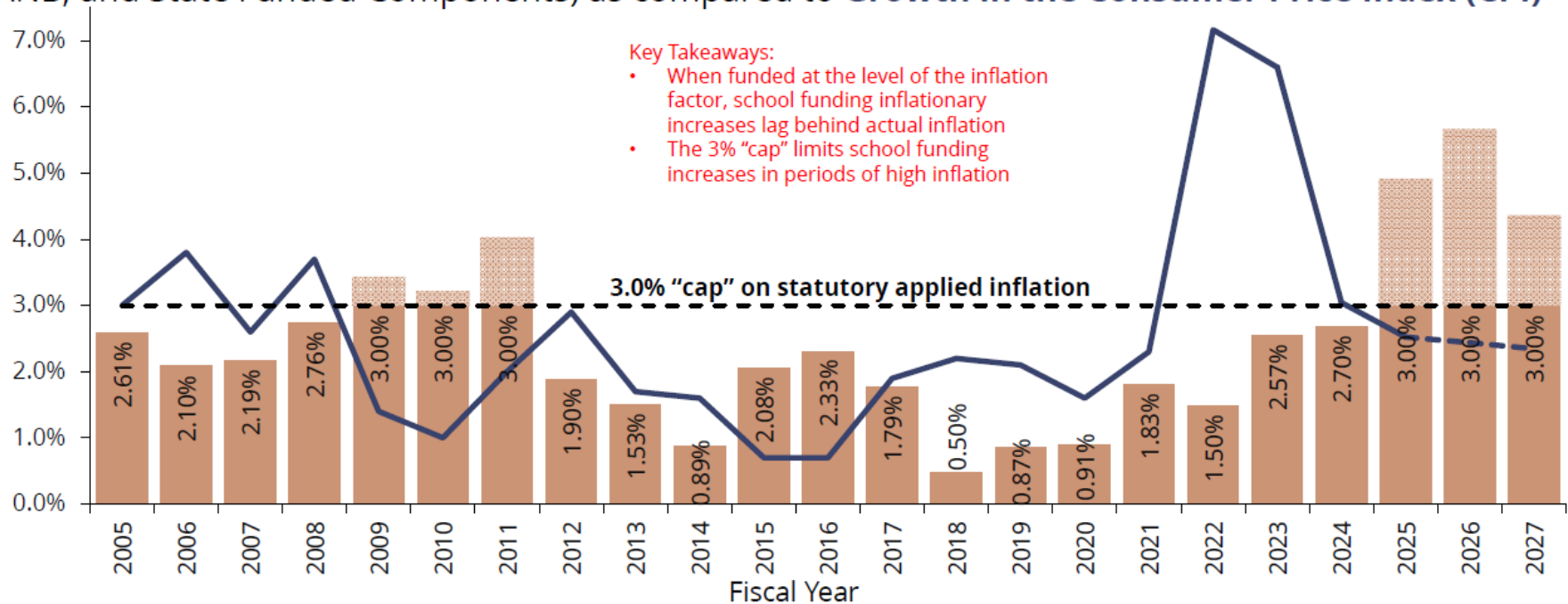


	MT	Kalispell	Jaret Stump	Self	07/15/2026 08:23 AM
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Subject: inflationary gap	Attachments:
Comment: -	 VIEW ATTACHMENT 1

Statutorily Defined Inflation Factor

Present Law Statutory Applied Inflation for K-12 Education Components (Basic Entitlements, Per ANB, and State Funded Components) as compared to **Growth in the Consumer Price Index (CPI)**

