

# **Distribution of State Funds for K-12 Public Education**

## **Program Distribution Summaries**

**Office of Performance Evaluations  
Idaho Legislature**



# Program Distribution Summaries

In this supplemental appendix to our report *Distribution of State Funds for K–12 Public Education*, we summarize 22 of the 39 program distributions found in the support budget of public schools for fiscal year 2017. The summaries list basic information on the program, state and federal mandates, funding sources, and distribution methods among districts and charters. The information is meant to directly address questions raised by the study requester and the 2016 Public Education Funding Formula Interim Committee.

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## Academic and College/Career Advisors and Mentors

### Program description

The academic and college/career advisors and mentors program was initially funded in fiscal year 2017 to provide students with early opportunities to identify areas of strength, interests, and needed improvement in preparation for setting postsecondary and career goals. The program is distinct from the more traditional school counseling resources.

After program funding passed the Legislature, a group of agency stakeholders established resources to implement the program. They described existing Idaho models and cost structures of those models and compiled contact information of schools that implemented applicable models and frequently asked questions. Additionally, the department conducted regional trainings in June 2016 to assist field staff in understanding and implementing the program.

### Funding sources

The program was appropriated \$5 million in state general funds for fiscal year 2017, all of which went to the Division of Teachers in the Department of Education.

### State and federal mandates and reporting requirements

The Legislature established the program in Idaho Code § 33-1212A during the 2015 legislative session; however, funding was not provided until the 2016 session. The statute allows wide latitude for implementing the program. Districts and charters are not required to have certificated staff, though forms of advising and mentoring must be research-based. Options listed in statute include near peer or college student mentors, counselors, teachers, or paraprofessionals, student ambassadors, cooperative agreements with other districts or postsecondary institutions, and virtual programs.

Districts and charters are directed to (1) provide professional development in college and career advising to all staff who serve in that capacity, (2) develop a plan to deliver the advising to

students, and (3) notify all parents and guardians of the availability of the services and how services can be accessed.

Districts and charters are required to report annually on the effectiveness of their programs as part of their annual continuous improvement plan. Report elements include the type of plan and student outcomes, which are to be defined in rules promulgated by the Board of Education.

#### **Distribution method or funding formula**

Funds are distributed according to Idaho Code § 33-1002(r). Distribution is based on the number of students enrolled in grades 8–12 for each district or charter with established minimum amounts. For districts and charters with enrollment of fewer than 100, they are allotted \$100 per student or \$5,000, whichever is greater; for districts or charters with enrollment of 100 or greater, the remaining funds are distributed on a pro rata basis, with a minimum of \$10,000 per district or charter.

#### **Additional issues for consideration**

The base level of \$5,000 for each district or charter may lead to relative overfunding for charters as compared with districts that have low enrollment numbers because a single charter may receive an amount similar to that which might be distributed across multiple schools in a district. For fiscal year 2016, 8 of the 10 highest distribution amounts per enrollment were for charter schools.

## Advanced Opportunities

### Program description

Advanced opportunities comprises four individual programs that received appropriations in the past:

- Dual Credit for Early Completers
- Fast Forward
- 8 in 6
- Mastery Advancement

The program is intended to remove financial barriers and allow students to attain both high school and postsecondary credits beyond a standard high school course load.

Through the program, \$4,125 is allocated to each student in grades 7–12 for use toward Dual Credit, overload high school courses, examinations for college credit, and career-technical education courses and examinations. In addition, students can receive a scholarship for graduating at least one year early.

### Funding sources

Funding comes from the state general fund. In fiscal year 2015, \$3.5 million was distributed, and in fiscal year 2016, \$4.6 million. Funds that are appropriated but not distributed are reverted to the public education stabilization fund (this occurred in fiscal year 2016, but not 2015).

### State and federal mandates and reporting requirements

Idaho Code § 33-4602 sets the amount available per student (\$4,125) and the purposes for which the funding is available. The amount available is based on an average of the amount historically accessed by students. The statute establishes that a student who completes grades 1–12 at least one year early is eligible for a scholarship to any Idaho postsecondary institution, with the size of the scholarship equal to 35 percent of the funding avoided by graduating early.

The department is required to report to the House and Senate education committees by January 15 of each year the number of students accessing funds, the number of credits awarded, and amounts paid through the program.

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### **Distribution method or funding formula**

The department reimburses districts, charters, or postsecondary institutions that provide advanced opportunities services within 125 days of receiving supporting information. Payment eligibility is verified at several points in the process by counselors, district managers, course providers, and the department.

