	Get it done! otherwise a court system is going to do it again.	8/22/2015 8:23 AM
470	Education is an investment not a cost. There should not be discussion of public funds for private schools.	8/22/2015 8:06 AM
471	Don't play party politics. It's about education of the states largest natural asset, children.	8/22/2015 8:01 AM
472	I believe that the current definition of a quality education is pretty good. However, the components of the funding formula that is supposed to implement the definition are not all adequately funded. Specifically, appropriations for at-risk students are woefully inadequate, as is state funding for special education and gifted and talented programs. The state also needs to take seriously the need to fund facility needs. There is a huge backlog of unaddressed infrastructure needs. Also, while the state has been eager to support and encourage the purchase of technology in schools, it has not recognized that there is an equal responsibility to fund the maintenance and replacement of technological infrastructure.	8/22/2015 7:58 AM
473	The smaller schools need the ability to have more dual credit opportunities available to students	8/22/2015 7:57 AM
474	Our students are suffering because we are unable to recruit qualified teachers and administrators because districts are unable to adequately pay them. Our students deserve better!	8/22/2015 7:37 AM
475	Keep common core.	8/22/2015 7:35 AM
476	STOP the siphoning of money from regular ed into special education	8/22/2015 7:33 AM
477	Raise public school funding.	8/22/2015 7:28 AM
478	Get rid of the convoluted common core math. 1+1=2. Simple as that.	8/22/2015 7:00 AM
479	Advocate for massive cuts in bloated education system	8/21/2015 9:23 PM
480	I need advice on how to advocate for children who do not suffer disabilities but whose needs are not considered by the system.	8/20/2015 1:07 PM
481	Special Ed and Gifted Ed are not mutually exclusive. I have a child who is both, and I have yet to see any program or system that addresses both simultaneously. He can't 'turn off' his Asperger's when he's on a gifted field trip, and in my experience, that is what was expected of him.	8/20/2015 12:31 PM
482	You do not have any Missoula middle schools listed as choices to choose from--nor do you have the three high schools listed. Nor do you have Chief Charlo (an elementary school) listed.	8/20/2015 12:03 PM
483	So much emphasis has been put on bringing up students who are behind and those efforts need to continue. However, we must stop ignoring the needs of gifted students. Our future leaders and innovators are being left to fend for themselves while schools struggle to avoid having kids fail to meet minimums. We are sacrificing the future of our country by failing to meet the needs of the gifted population.	8/20/2015 11:32 AM
484	Please learn from the work done in the past and stay within the parameters of the charge of the Commission. Decades of effort to address equity and adequacy of school funding in our state is on the record and many of the recommendations from that record are now law. The progress is slow but the depth of study and work of the Commission can lead to changes that positively impact the education of Montana's children. Thanks for your contributions and service.	8/20/2015 9:49 AM
485	State needs to invest in facilities and seriously look into consolidating districts.	8/19/2015 10:10 PM
486	None at this time!	8/19/2015 9:48 PM
487	It would be difficult, but all schools should get away from FEDERAL funding. It should be left to locals.	8/19/2015 8:24 PM
488	More local, parental involvement. Less federal control and politicizing by liberal special interest groups. End tenure.	8/19/2015 5:19 PM
489	Why aren't we preparing our children for college?	8/19/2015 4:04 PM

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490	Our Montana schools need to be teaching reading, writing,(English), math, biology, chemistry, shop, homemaking, accurate history, speech, and other old school basics. Let the parents and guardians take care of the other things.	8/19/2015 3:31 PM
491	We continue to pour money in to schools with very little accountability. The unions want more and more dollars, but to not want reform or accountability for teachers.	8/19/2015 2:39 PM
492	A good educational system that does not allow children to fall behind and yet challenge students will contribute to a functioning society. Keep religious teaching out of public schools.	8/19/2015 2:15 PM
493	Put a mandate in the formula that additional funding for difficult to educate students should increase number of teachers and NOT for pay raises. No pay raises until the proper number of teachers are on staff.	8/19/2015 1:52 PM
494	One of the biggest challenges is paying wages, insurance benefits and retirement benefits - the ever increasing costs to the local district often means no raise on base wages. Quality teachers find it very easy to leave Montana, to equally satisfying working conditions at higher pay in many surrounding states. As with everything, you get what you pay for. Would also like to see a realistic approach to merit based pay, ending tenure and giving local boards more support in dealing with union demands.	8/19/2015 1:11 PM
495	You have an onerous task. Please do not be swayed by groups on either side of the political pendulum.	8/19/2015 12:24 PM
496	Please allow funds to be transfered to carryover fund so we as board members can be fiscally responsible.	8/19/2015 12:23 PM
497	Stop funding efforts to take the job of a parent. If little Johnny mis behaves send him home not to counseling and certainly don't dumb him down with drugs.	8/19/2015 12:18 PM
498	Decrease bureaucratic waste	8/19/2015 12:09 PM
499	The size and scope of OPI is out of control. The administrative overhead is consuming education dollars.	8/19/2015 11:59 AM
500	Thank you for your service	8/19/2015 11:54 AM
501	State funding for private charter schools or other private schools that do not have the same accountability and licensing requirements as public schools and are not governed by a locally elected board is NOT ACCEPTABLE. As a taxpayer, I'm strongly opposed to that.	8/19/2015 11:43 AM
502	Make sure funding is being spent on needs not what's nice to have.	8/19/2015 11:39 AM
503	Recruitment of teachers is number one. They are impossible to find. Each year it gets harder and harder.	8/19/2015 11:12 AM