



NDE Legislative Corner

The 105th Nebraska legislative session continues to move forward as education-related bills are heard in front of standing committees.

On Tuesday, March 7, Commissioner Matthew L. Blomstedt testified before the Appropriations Committee on recommendations for the Department of Education budget. Dr. Blomstedt thanked the senators for including additional funds than those presented in the Governor's plan. He noted the additional money would allow for the continuation of the High Ability Learners Coordinator and Multi-Cultural Education Coordinator positions. The committee's recommendation would also provide extra funding for IT support, Step Up To Quality and Vocational Rehabilitation. Commissioner Blomstedt asked the committee to consider an increase in funding for TEEOSA and Special Education.

The Education Committee heard two bills this week that drew opposition from schools, teachers and the State Board of Education. LB651 would require each student's grade progression to be determined by proficiency in reading. The Board believes that important decisions about retention should be made at the local level between parents, teachers, counselors and administrators.

LB662 would require an A-F grading system for schools and school districts. The State Board opposes the bill and supports the current AQuESTT classification system. Several other education based groups also opposed the bill at the hearing.

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