## Assessments

### Program description

Funding supports the development and administration of student assessments: a college entrance exam for students in grade 11, a preparation exam for an entrance exam for students in grade 10, and end-of-course exams for science courses. The assessments funded by this appropriation are a subset of those managed by the Division of Assessments in the Department of Education.

### Funding sources

The Legislature appropriated \$1,758,500 in state general funds for the fiscal year 2017 distribution. Specified in House Bill 623(5), the appropriation is for exams specifically listed in the program description. The budget for the Division of Assessments includes funds from federal sources and state general funds appropriated in the Superintendent of Public Instruction's budget.

### State and federal mandates and reporting requirements

The appropriation bill does not require reporting for the funding. However, reporting may be required on particular assessments.

### Distribution method or funding formula

The Division of Central Services in the department receives the appropriation. The funds are used to pay contracted vendors for services associated with assessment preparation, administration, and results reporting.

## Classroom Technology

### Program description

The classroom technology line item in the public school support budget provides funds to districts and charters for technology that will assist in classroom learning. Districts and charters may purchase laptops, tablets, computers, and other related technology.

### Funding sources

For fiscal year 2017, the Legislature appropriated \$18 million in state general funds for classroom technology.

All districts and charters are eligible to receive classroom technology funding, and in fiscal year 2015, all received some funds.

### State mandates and reporting requirements

The appropriation bill outlines how districts and charters should use classroom technology funds. For example, the fiscal year 2017 appropriation bill states that funds can be used for “technology infrastructure that assists teachers and students in effective and efficient instruction or learning.” —House Bill 619 (7).

Districts and charters are not required to report to the Legislature or the department on total program expenditures or revenues.

### Distribution formula

The distribution formula is not established in Idaho Code. Instead, an approved appropriation bill gives the Superintendent of Public Instruction authority to determine how to distribute funds. All funds appropriated for this program are distributed to districts and charters.

In fiscal year 2017, the classroom technology formula for distributing state general fund dollars began with a base amount per district or charter. The base amount was determined by each district’s or charter’s midterm average daily attendance (ADA). Districts and charters received the sum of the base amount

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calculation plus an additional \$50 per midterm ADA for the 2016–2017 school year.

The base amount for fiscal year 2017 was determined using the following criteria:

If a district's or charter's midterm ADA is less than 25, it receives \$5,000 for the base amount.

If the midterm ADA is 25–100, the base amount distributed is \$200 per ADA.

If the midterm ADA is greater than 100, the base amount distributed is \$20,000.

## Content and Curriculum

### Program description

The content and curriculum program funds online and digital learning programs and technology certifications. Over the past two years, funding has been moved out of other appropriation lines into this appropriation. The entire funding amount is appropriated to the Division of Central Services in the Department of Education.

### Funding sources

In fiscal year 2017, \$4,250,000 was appropriated for the program. The funding structure for the program has changed over the past two years, so recent variation in the funding level does not necessarily reflect a change in licensing or other costs.

### State and federal mandates and reporting requirements

House Bill 623 (9 and 11) specifies the following levels of funding:

\$950,000 for digital content

\$650,000 for credit recovery and alternative pathways to graduation

\$1,200,000 for adaptive math instruction

\$450,000 for programs to assist with limited-English instruction

\$1,000,000 for contracted technology education

The appropriation bill requires reporting on the number and type of certificates earned by students and faculty who received the \$1 million in funds for contracted technology education.

### Distribution method or funding formula

Funds are not distributed to districts or charters. However, districts and charters are the direct recipients of the licenses purchased. The department does not receive any administrative funding.

## District IT Staffing

### Program description

District IT staffing is a nonstatutory program distribution that provides funds to all districts and charters for the personnel costs of district-level IT staff. These funds can be used for full-time and part-time staff and contracted IT support.

### Funding sources

Funding for the program comes exclusively from the state general fund. Federal funds are not appropriated for the program.

Distributed funds have been \$2.5 million per year since the Legislature began funding this program for fiscal year 2013.

### State and federal mandates and reporting requirements

The appropriation bill instructs districts and charters to use the funds for public school IT staff costs. For fiscal year 2017, the appropriation bill states that “such moneys shall be distributed pursuant to a formula, with a minimum distribution per school district and public charter school, determined by the superintendent of public instruction.” —House Bill 619 Section 6.

Districts and charters are not required to report to the Legislature or the department on total program expenditures or revenues.

### Distribution formula

The distribution formula is not established in Idaho Code. Instead, an approved appropriation bill gives the Superintendent of Public Instruction authority to determine how to distribute funds. All funds appropriated for this program are distributed to districts and charters.

