

Wyoming Education Association Legislative Update



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Contact [WEA President Kathy Vetter](#)

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The [Senate Education Committee](#) plans to meet 8 AM on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays.

The [House Education Committee](#) plans to meet upon adjournment on Mondays and Wednesdays, and at 12 Noon on Fridays.

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[2016 WEA Legislative Update Archives](#)

[2015 WEA Legislative Update Archives](#)

March 7, 2017 - **Final Update**

Education Funding Sees Drastic Cuts During Last Day of the Legislative Session -

Both Houses concurred with House Bill 236 ([School finance-omnibus education funding](#)), and compromised by increasing cuts on education to \$34.5 million for the 2017-18 school year, in addition to the cuts listed below from the 2016 Budget Session. The findings language had that been added in the Senate was removed, as well as the language regarding education saving accounts.

School Funding Recalibration Set for Summer 2017 -

It is imperative that parents, students, and other education stakeholders show up to the Recalibration meetings and testify about what education cuts will mean to YOU personally. The Legislative Service Office will post when the meetings are scheduled and agendas set, which we anticipate will begin soon. Please, check the [legislative website](#) to see when those meetings will be held. Tentatively, most (if not all) will be held in Casper, WY.

Recalibration consists of three prongs, mandated by the Supreme Court of Wyoming -

- What do we want in the educational system? (the basket of goods and services).
- What does it take to accomplish what we want? (what fills the basket).
- How much does that cost? (how much to fill that basket)

For example -

- Three years of math are required for students to graduate, and there was a bill to increase that to four years. If that had passed, how many math teachers will that take, and how much will it cost?

Addressing Education Funding Cuts and Past Recalibration -

For decades, the Wyoming Legislature has set education spending policy, and the Legislature has then voted to appropriate such funds for education in Wyoming. The WEA is cognizant of budget shortfalls, especially those regarding our Wyoming

students; however, the students of Wyoming don't deserve to lose valuable academic and activity opportunities. With another recalibration of education funding set for the summer of 2017 (*Recalibration was most recently completed in 2015*), the WEA is concerned that this committee will only institute cuts, and not fully investigate education funding.

Regarding past cuts to education in Wyoming: during the 2016 Budget Session, a Joint Conference Committee (JCC) compromised on a Budget Bill by cutting approximately \$37 million from school districts over the two years from 2016-17 & 2017-18. Beyond those cuts, districts are already losing funding as students move away (out of state/other districts). Furthermore, between 2010 and 2015, *only ONE* External Cost Adjustment (ECA) was given to districts, whereas the current funding model asks for an ECA to be given to districts *every* year.

Education has taken significant cuts over the past five years, and reporting otherwise is simply not true.

JOINT EDUCATION INTERIM COMMITTEE

Priority #1- Education Accountability

The Committee will continue efforts related to the Wyoming Accountability in Education Act (WAEA), including: review of Wyoming graduation standards as required by 2015 SF008 and State Board of Education rules and regulations, implementation of an alternative school accountability model as required by 2016 SF032, implementation of the statewide system of support, implementation of the federal ESSA, reports required under 2017 HB040, and implementation of the new statewide summative assessment and implications on the WAEA.

Priority #2 - Computer Science Education

The Committee will develop a multi-pronged strategy for increasing the number of opportunities across the state for students to take classes in computer science/computational thinking. This may include an analysis of graduation requirements, accountability indicators, Professional Teaching Standards Board credentialing practices, funding mechanisms, the common core of knowledge and skills, and public-private partnerships.

Priority #3 - Education & Military

The Committee will work to find solutions to incentivize schools to recommend at-risk youth to the Wyoming Youth Challenge Program (WYCP), fully utilize the WYCP's resources, implement new Every Student Succeeds Act requirements related to military child identification, and support military spouses who are in the education profession.

Priority #4 - Medically Necessary Placements

The Committee will review and study the education provisions necessary for children placed in Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES), group homes and residential treatment facilities for medical necessities.

Priority #5 - PTSB: Online Credentialing Service

Receive a report from the Professional Teaching Standards Board on the implementation of the online credentialing system created by Enterprise Technology Services.

Priority #6 - Wyoming Unified Network

Analyze funding and bandwidth requirements to extend the Wyoming Unified Network to all state school locations.

Priority #7 - Attendance of Education Committee members at Recalibration Committee Meetings

IMPORTANT LINKS TO EDUCATION NEWS

[Quality Counts 2017: State Report Cards Map](#)

[Wyoming Ranked 7th in National Education Quality](#)

[Winter 2016 WEA News Magazine](#)

[Wyoming Education Association Celebrates More Positive Education News](#)

[Wyoming Students Top National Average in Science](#)

[Wyoming K-12 Education Funding Deficit White Paper](#)

[School Finance: Constitutional Duties, Powers, and Approaches](#)

[2015 School Finance Recalibration Report](#)

[Legislative Service Office School Finance Information](#)



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