



## Sweetwater County School District #1

### *Keeping Students a Priority*

Education impacts Wyoming's most important resource, our students. We have ONE OPPORTUNITY to provide a quality education and prepare them to be productive citizens. Do not sacrifice the quality education currently provided for our students due to a reduction in financial resources.

“Because education is one of the state’s most important functions, lack of financial resources will not be an acceptable reason for failure to provide the best educational system. All other financial considerations must yield until education is funded.”

*Campbell Cty. Sch. Dist. v. State*, 907 P.2d 1238, 1279 (Wyo. 1995) (*Campbell I*). 2

“Supporting an opportunity for a complete, proper, quality education is the legislature’s paramount priority; competing priorities not of constitutional magnitude are secondary, and the legislature may not yield to them until constitutionally sufficient provision is made for elementary and secondary education...The constitution requires it be the best we can do...To that end, this court required the legislature to consider education as a paramount priority over all other considerations and has identified class space, class size, teacher quality, and local innovation as factors critical to its determination that the legislature is providing a quality education.”

*State v. Campbell Cty. Sch. Dist.*, 2001 WY 19, ¶ 51, 19 P.3d 518, 538 (citing *Campbell I*, 907 P.2d at 1279; *Washakie Cty. Sch. Dist. No. One v. Herschler*, 606 P.2d 310 (Wyo. 1980)).

### *District Reductions*

- The negative ECA reduction to the District foundation guarantee (block grant) is approximately \$392,647 for the 17-18 school year.
- Examples of 5%, 10%, and 15% reductions to the block grant results in the following losses respectively: \$4.08 million; \$8.17 million; and \$12.25 million.
- For certified positions, this would result in a reduction in force with newer staff vacating the job and possibly leaving the State. This will present a future recruiting problem and teacher shortage including certification concerns. Sweetwater #1 currently experiences difficulty in recruiting special education certified staff and has so for many years.
- The reduction in foundation funding due to a decrease in ADM for 17-18: \$678,602. The Legislative model automatically adjusts for these fluctuations through the block grant and the major maintenance funding formula. In other words, fewer ADMs reduces the allotted funding provided from the State level for building maintenance. The block grant is lowered automatically with decreased enrollment and allows for a 3-year rolling average which allows districts time to adjust.
- In an effort to address the impending budget shortfalls, the District has taken the following steps in an effort to preserve teaching positions and student programs: unfilled and absorbed central office positions, reduced the number of classified positions, frozen experience steps for ALL District staff, and absorbed certified teaching positions through attrition.
- Professional development costs have been reduced by utilizing instructional facilitators and teacher leaders. The elimination of the instructional facilitator program would severely impact the level of training teachers receive, including young teachers needing mentoring to support high quality instruction.
- Over the course of the next seven years, the District will need updated curriculum resources and technology to support other content areas as the Wyoming Content and Performance Standards are revised and updated.

### *Moving from the Legislative (Block Grant) to the Consultants (Evidence-based, Picus & Odden) Model*

- The District supports the regional cost of living adjustment by using comparable wage index methodology and/or updating the Hedonic Wage Index to the most current available Index. An updated regional cost adjustment allows districts to recruit and retain quality certified, classified, and administrative staff.

*Keep Students First!*