In their fiscal year 2017 budget development, districts and charters were instructed to budget the larger of \$115 per 2016–2017 school year midterm support unit or the following minimum distribution:

\$10,000 minimum if the school year 2016–2017 enrollment for grades 9–12 is greater than zero

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**\$5,000 minimum if the school year 2016–2017 enrollment for grades 9–12 equals zero<sup>1</sup>**

In fiscal year 2015, 25 of the 164 districts and charters received the \$5,000 minimum, 106 districts and charters received the \$10,000 minimum, and the remaining districts received more than the \$10,000 minimum.

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<sup>1</sup> Some districts and charters do not serve students in grades 9–12.

## Gifted and Talented

### Program description

Per Idaho Code § 33-2001, gifted and talented refers to students identified with demonstrated or potential abilities for high performance in intellectual or creative areas, specific academic or leadership areas, or abilities in the performing or visual arts. These students require services or activities not ordinarily provided by a school to fully develop such capabilities.

Each district or charter is responsible for the special instructional needs of children who are gifted and talented. The Board of Education, through the Department of Education, determines eligibility criteria and assists districts and charters in developing approaches for instruction and training.<sup>2</sup>

### Funding sources

In the aftermath of the great recession, the gifted and talented program lost specifically appropriated funding beginning in fiscal year 2011.<sup>3</sup> Since then, and until the appropriation of \$1 million for fiscal year 2017, gifted and talented has been an unfunded, mandated program.

For fiscal year 2016, in accordance with Senate Bill 1184(5), \$10.6 million was provided to districts and charters. The bill specifically identified professional development, teachers' identification of gifted and talented students, and teachers' certification in gifted education as areas for funding. However, a *not limited to* statement in the bill meant that none of the dollars were specifically dedicated to the gifted and talented program.

Department officials reported to us that many districts allotted little or no money from the fiscal year 2016 appropriation for gifted and talented. For that reason, district coordinators for the gifted and talented program and other stakeholders emphasized the need for a line item that could not be spent on other areas. The

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<sup>2</sup> Idaho Code § 33-2003.

<sup>3</sup> In the *Legislative Budget Book for FY 2011*, the gifted and talented program had a note that said if it was funded, the amount of overall discretionary funding for districts and charters would have to be reduced. The program did not appear in the legislative budget books in fiscal year 2012 and thereafter until fiscal year 2017.

Legislature provided funding for fiscal year 2017 with a \$1 million appropriation.

Federal funds are not provided for this program.

#### **State and federal mandates and reporting requirements**

There are no federal reporting requirements. Reporting requirements in Administrative Code, IDAPA 02.08.03, specify elements of district program plans, requirements for student screening and assessment, and program administration.

According to department officials, when funding was cut after the Great Recession, data on actual gifted populations declined. Because schools did not receive monies for the program, the department did not require schools to report services. The department expects that student reporting will improve for fiscal year 2017, especially given the incentive in the fiscal year 2017 appropriation to identify gifted and talented students (see distribution formula below).

Districts and charters reported spending nearly \$8 million for this program in fiscal year 2015 (the last year for which we have complete information).

#### **Distribution formula**

For fiscal year 2017 the distribution formula for the appropriated \$1 million is as follows:

Each district and charter receives \$3,000 and then receives an additional \$28 per student identified as gifted and talented in the 2016–2017 school year.

The \$28 per student is limited to 6 percent of total enrollment.

The \$28 per student incentivizes districts and charters to identify their gifted and talented students.

According to the department, the percentage of identified students in Idaho schools is low compared with national percentages.

### Additional issues for consideration

The term *exceptional child* causes confusion in funding gifted education. In statute, the term includes both students in special education and those in the gifted and talented program. Although some overlap exists between these programs (a gifted and talented student could also have a disability qualifying for special education), the two populations are not the same. Confusion occurs because the support unit funding formula (in statute and rule) and the reporting for exceptional child in practice apply primarily to special education even though they refer to the broader exceptional child category. This situation creates conflicts between what statutes and administrative code prescribe, and how funding takes place.

During our evaluation of the gifted and talented program, staff at the department raised a concern about twice-exceptional students. These students have both gifts and challenges that include learning disabilities. Department staff were concerned that these students were often overlooked. The setting in which these students were taught, often special education, might not be the most appropriate for funding their gifted education needs.

## High School Redesign—Math and Science

### Program description

The high school redesign program was created to fund the expanded math and science credit requirements that were instituted with the graduating class of 2013. The requirements increased the credits required in math and science from four credits to six, which include two to be taken during a student's senior year.

