

Bill No.: HB0236 **Effective:** Multiple Dates

LSO No.: 17LSO-0532

Enrolled Act No.: HEA No. 0125

Chapter No.: 205

Prime Sponsor: House Education Committee

Catch Title: School finance-omnibus education funding.

Subject: Education funding.

Summary/Major Elements:

- This bill modifies the existing education funding formula by calibrating the non-personnel funding levels to cost-based levels and eliminating the external cost adjustment in school year 2017-2018 that was provided in the 2016 Budget Bill. The bill repeals the instructional facilitator categorical grant program in W.S. 21-13-335 and imbeds it within the education resource block grant model. It reduces the level of funding for instructional facilitators by 10% in school year 2017-2018 and then by 50% in school year 2018-2019, and each school year thereafter. The bill also repeals the summer school and extended day categorical grant program in W.S. 21-13-334 and imbeds it within the education resource block grant model.
- The bill amends the 2016 Budget Bill to make conforming changes to the appropriations for school district payments and establishes that amendments in the bill that are in direct conflict with the 2017 budget bill shall prevail over amendments in the 2017 budget bill, except for court ordered placement program appropriations.
- The bill also prohibits school districts from purchasing or entering into a lease for a school bus on or after March 15, 2017, unless the Department of Education determines that an emergency exists. The bill also modifies the level of funding provided to school districts for transportation operations in school year 2018-2019 to be based upon the average a school district received in school years 2014-2015, 2015-2016 and 2016-2017.
- The bill modifies the calculation of average daily membership to be counted on a fractional basis for students enrolled in a school less than eighty percent (80%) of a full time equivalency basis. The bill provides that a school district may count among its average daily membership a child placed in a private treatment facility or group home as a result of a court order so long as the district provides education services directly to the child or pays another district to provide education services to the child pursuant to contract.

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- The bill establishes a moratorium on the creation of alternative schools through June 30, 2019 and requires the Joint Education Interim Committee to conduct a study related to alternative schools and report findings not later than November 30, 2018. It prohibits design and construction funding to be expended on alternative schools until July 1, 2019.
- The bill also repeals the K-3 grades student-to-teacher ratio requirement of sixteen (16) students to one (1) teacher as a criterion to participate in the School Foundation Program.
- The bill, to the extent funds in the Legislative Stabilization Reserve Account (LSRA) are available, restores the School Foundation Program Account balance (SFPA) to \$100,000,000. It repeals this requirement if the LSRA's balance is less than \$500,000,000. It also repeals the transfer of funds from the SFPA to the School Capital Construction Account (SCCA) and the SCCA to the Common School Account within the Permanent Land Fund.
- The bill establishes a select committee on school finance recalibration that will undertake a study of the state educational program and recalibrate the education resource block grant funding model. The recalibration is not limited to the existing cost-based model. The select committee must study and recommend solutions to the projected shortfall for funding related to public education. The select committee shall report its recommendations and any associated legislation not later than January 31, 2018. The bill appropriates \$80,000 to the Legislative Service Office to provide salary, per diem and mileage for the select committee members.

Comments:

- The bill amends major programs related to education funding and finance;
- The bill requires reports by the newly-created select committee;
- Appropriates funds to LSO;
- Creates a Select Committee with Legislative Members;
- Requires a Legislative Appointment.

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