



## NDE Legislative Corner

As many of you know there is a budget shortfall this year in Nebraska. By law, a balanced budget is required, meaning the Governor and state senators need to find ways to reduce the budget while revenues are down. Nearly every department of state government is facing cuts.

This week Commissioner Blomstedt testified in front of the Legislature's Appropriations Committee on LB 22, introduced on behalf of the Governor. LB 22 proposes cuts to the current Department of Education budget as well as 4% cuts in the base budget. Additionally, the proposal would completely cut the Master Teacher program funding.

From an agency perspective, the Commissioner testified that NDE could generally withstand the majority of proposed reductions due to NDE's efforts to restrain spending since last summer and the agency's historically prudent approach to spending.

However, Dr. Blomstedt highlighted several proposed cuts that could have larger negative impacts including those to Vocational Rehabilitation, the division that assists individuals with disabilities prepare for, find, and keep jobs.

The Commissioner anticipates making recommendations on the next steps regarding the budget by the February State Board of Education meeting. There will also be discussions on the mainline budget bill LB 327.

In the coming weeks the Commissioner and the NDE finance team will be working closely with the Legislature's fiscal office and Appropriations Committee leadership.

Attached is the analysis and summary the Commissioner shared during his testimony.

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