

Supreme Court delays talk of sanctions in school funding case

By Jerry Cornfield
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State lawmakers are getting a little more time from the state Supreme Court to show they've complied with a contempt order in the [McCleary case](#) – but not much.

Chief Justice Barbara Madsen [filed an order](#) Monday giving lawmakers until 15 days after the end of their final special session or July 27, which ever comes first, to take steps necessary to avoid further punishment.

Basically, what they must do is turn in a plan detailing how the state intends to meet a 2018 deadline for funding basic education and lessening school districts' reliance on local property taxes to operate. That was the essence of the 2012 court decision.

Justices demanded such a plan last year and found lawmakers in contempt when they did not turn one in. They gave them until the end of the 2015 legislative session to get it in and have now extended the deadline twice because of the two special sessions.

Meanwhile, the 2012 ruling also required lawmakers to file annual progress reports on their compliance efforts. This year's report is now due along with a response to the contempt order.

Madsen also said the folks who brought the lawsuit will be allowed to tell the court what, if any, punishment they think should be exercised against lawmakers.