



Sweetwater County School District #1 – Keeping Students A Priority
HB0236

- **Total fiscal impact of the Omnibus bill make it difficult to provide the basket of good necessary for a quality education of our students. Let's keep students first.**

Special Education—capped at 16-17 expenditures

Current funding: 100% Proposed for 18-19 and thereafter: 100% of 16-17 expenses + 100% of out of district placements

- Federal Law IDEA and Chapter 7 Special Education rules and regulations require Districts to comply and meet student needs governed by an Individual Education Plan. The District is currently under a corrective action plan requiring staff training, system alignment, and focused delivery of services for students, which must be provided regardless of cost. Capping expenses at the 16-17 level causes another unfunded mandate placed upon the District with corrective action plan requirements that must be completed. District concerns include litigious issues in meeting student IEP needs and addressing an increased population of students receiving special services.

Accountability and student needs

- Our District recognizes the need for counselors in grades K-6 and school nurses. We currently have a counselor in each school supporting those grade levels. The current funding model does not specifically include counselors in grades K-6 or nurses. This does not support educating students with unique needs, positive behavior expectations, and school safety efforts. These elements should be part of the essential basket of goods for all students.
- The District has a large subgroup of English Learners (472 students in 15-16). Under proposed legislation, the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) may require student achievement accountability for adequate growth either by individual EL student or by school. The current funding model provides only 1 EL teacher: 100 students. In essence, schools are held accountable for an inadequately funded mandate.

Transportation—capped at 16-17 expenditures

Current funding: 100% Proposed for 18-19 and thereafter: 100% of 16-17 expenses

- Chapter 20 Transportation rules and regulations require bussing for students living outside a designated radius. Limiting the amount of reimbursements without regulation adjustments is another unfunded mandate placed upon the District. If a cap on reimbursements is implemented, students may be required to walk further to school or spend an undue amount of time riding to or from school on bus routes. Bus routes would be fewer in total and longer in length. General inflation is not being considered such as increased fuel prices, student enrollment and additional routes needs. What constitutes an emergency? Bus purchases require a minimum of three months for delivery. Emergencies would prove difficult to address in a timely fashion.

Operating Days – reduced from 185 to 180 and Administrative Salaries – reduced 10% in 18-19 (each year thereafter)

- The loss of five days equates to lower teacher salaries and loss of professional development days. Recruitment and retention of quality teachers and administrators will be harmed. Wyoming attracts a higher quality candidate pool in many areas due to the pay and training. Hattie (2012) stated collective teacher efficacy (effect size of 1.57) resulted as one of the biggest factors resulting in improved student achievement. An effect size

of .40 represents one year's growth over the course of one school year. Professional development efforts allowing teachers and administrators to collaborate result in improved instruction and student learning. Eliminating five training days inhibits achievement scores and teacher quality.

Instructional Facilitators – reduced from 0.9 FTE (17-18) and 0.45 FTE (each year thereafter)

<u>Current funding:</u>	<u>Proposed for 17-18:</u>	<u>Proposed for 18-19 and thereafter:</u>
13.5 FTE	13.5 FTE	6.5 – 7 FTE
Loss of funding:	\$0	\$664,000 per year

- With the proposed reductions, any loss in instructional facilitator positions will eliminate teaching positions and cause a reduction in workforce. These positions serve as mentors for teachers through in-district training, provide instructional support, and analyze data to assist in making instructional decisions. Instructional facilitators have been utilized as a cost savings measure by providing professional development without extensive out of district travel costs or consultant fees. The District has 39% of the student population eligible for free and reduced lunch. By reducing instructional facilitators, the most at-risk population of students will suffer due to the lack of support the classroom teachers receive from the coach.