

HB 252 “STARS” Act & Future-Ready payments



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HB 252 “Student and Teacher Advancement for Results and Success (STARS) Act



Rep. Llew Jones, R – Conrad

Montana HB 252, the "Student and Teacher Advancement for Results and Success Act (STARS)," aims to enhance the K12 school the funding formula through incentives and a housing cost budget increases.

1. Enhance the TEACH Act – higher payments to districts per qualified employee if they have a minimum wage for new teachers and hit thresholds for salary compression.
2. Incentives for smaller districts to share resources.
3. Raise budget limits for districts with high housing costs.
4. Extend “advanced opportunities” funding (funds for districts to create individualized career pathways for grade 6-12 students.
5. **Create a “Future-Ready” payment – Incentive for schools to deliver dual enrollment or industry-credentials of similar rigor.**

Future-Ready Payment

Future-Ready Goal		HS Payment	Elementary Payment
Level 1	15 postsecondary or CTE Equivalent credits	10% ANB (~\$800)	10% ANB (~\$600)
Level 2	30 postsecondary or CTE Equivalent credits	20%ANB (~\$1600)	20% ANB (~\$1200)
Level 3	Associates Degree	30% ANB (~\$2400)	30% ANB (~\$1800)

Postsecondary Credits → ‘The commissioner of higher education shall provide to the office of public instruction an annually updated list of the criteria of courses of study, including any completion or examination requirements, that a high school student may take that result in eligibility for transcribed credit at any unit of the Montana university system based on the adopted policies of the board of regents of higher education.’

ACTION STEPS

- Fall 2025 faculty process to align how AP / IB scores relate to academic credit in the MUS.
 - Spring 2026 revisions to BOR policy related to AP / IB scores and academic credit.
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Future-Ready Payment

“CTE Equivalent Credits”

“Annually, but not later than December 1, the department of labor and industry shall adopt in rule a list of industry-recognized credentials, combinations of credentials, and work-based learning experiences, and the credit value of each. The list must:

- (a) be developed, in part, with input from industry stakeholders, school districts, the office of public instruction, and the office of the commissioner of higher education;
 - (b) include credentials, combinations of credentials, and work-based learning experiences that lead to enhanced employment opportunities at higher rates of compensation and, when feasible, are stackable toward further credentialing;”
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Future-Ready Payment

2023-24 Senior Credit Analysis by MHSAA Class

Credits	AA	A	B	C	Home School	Other	Private	Total	% of Sr Class
1-14	1383	607	378	228	38	40	113	2787	75.9%
15-29	307	191	111	72	34	11	21	747	20.3%
30+	38	19	16	18	39	0	8	138	3.8%

Questions and Implications:

- If trends hold Future Ready Payments won't drive a high level of funding solely through dual enrollment. In 2023-2024, would have led to ~\$1.5m in school payments.
- Of DE participants, B & C schools have higher rates of hitting goals (26%) than A or AA (22%)
- But we expect gaps in access to some dual credit pathways in rural areas.

ACTION STEPS:

- Collaboration with OPI, School Administrators of Montana, MTDA and others to develop a resource guide and template pathways for districts.
 - Developing an inventory of existing pathway partnerships between campuses and districts.
 - Assessing gaps in access to course / pathway access.
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