

USEA Legislative Updates

March 8, 2010

Final decisions regarding the **2010-2011 education budget** have not been made at this point. Currently, there is a proposed 1% reduction in the education budget. The Executive Appropriations Committee is scheduled to meet again tomorrow. We hope to have more information for you regarding the budget after this meeting.

We are working with supportive legislators to try to bring funding for education up to at least current funding levels and to fund growth for the 11,000 new students entering the system.

[First Substitute HB 166: Reductions to Education Mandates](#)

1SHB166, "Reductions to Education Mandates," at lines 384-387, would reduce the mandated transportation of secondary school students to only those students living more than three miles from school (instead of the present two miles). The Utah School Employees Association believes that this change is not in the best interests of Utah students.

A substantial percentage of high school students rely on school busses to get to school. Those students would have to devote substantial time to walking or taking public transportation (if available) to and from school and many will simply stop attending school. Those students that are able to secure other transportation will increase traffic and pollution near schools.

Because districts will still have to send busses to pick up those students farthest away, it is likely that total bus mileage and operating time might not be reduced as much as would appear at first glance.

We are encouraging the Legislature to amend the bill to eliminate the change to the student transportation mandate and return to a two mile requirement.

[Second Substitute HB 295: Expanded Use of School District Property Tax Revenue](#)

This bill would allow school districts the flexibility to use funding for capital projects (construction, renovations, etc.) to be used for general school district operations. This legislation is very important to school districts that are having financial challenges in their maintenance and operations budgets.

The Utah School Employees Association supports this legislation, which may save reductions to programs and staff.

Please contact your State Representatives and Senators by phone, email or letter. ***Ask your legislators to support adequate funding for public education, with no reduction to the current WPU funding. Please ask them to also fund growth, which is additional funding for the 11,000 plus new students entering the system this coming year.***

You can reach your Representative and Senator at the following links:

[Utah House of Representatives](#)

[Utah State Senate](#)