

SF 70: School Finance – Amendments
2008 Budget Session
Sponsor: Joint Education Interim Committee

SF 70 contained appropriations totaling \$14.66 million from the school foundation account to the Wyoming Department of Education to provide additional funding for several school programs.

The bill provided \$2 million to continue the summer school program that now exists for the next two years.

It provided \$1.69 million for career technical education programs, to augment spending on this program for the next two years. This funding will establish a steering committee, fund an additional full time staff position, augment funding for the existing demonstration grant program, and develop a comprehensive statewide model for career-technical education.

SF 70 provided \$5.89 million to augment resources now available to school districts for professional development, specifically to assist schools in providing ongoing instructional coaching and mentoring for one year (fiscal year 2009).

The bill provided \$300,000 to fund a study committee and one additional state employee to review, analyze and evaluate resources and strategies for supporting at-risk students in Wyoming schools in the coming two years.

An appropriation of \$4.5 million was made available to help school districts pay for their food service programs. Until now, the state assumed that school district food service programs were financially self-supporting through student fees and federal funding. A 2006 study indicated a need for supplemental state funding to help districts cover the cost of their food service programs until the 2010 recalibration of the school funding model.

Finally, the bill provided \$275,000 to expand the current distance education program, and \$135,000 to fund a study on the effectiveness of the Hathaway Scholarship program.

The components of SF 70 were viewed as necessary supplements to the school funding model, and there was no particular opposition to the bill. The Wyoming Education Association supported all portions of the bill.

Although a number of amendments were proposed and debated, in the end the bill passed both legislative chambers unanimously.