Idaho Code § 33-1021 establishes that funding shall be distributed to defray the costs of providing additional courses, and more specifically to "hire additional high school math and science teachers or to defray costs associated with providing math and science courses." A specific funding level was not included in the statute.

### Funding sources

Funding for the program comes entirely from the state general fund. In fiscal year 2017, \$5,157,200 was appropriated.

### State and federal mandates and reporting requirements

Other than the statute specifying the distribution method, there are no mandates or reporting requirements for the districts or charters.

### Distribution method or funding formula

The funding distribution method, found in Idaho Code § 33-1021, establishes funding tiers based on individual high school enrollment rather than on district-wide characteristics. Within each tier, funding is based on the number of staff positions. The formula is as follows:

Enrollment 1–99: Distribute the equivalent of one and one-quarter (1.25) of a classified staff position

Enrollment 100–159: Distribute the equivalent of one-ninth (1/9) of a classified staff position

Enrollment 160–319: Distribute the equivalent of two-sevenths (2/7) of a classified staff position

Enrollment 320–639: Distribute the equivalent of one (1.0) instructional staff position, based on the statewide average funding per position

Enrollment 640 or more: Distribute the equivalent of one (1.0) instructional staff position, based on the statewide average funding per position, and three-quarters (0.75) of a classified staff position

In fiscal year 2017, the formula led to the following budgeting guidelines:

Enrollment 1–99: \$30,300

Enrollment 100–159: \$2,700

Enrollment 160–319: \$6,900

Enrollment 320–639: \$48,500

Enrollment 640 or more: \$66,700

#### **Additional issues for consideration**

The funding formula is based on a review of the schools in each district or charter, with department staff assessing the ability of each school to adapt to the new requirements based on teaching staff, enrollment, and local funding levels as they existed several years ago. Funding levels can fluctuate extremely with the increase or decrease of a single student. Because the purpose of the funding is to hire additional teachers or defray costs of providing regular math and science courses, the funds could potentially be provided through other existing distributions.

## Innovation Schools

### Program description

The Legislature created and funded the innovative schools program for fiscal year 2017. The program allows individual schools and charters to apply for flexibility from laws and policies that have been evaluated and identified as impeding local autonomy. Innovative schools must adhere to certain federal, state, and local laws but may be exempt from other Idaho statutes, rules promulgated by the Board of Education, and local policies. The program provides \$10,000 to each school for planning purposes.

### Funding sources

Idaho Code § 33-5803–5804 (Innovation Schools Act) establishes that up to 10 schools per year may each receive \$10,000 to establish themselves as an innovation school. A school may only receive funding in its initial year, and the funding is available for up to five years. Funding comes from the state general fund, and \$100,000 was appropriated for fiscal year 2017.

### State and federal mandates and reporting requirements

The Innovation Schools Act exempts approved schools from many state statutes and local policies, but specifically states that schools must adhere to laws prohibiting discrimination, laws governing safety, Idaho Code § 33-119 (as it applies to accreditation of secondary schools), and Idaho Code § 33-5204 (if the school is a charter).

Idaho Code § 33-5804 establishes the requirements for a school to access program funding. An agreement must be established between a majority of the teachers at the school, the principal or superintendent, and the authorizer, if the school is a charter. The agreement must include the agreed upon performance goals and accountability metrics, the duration of the agreement, grounds for termination, a statement of which provisions of Idaho Code § 33-5201–5217 apply (if the school is a charter), assurance that the ISAT will be administered, assurance that the school will meet the Board of Education's content standards, and a statement specifying how graduation requirements will be met.

#### **Distribution method or funding formula**

After an innovation agreement is established, the local board notifies the Board of Education. The Board of Education notifies the department, and the department will distribute \$10,000 to the school within 60 days. No more than 10 schools can be designated as innovation schools in any year; if more than 10 schools submit notifications, priority is given to the earlier notifications.

## Instructional Management System (IMS)

### Program description

The instructional management system (IMS) is a program that gives districts and charters resources to purchase their own IMS system. An IMS system provides teachers and administrators accurate, up-to-date data on student performance as well as access to curriculum, professional development, and student assessment resources.

In 2015 the Legislature passed Senate Bill 1185 that allowed districts and charters to receive state-appropriated funds toward the implementation and operation of an IMS. As of fiscal year 2017, the Department of Education no longer hosts a statewide IMS but instead distributes money to districts and charters who have selected their own IMS. Our 2015 report *Idaho's Instructional Management System (Schoolnet) Offers Lessons for Future IT Projects* offers more information on the IMS program and funding before 2015.

