



PO Box 993
Helena MT 59624

Fiscal Year 2019 Invoice

Bill To:

Mr. Matt Jensen
Bigfork Public Schools
PO Box 188
Bigfork, MT 59911

Invoice #: 2217
Invoice Date: 4/5/2018
Due Date: 7/1/2018

Date	Description	Amount
4/5/2018	MQEC Membership - Fiscal Year 2019	2,000.00

Thank you for your support.

Total	\$2,000.00
Payments/Credits	\$0.00
Balance Due	\$2,000.00



Montana Quality Education Coalition

April 6, 2018

MQEC is the “Constitutional Guardian” of Article X of the Montana State Constitution, working for public school students and their communities.

We advocate for, pursue, and defend the need for adequate and equitable funding to provide quality education for each of Montana’s public school students.

Dear Matt,

The MQEC Board of Directors would like to thank Bigfork Public Schools for your membership this year, and we invite you to renew membership for the 2018-2019 school year. MQEC is a collaborative effort of the entire education community, providing the vital advocacy function of holding the state accountable to the guarantees of the Montana Constitution:

- *The legislature shall provide a **basic system of free quality public elementary and secondary schools** (Article X, Sec 1).*
- *The legislature, counties, cities, towns, school districts, and public corporations **shall not make any direct or indirect appropriation or payment from any public fund or monies, or any grant of lands or other property for any sectarian purpose or to aid any church, school, academy, seminary, college, university, or other literary or scientific institution, controlled in whole or in part by any church, sect, or denomination** (Article X, Section 6).*
- *The **supervision and control of schools in each school district shall be vested in a board of trustees to be elected as provided by law** (Article X, Section 8).*
- *There is a **board of public education to exercise general supervision over the public school system and such other public educational institutions as may be assigned by law** (Article X, Section 9).*
- ***No appropriation shall be made for religious, charitable, industrial, educational, or benevolent purposes to any private individual, private association, or private corporation not under control of the state** (Article V, Section 11(a)).*

These constitutional guarantees are challenged in each legislative session, and the education community has turned to the courts for relief when necessary. In the 1980s, these actions addressed equity issues (Lobel decision, 1989). Since MQEC’s inception in 2002, we have worked with the education community to pursue adequacy (Sherlock decisions, 2004; 2008) and to maintain equity in state funding. Additionally in 2011, the education community through MQEC returned to court and successfully restored statutory inflation increases for the 2011-2012 biennium.

Following the passage of SB 410 in the 2015 legislative session, the education community through MQEC has actively participated in court action, including two appeals to the Montana Supreme Court, to defeat the channeling of public tax dollars to sectarian schools. SB 410 litigation is critical to the future of public education funding in our state. If we do not successfully defend the constitutional prohibition of aid to sectarian schools, this could open the door for additional mechanisms that direct public funds to private educational purposes – any of which would be harmful to public education funding.

Separately, but just as important, the lower-than-anticipated state revenues in the current biennium has put MQEC on high alert for the 2019 legislative session. To protect the funding necessary to provide quality education to our students, it is imperative that we:

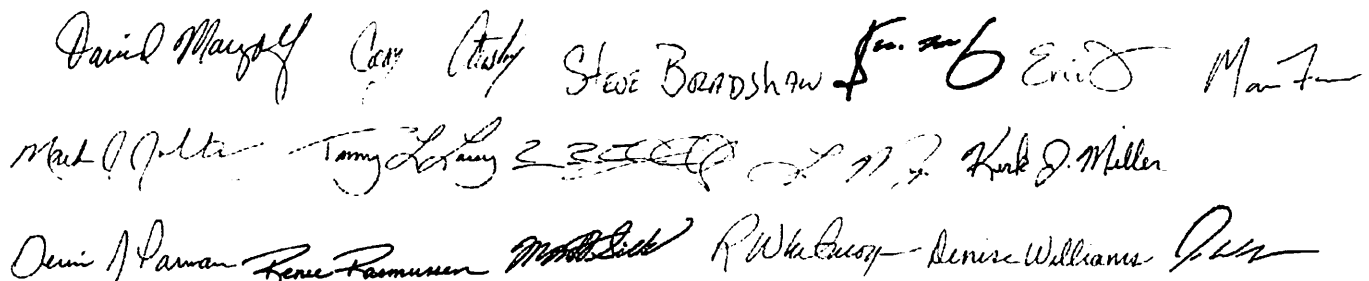
- Defend and preserve the existing funding formula defined in 20-9-309 MCA
- Insist upon the return of the Data for Achievement payment
- Insist upon continued expansion of Guaranteed Tax Base Payments (224% in FY2020, 232% in FY2021)
- Insist upon funding for the school facilities program that was established, but not funded, in the 2017 legislative session.

As described in the attached datasheet, the education community and MQEC have been effective in protecting the interests of public education. The gains from our 2004 litigation continue to multiply, and today each school district in Montana receives significantly more funding per pupil than we would have seen without intervention of the courts – a difference of \$940 per pupil in the 2017 school year. *Just think of how different your district budget decisions would be without these additional dollars.*

The educational community has worked successfully together over the past several years, finding substantial areas of common ground and presenting a united front in our lobbying efforts. MQEC's voice is an essential component of that solidarity. Your membership in MQEC is important to our continued and collective success in providing quality public education for each child in Montana. Please consider supporting our efforts this year. If you have any questions about the renewal process, please contact our Executive Director, Dianne Burke, at 406-449-4594 or at dburke@mqec.org.

