

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
STATE OF MONTANA

GREG GIANFORTE
GOVERNOR



KRISTEN JURAS
LT. GOVERNOR

May 15, 2025

The Honorable Brandon Ler
Speaker of the House
State Capitol
Helena, MT 59620

The Honorable Matt Regier
President of the Senate
State Capitol
Helena, MT 59620

Dear Speaker Ler and President Regier:

I'm proud of what we accomplished together this year to provide record support for public education, investing in our classrooms and not on education bureaucracy.

Our measures were critically important given the generational high levels of inflation from the last four-plus years. No household, business, sector of our economy, or school was immune to the impact of rising inflation.

In April, the Legislature passed House Bill 266, and I signed it into law on May 1. House Bill 266 clarifies how inflationary adjustments for our K-12 public schools are calculated and reported to lawmakers. First, the new law requires the Superintendent of Public Instruction to provide to legislative interim committees and the Legislative Finance Committee with information and data about K-12 education funding and inflation.

Second, the new law clarifies that neither a Superintendent nor a Governor are limited to a 3% cap when recommending inflation adjustments for school funding during budgeting.

Third and as a practical matter, the Legislature has the authority to appropriate funds, adopt laws regarding inflation adjustments for school funding, and implement its own inflation factor for K-12 education funding, regardless of what a Superintendent or a Governor proposes.

Finally, and most importantly when considering Senate Bill 258, Section 2 of House Bill 266 reads, "If both Senate Bill No. 258 and [this act] are passed and approved, then Senate Bill No. 258 is void." Because House Bill 266 is law, Senate Bill 258 is unnecessary.

Therefore, in accordance with the power vested in me as Governor by the Constitution and the laws of the State of Montana, I hereby veto SB 258: "AN ACT CLARIFYING THE LEGISLATURE'S AUTHORITY TO PROVIDE SCHOOL FUNDING INFLATIONARY ADJUSTMENTS DIFFERENT THAN THOSE CALCULATED TO DETERMINE THE PRESENT LAW BASE; AND AMENDING SECTION 20-9-326, MCA."

Sincerely,



Greg Gianforte
Governor

Enclosure

cc: Legislative Services Division
Christi Jacobsen, Secretary of State