



**WYOMING**  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

*Creating Opportunities  
for Students to Keep  
Wyoming Strong*

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## MEMORANDUM NO. 2018-036

**TO:** School District Superintendents  
Business Managers  
Principals

**FROM:** Megan Degenfelder, Chief Policy Officer

**DATE:** April 2, 2018

**SUBJECT:** Education Legislation Information

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION ON EDUCATION LEGISLATION

The Wyoming Department of Education (WDE) will begin implementing statutory changes from the 2018 legislative session across its programs, and will provide guidance and transition plans for the 2018-19 school year. The most relevant changes are discussed below. The WDE will continue to provide updates as it works with various stakeholder groups on implementation.

### **Funding Model Changes**

Through [2018 House Enrolled Act 068](#) (formerly House Bill 0140), the Legislature modified the Wyoming Education Resource Block Grant Funding Model, (“funding model”) which reduced funding by about \$27.3 million over the 2019-20 biennium. These reductions will be implemented through technical changes to the funding model, workers’ compensation programs, transportation, and special education reimbursement. Modifications to the funding model include determining “greater of” average daily membership (ADM) values at the district-level as opposed to the school-level, modifying how resources are generated for district-level groundskeepers, and repealing funding for interim student assessments. The second phase of reductions to Instructional Facilitator funding will also be incorporated into funding model calculations for SY 2018-19 in accordance with [2017 HEA0125](#). Reductions resulting from changes to model ADM and groundskeeper calculations will be phased-in by increasing the funding model guarantee by two-thirds of the reduction in school year (SY) 2018-19 and one-third in SY 2019-20. Additionally, the reduction in funding for small school districts with 243 ADM or less will be limited to 2.5 percent of the prior year’s guarantee, not including reimbursements.

Whenever the Legislature implements changes to the funding model, the State Superintendent of Public Instruction is required to certify that they are properly implemented into the state's school finance administration system. These technical modifications must then be reviewed by the state's school finance consultants, as mandated by W.S. 21-2-202(e).

### **Transportation**

[2017 HEA0125](#) placed a moratorium on new bus purchases. [2018 HEA0068](#) modifies this moratorium by prohibiting the lease-to-purchase option, and provides 100 percent reimbursement for purchases the following year. An additional qualification was added allowing new school bus purchases if the vehicle is partially or fully funded through certain state or federal programs.

2017 HEA0125 made additional changes to transportation maintenance and operations funding, and they will take effect beginning in SY 2018-19. Funding determined by the school foundation formula for transportation maintenance and operations will be an average of the amounts received by school districts during SY 2014-15, 2015-16 and 2016-17. Final allocations will be subject to adjustments for refunds of prior year expenditures and audit reviews conducted under W.S. 9-1-513.

[2018 SEA0055](#) calls for the identification of fiscal efficiencies within the transportation component of the funding model. The identification of efficiencies will lead to recommendations for implementation through statute or rule. The preliminary evaluation report is due by June 1, with the final by September 1, 2018. The WDE will continue working with stakeholder groups to identify efficiencies leading to recommended changes to statute and rule.

### **Special Education**

[2018 HEA0068](#) limits the statewide amount reimbursed for special education in SY 2019-20 and 2020-21 to the amount reimbursed to school districts in SY 2018-19. An additional \$2 million has been appropriated to the WDE for out-of-district placements of special education students that exceed the limitation. The WDE will be working with stakeholder groups to adopt necessary rules and regulations to administer the changes to special education funding.

[2018 HEA0068](#) further requires the WDE to review statutes and rules relating to special education to provide recommendations, guidance, and input on best practices for fiscal efficiencies. The WDE is working with stakeholder groups to identify special education efficiencies and to provide input on establishing statewide guidelines for adequate special education staffing levels as required by W.S. 21-2-202(a)(xxiii).

### **Computer Science**

[2018 SEA0048](#) adds computer science and computational thinking to the state educational program and eliminates applied technology and keyboarding. Effective July 1, 2018, a computer science course may count as a science course in high school graduation requirements, and may count as either a science course or an "additional math" course in the [Hathaway Success Curriculum](#). Standards must also be developed, approved, and fully implemented at the beginning of the 2022-23 school year.

### **Hathaway Scholarship Program**

In addition to the changes regarding computer science, further changes were made with [2018 HEA0030](#), which extends the deadline for students to apply for the Hathaway Scholarship. Students now have four years from the date of their high school graduation to apply. Exceptions for military service, religious service, and other good cause are still allowable. Application for a Hathaway Scholarship is made directly through a Wyoming community college or the University of Wyoming.

### **Erin's Law**

[2018 SEA0067](#) authorizes school districts to provide parents with information, and to provide training to teachers and staff regarding child sexual abuse education. It also allows school districts to offer child sexual abuse prevention instruction with permission from the student's parent or legal guardian.

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*For more information on school finance, contact Jed Cicarelli, School Foundation Supervisor, at [jed.cicarelli@wyo.gov](mailto:jed.cicarelli@wyo.gov) or 307-777-5808.*

*For more information on Special Education, contact Anne-Marie Williams, Individual Learning Division Director, at [anne-marie.williams@wyo.gov](mailto:anne-marie.williams@wyo.gov) or 307-777-3530.*

*For more information on transportation, contact Shelley Hamel, School Support Division Director, at [shelley.hamel@wyo.gov](mailto:shelley.hamel@wyo.gov) or 307-777-6132.*

*For more information on computer science, contact Laurel Ballard at [laurel.ballard@wyo.gov](mailto:laurel.ballard@wyo.gov) or 307-777-8715. For more information on computer science standards, contact Jill Stringer, Standards Consultant, at [jill.stringer@wyo.gov](mailto:jill.stringer@wyo.gov) or 307-777-5036.*

*For more information on the Hathaway Scholarship Program, contact Bradley Barker III at 307-777-6226 or Jennifer LaHiff at 307-777-6840 or [hathawayscholarship@wyo.gov](mailto:hathawayscholarship@wyo.gov).*