

# News Release



WYOMING LEGISLATIVE SERVICE OFFICE

**FOR RELEASE** July 19, 2004  
**CONTACT** Dave Nelson, School Finance Manager  
**TO REACH** (307) 777-7881

## WYOMING RANKS SECOND NATIONALLY IN GROWTH IN K-12 EDUCATION FUNDING

**CHEYENNE** – The Wyoming Legislature’s efforts to address elementary and secondary education funding issues over the past several years has been recently recognized in a national report on education spending growth. Wyoming ranks second nationally over a five-year period in growth in education funding for elementary and secondary education.

The Nelson A. Rockefeller Institute of Government recently released an analysis of 2002 U.S. Census data from state and local governments regarding education funding. The analysis found that state and local governments increased spending on elementary and secondary education by nearly 17 percent between 1997 and 2002, when adjusted for inflation and growth in pupil enrollment.

The analysis found that Wyoming experienced the second highest growth in real per-pupil spending (30 percent) over the time-period reviewed. The District of Columbia had the greatest growth rate at a 46 percent increase. The report notes that states with decreases in enrollment generally experienced larger spending increases. Despite declining enrollments in the state, Wyoming has continued to invest additional resources into K-12 education.

Senate Education Committee Chairman Hank Coe remarked on the ranking, “Since 1997, the Wyoming Legislature has worked incredibly hard to adequately fund K-12 education in a fair and equitable manner. We have methodically enhanced one of the nation’s best school systems through increased funding. Wyoming is a great place to educate kids.” House Education Committee Chairman Representative Jeff Wasserburger stated, “Wyoming has increased revenue to K-12 education at an impressive rate. Since the Special Session on education in 1997, Wyoming is leading the nation once again in the Legislature’s commitment to education. Our rising test scores are proof of the wisdom of the Legislature’s investment in the students in our public schools.”

After learning about Wyoming’s ranking, Speaker of the Wyoming House of Representatives Fred Parady observed, “This new national data reflects the sustained commitment of Wyoming’s Legislature to education in our state. We remain committed to strong funding for kids and schools. Wyoming schools are good and getting better.” Senator April Brimmer Kunz, President of the Wyoming Senate, added, “The report provides verification of the continued dedication of the Legislature to Wyoming’s K-12 education. The Legislature has been, and will continue to be, active in ensuring public schools are sufficiently funded to provided exceptional educational programs to our kids.”

The full report can be found on the Nelson A. Rockefeller Institute of Government site at:  
[http://stateandlocalgateway.rockinst.org/fiscal\\_pub/state\\_news/sn\\_reports/SFNV4N5.pdf](http://stateandlocalgateway.rockinst.org/fiscal_pub/state_news/sn_reports/SFNV4N5.pdf). . – End –