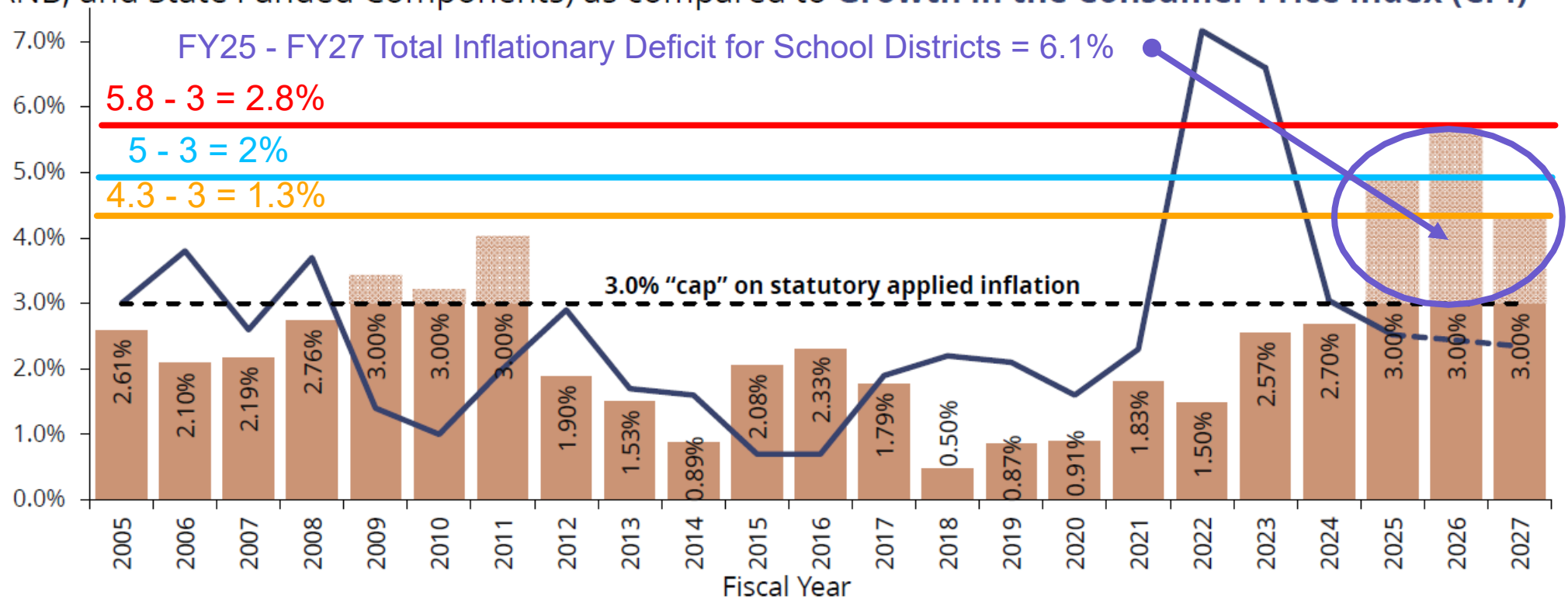


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DIVISION

This is the data from February's meeting showing how Montana's current funding mechanism has been adjusted for inflation over the past 20+ years. Our current funding mechanism, although trailing with the 3 year average, seems to have kept up with inflation except in years that exceed the the 3% cap. These inflationary humps have been ignored by the legislature and our governor each time they have occurred. So elimination of the cap may suffice to make our current system much more accurate of the actual increases our children deserve. Remember that when districts make budget cuts, that almost always includes cutting staff that support our children.

Statutorily Defined Inflation Factor

Present Law Statutory Applied Inflation for K-12 Education Components (Basic Entitlements, Per ANB, and State Funded Components) as compared to **Growth in the Consumer Price Index (CPI)**



To "true-up" the inflationary gap that districts lost during 2021-2024 would take approximately 6.1%. This number represents the cumulative inflation amount that probably should have occurred had the statutory applied inflation been allowed to grow past the 3% cap over the last few years. Had this extra 6.1% in funding been applied to school budgets, the school districts around the state would most likely not be in such dire straits as we see today.



	MT	Potomac	Heather Marcella	Self	07/15/2026 03:24 PM
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Subject: Support for CAMPS School Funding Proposal

Attachments:

Comment: The attached letter was submitted to commission members prior to the July 20th meeting. Thank you for allowing this submission.

 [VIEW](#)
[ATTACHMENT 1](#)

July 14th, 2026

Members of the School Funding Interim Commission,

Thank you for devoting your time and effort to serve on the School Funding Interim Commission. This study and any subsequent improvements suggested for Montana's public-school funding system is of vital importance. It is my sincere hope that meaningful changes can be applied to our school funding formula and I appreciate the work the Commission has undertaken to address this.

I am currently a school board trustee of a rural school district, employed as a school business official for another rural school district, a parent of two school aged children, a landowning taxpayer and a community member. My perspective is multi-faceted and I believe strong public schools are essential to the future of Montana. Every community, especially our smaller rural towns, depends upon schools that can attract quality educators, provide educational opportunities for students, and remain financially stable over the long term. Schools in rural areas do not only provide education, in many instances they are the heart of the community, without which these towns would be reduced to a group of homes sharing the same general location. Schools are at the foundation of communities.

My own vision for Montana would be to strengthen educational opportunity, improve the long-term financial stability of our public schools, and provide meaningful property tax relief. This is no small task to accomplish and in reviewing the Coalition proposal, I think it is a good start to addressing these goals. I recognize that the proposal creates a funding system that is straight forward, easier for people to understand, and continues to protect local decision-making.

I encourage you to view the Coalition proposal as a comprehensive framework for modernizing our current funding formula. Some individual improvements can strengthen Montana's current funding system and deserve serious consideration. However, I have seen individual improvements each legislative session and the cumulative effect these have created. The good that is generated comes at the expense of further complicating the school funding formula. This is an issue for tax payers, community members, school trustees and administrators. This over complication negatively impacts communication and comprehension of how schools receive their funding and where it is being spent. This has generated distrust from the public and in many cases has become a factor in the failure of many local schools voted levies. I hope the Commission will continue working toward a comprehensive solution. If fiscal realities require implementation over several years, a coordinated phase-in can preserve the integrity of the proposal while providing gradual benefits for schools, communities, and taxpayers alike.

Thank you again for your willingness to study this issue carefully and thank you for your service to the people of Montana. I respectfully encourage you to recommend a constitutional, comprehensive, and achievable path toward modernizing Montana's public-school funding system.

Sincerely,
Heather Marcella

Potomac, Montana: resident/school board trustee
Clinton, Montana: school business official/parent of a student
Missoula County Public Schools: resident/parent of a student