

Lakeland Joint School District #272

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Attachment 11



LJSD Vision: A community committed to academic excellence ... dedicated to student success.

Good Afternoon Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee,

My name is Lisa Sexton. I am the Assistant Superintendent for the Lakeland Jt. School District. It is an honor to be here with you today and be afforded the opportunity to provide input regarding SB1196. While we understand and appreciate your desire to modify the current funding formula in an effort to ensure that students are best supported in their efforts to learn, we have concerns about the current iteration of the new funding formula.

It is difficult for us to accurately identify the impact of the new funding formula because the models compare actual 2017-18 data to incomplete 2018-19 projected data. Instead of using the future projected revenues and student data, we would encourage the committee to use actual fiscal year 2018 funding data and run those numbers through the new model to more accurately identify the impact to our school districts. The budget team for my district has been watching closely as iterations of the original funding formula proposal have been released. Lakeland Jt. School District continues to be one of the districts with the greatest negative financial impact. Estimates from the most recent shared spreadsheet comparing 2018-19 funding to our actual 2018-19 mid-year apportionment report estimates a 4.15% reduction in state funding for our district, which equates to nearly one million dollars or approximately 20 full-time teachers.

We appreciate the stipends for our teachers with 24 credits beyond their bachelor degrees and the stipends for teachers who have earned a Masters degree. However, this proposal takes into account neither education levels (beyond the two stipend steps) nor experience. The impact of this will be additionally difficult for Lakeland because we have a veteran staff that is highly valued. We have been intentional in our efforts to recruit and RETAIN highly qualified staff, which is already difficult due to our proximity to Washington. This bill will punish us for our efforts. Our district office is 8 miles from the East Valley School District in Washington. Our teachers can now earn a significantly larger salary (up to \$30,000 per year depending on which step they land on the Washington salary schedule) by crossing the border. Because of the close proximity, they can work in Washington while still enjoying the ability to live in beautiful north Idaho.

We appreciate the ability for districts to work with our LEA's to decide on a salary schedule that helps us meet our goals. We value local control and would very much like to see the career ladder portion remain part of the funding formula and not a required salary

schedule. Additionally, the inability of districts to separate the dollars appropriated to support salaries and benefits from the "discretionary" dollars will make negotiations difficult at best and could potentially lead to more positional negotiations. We have worked hard in our district to move to interest-based bargaining. Currently our team works well to address common issues. Part of our success has been in being able to identify dollars that are meant for staff salaries and benefits. That will not be the case with this new formula.

One area that does not appear to be addressed in this most current bill is funding for alternative school students. It may be that the authors of this bill believe that these needs are addressed through the identified student weights for economically disadvantaged students, however, not all at-risk students are economically disadvantaged. The lack of funding for this most fragile group will be detrimental to our programs.

We understand and appreciate the efforts of our legislators to create a funding mechanism that more adequately supports our students. However, we cannot support the current bill as the data is not correct and as a result we cannot forecast our budgets accurately. We are opposed to any funding formula which harms any of Idaho's school districts. We would love to see our legislators take one more year to work the bugs out of this model and make sure the language associated with it has the intended consequences. Thank you for your consideration of our input!