Sincerely,

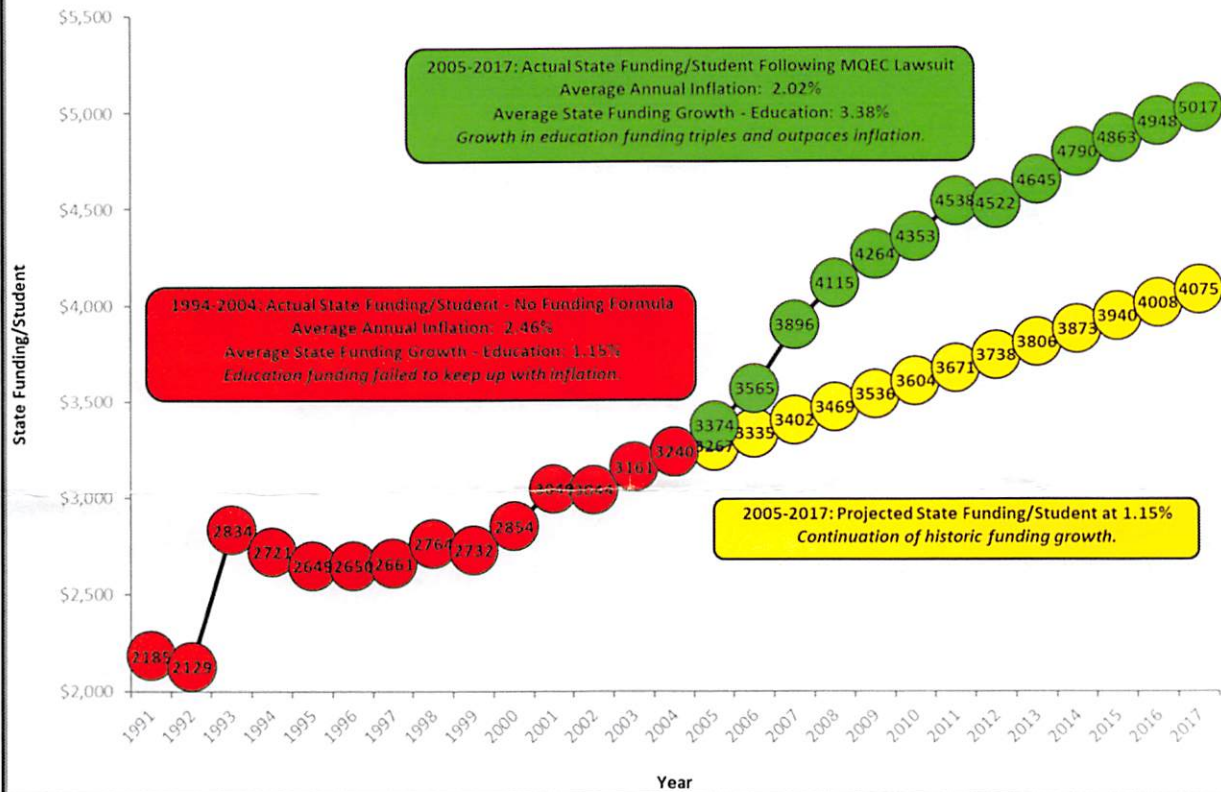
Your MQEC Board of Directors,



Dave Marzolf, Chair – Sun River Valley Schools
Corey Austin – Target Range Public School
Steve Bradshaw – Columbia Falls Public Schools
Jack Copps – Helena Public Schools
Eric Feaver – Montana Federation of Public Employees
Marco Ferro – Montana Federation of Public Employees
Mark Johnston – Ronan Public Schools
Tammy Lacey – Great Falls Public Schools
Lance Melton – Montana School Boards Association
Les Meyer – Fairfield Public Schools

Kirk Miller – School Administrators of Montana
Dennis Parman – Montana Rural Education Association
Renee Rasmussen – Bainville Public School
Monte Silk – Sidney Public Schools
Ron Whitmoyer – East Helena Public Schools
Denise Williams – Montana Association of School Business Officials
Jon Wrzesinski – Baker Public Schools

The Value of MQEC: \$940/student in 2016-2017



Statewide Funding Increase 2005-2017

Fiscal Year	Projected State Contribution/pupil based on historical trends (yellow line on chart)	Actual State Contribution/pupil (green line on chart)	Funding Attributed to MQEC Efforts (Difference between Actual and Projected)	Statewide student enrollment	Statewide increased funding
2005	\$3,267	\$3,374	\$107	147,652	\$15,754,217
2006	\$3,335	\$3,565	\$230	148,899	\$34,294,712
2007	\$3,402	\$3,896	\$495	147,019	\$72,705,211
2008	\$3,469	\$4,115	\$646	150,157	\$97,035,017
2009	\$3,536	\$4,264	\$728	149,748	\$108,958,293
2010	\$3,604	\$4,353	\$750	148,865	\$111,577,779
2011	\$3,671	\$4,538	\$866	147,965	\$128,200,290
2012	\$3,738	\$4,522	\$784	147,525	\$115,593,652
2013	\$3,806	\$4,645	\$840	147,705	\$124,021,476
2014	\$3,873	\$4,790	\$917	148,567	\$136,246,611
2015	\$3,940	\$4,863	\$922	149,410	\$137,786,862
2016	\$4,008	\$4,948	\$940	150,187	\$141,176,168
2017	\$4,075	\$5,017	\$940	151,433	\$142,347,020
				Cumulative Per-Pupil Increase in Funding	\$1,365,697,308
				Quality Schools Grant Program	\$63,036,219
				Cumulative Per-Pupil Increase in Funding + QSGP: 2005-2017	\$1,428,733,527

