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Wyoming Education Association Legislative Update



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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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February 24, 2017

Notable news of the day -

Tentative Budget Compromise

K-12 Funding

The Conference Committee to work on differences between the House and Senate versions of the budget tentatively agreed this morning to cut \$25 million from education for the 2017-2018 school year. They also agreed to cut \$20 million for the 2018-2019 school year. The budget will now go back to each house for concurrence on Monday.

Although still a large cut, it is not as bad as the original Senate proposal of a \$91 million cut. Many Senators said they heard from **YOU**.

Please thank members of the Budget Compromise Committee:

Senators [Bruce Burns](#), [Dan Dockstader](#), [Ogden Driskill](#), [John Hastertand](#) [Bill Landen](#); **Representatives** [Bob Nicholas](#), [Lloyd Larsen](#), [Andy Schwartz](#), [Albert Sommers](#) and [Tom Walters](#).

The budget proposal may be irrelevant if either HB236 or SF165 survives the session. Language in the budget amendment states that HB236 or SF165 will override the budget amendment if either passes.

Community Colleges

The Budget Conference Committee also worked funding for Community Colleges. The Senate budget added nearly \$600 thousand for Community Colleges, while the House budget added nothing. The Committee split the difference by agreeing to add \$295,451 to Community College funding.

Budget work is NOT OVER

While the above is how the budget stands today as a result of work by the Conference Committee, it is NOT finalized until both houses approve it. They should vote on the budget Monday. If they do not concur, it will go back to another conference committee. In addition, the Governor has the ability to line-item veto the budget once passed by the legislature.

House Ed Works SF165

The House Education Committee today approved a [Substitute Bill #2](#) for Senate File 165ENG ([School Finance-education funding restrictions](#)) that essentially duplicates the original language of HB236. The bill cuts education funding by roughly \$33 million. It funds the remaining education shortfall by utilizing savings in the Legislative Stabilization Reserve Account (LSRA) and defers automatically putting money into

savings. It also includes a revenue increase ONLY if the LSRA drops below \$500 million; the revenue would be generated by restoring taxes on food and on services. With this amendment, SF165 is much better than how the Committee received it. It will no doubt be heavily amended once it goes to the House floor. It passed the Education Committee 7-2.

Guns in K-12 Schools Passes 2nd Reading

School safety and security ([HB194](#)) allows school boards to decide if they want employees to carry guns. Earlier amendments will require training for those willing to carry guns, but today it was amended again to lessen or even eliminate the amount of training required for employees in isolated rural schools.

The WEA has always supported the use of School Resource Officers (SROs) as those professionals highly-trained to carry firearms in schools.

[Contact your Senator immediately](#), and ask them to VOTE NO ON HB194!

Legislative action today -

The House concurred on House Bill 40 ([HB0040ENG](#), Education accountability) amendments, and it has now become [House Enrolled Act 61](#).

House Bill 58 ([HB0058](#), School facilities appropriations) was amended and passed Senate Committee of the Whole.

House Bill 153 ([HB0153](#), Parental rights) passed Senate Committee of the Whole.

House Bill 159 ([HB0159ENG](#), Homeless minors) passed 3rd Reading in the Senate 16-13-1-0-0. The House has received it for concurrence.

House Bill 211 ([HB0211](#), Developmental preschool payment calculations-amendments) passed Senate 3rd Reading 29-0-1-0-0. It has been assigned [House Enrolled Act 73](#).

Senate File 35, ([SF0035ENG](#), Virtual education), Senate File 123 ([SF0123](#), School nutrition pilot project), and Senate File 132 ([SF0132ENG](#), ENDOW initiative) all passed House Committee of the Whole, with amendments to 132.

Coming up next week -

2/27	8 AM	Joint Appropriations is scheduled to meet to present a summary of the Joint Conference Committee's results on the Budget Bill.
2/27	Noon	Joint Education is scheduled to meet to discuss interim topics.
2/27		Last day for Committee of the Whole in the second house.
2/28		Last day for second reading in the second house.
3/1		Last day for third reading in the second house.

3/1	3 PM	Management Council is scheduled to meet to discuss 2017 interim topics and LSO committee staffing assignments and other administrative matters.
3/2		Concurrence on Amendments/Joint Conference Committee Reports
3/3		Joint Conference Committee Reports; All JCC Reports due to Front Desk by 2:00 p.m.; ADJOURN by Midnight.

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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