

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
STATE OF MONTANA

STEVE BULLOCK
GOVERNOR



MIKE COONEY
LT. GOVERNOR

August 10, 2020

Superintendent Elsie Arntzen
Office of Public Instruction, State of Montana
P.O. Box 202501
Helena, MT 59620

Subject: Transportation Reimbursement for School Districts

Dear Superintendent Arntzen:

This letter serves to inform you that the Governor's Office will reimburse school districts for transportation costs incurred as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic that exceed usual transportation costs through December 30, 2020. Accordingly, the Office of Public Instruction (OPI) should plan to reimburse school districts' state transportation claims only for usual transportation costs through December 30, 2020. That is, for the remainder of the calendar year, OPI should plan to reimburse schools in accordance with its normal procedure, pursuant to § 20-10-145, MCA, for the amount the state would normally provide school districts in non-emergency circumstances.

The Governor's Office will provide up to \$10 million to cover schools' incremental transportation costs, using relief funds made available to the state under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act. As the CARES Act requires, Coronavirus Relief Funds may only be spent to mitigate otherwise unanticipated expenses arising directly from the COVID-19 pandemic. As to this specific allocation of \$10 million in federal funding, I have designated this money only for the transport of students to and from school. This money should prevent school districts, counties, and the state from incurring school transportation-related costs as a result of the pandemic. I understand that our offices are working together now to develop a webinar to guide school districts in how to seek and receive this funding. As always, I am pleased that we are able to work together for the good of our schools and students.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "S. Bullock".

STEVE BULLOCK
Governor