### Funding sources

For fiscal year 2017, the Legislature appropriated \$3 million for this program. The department distributed those funds to districts and charters so they could support their chosen IMS. The appropriated funds came exclusively from the state general fund. Federal funds were not appropriated specifically for the use of an IMS.

Local funds were likely used to cover any additional costs of the IMS program if the state-appropriated amount did not cover the entire cost.

### State mandates and reporting requirements

In 2016, the Legislature passed House Bill 619 that instructed the department, districts, and charters on IMS requirements:

The Superintendent of Public Instruction shall distribute an amount not to exceed \$3,000,000 to school districts and charter schools based on the support units used to calculate salary-based apportionment. Moneys so distributed shall be used to implement and operate an instructional management

system of their choice that meets the individual learning needs and progress of all students. An instructional management system must include individual student learning plans, monitoring of interventions, integration with a district's Student Information System (SIS), and analysis of student and classroom levels of learning. —House Bill 619(8), 2016

The department requires districts and charters to certify that their procured solution meets statutory requirements. Districts and charters are then eligible to receive funds.

#### **Distribution formula**

The department instructed districts to budget \$200 per 2016–2017 school year midterm support unit for funding distributed in fiscal year 2017. If a district had 50 midterm support units, it could expect to receive \$10,000.

Fiscal year 2017 was the first year that money was not held at the department for operational support.

## Limited English Proficiency

### Program description

The limited English proficiency program (now referred to as English Learners under the Every Student Succeeds Act) assists students in gaining proficiency in English so they can participate fully in the educational system and meet Idaho's academic content standards and achievement standards. Students ages 3–21 who enroll in a primary or secondary school and meet the federal definition of limited English proficiency are eligible for the program. Potentially eligible students are identified by a home survey, and if a language other than English is indicated, a placement test for English proficiency is administered to determine actual eligibility.

Districts and charters are given broad leeway in the type of language development program they implement. This local control decision is based on which type of program best fits students' needs and available staffing and resources. There is a federal requirement that the method of instruction is research or evidence-based.

### Funding sources

For fiscal year 2017, the Legislature appropriated \$3,870,000 to the program. Of this, \$3,370,000 was distributed to districts and charters based on a per-pupil formula, \$450,000 to an enhancement grant program for districts and charters struggling to meet their plan objectives, and \$50,000 for contracts to administer and evaluate the enhancement grant program.

Federal funding supports the program through Title III. In fiscal year 2016, the department received \$2.1 million for districts and charters qualifying for a Title III subgrant, of which \$1.9 million was passed through to districts and charters. Title III funding is targeted toward immigrant students and is used for purposes other than English instruction, such as family literacy programs and training for teachers and school staff.

Program staff indicated that funding is not adequate and districts and charters often use other funding sources to meet students' needs. Program staff indicated that hiring for hard-to-fill positions such as qualified English teachers is difficult with limited funding.

and some districts have resorted to hiring paraprofessionals to instruct.

Schools and charters are expected to have necessary teachers to properly implement their chosen English learning program within a reasonable period of time and have documentation of proper certification or licenses for instructional staff. According to the Office for Civil Rights, English learners should not be getting instruction from aides (paraprofessionals) as a replacement for teachers. Additionally, schools may not relegate students to second-class status by indefinitely allowing teachers without formal qualifications to teach them while requiring teachers of students who are not assessed as limited in English proficiency to meet formal qualifications.

#### **State and federal mandates and reporting requirements**

Idaho Code § 33-1617 requires each district and charter reporting students with limited English proficiency to formulate a detailed plan with measurable objectives for acquiring English proficiency. It establishes that funds shall be distributed based on the number of students with limited English proficiency but does not provide a specific formula. It requires that each district's and charter's plan and allocation be included in a report to the Board of Education and the Department of Education, and that the board will provide a summary of these reports to the Legislature.

Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act prohibits programs that receive federal funding from discriminating on the basis of national origin (among other things). The Office for Civil Rights addresses the failure of districts and charters to provide an equal educational opportunity for students with limited English proficiency.

In addition, 20 U.S.C. § 1703 requires an education agency to take appropriate action to overcome language barriers that impede equal participation in programs.

#### **Distribution formula**

Distribution to districts and charters is based on the actual number of students each school reported and assessed with limited proficiency the previous year. These students are identified using the WIDA ACCESS Placement Test. Districts and charters are instructed to budget \$250 per student, though the exact

allocation depends on the final appropriation amount and the actual number of qualifying students.

In fiscal year 2016, 94 districts received funding (meaning that they had at least one student with limited English proficiency). Only 36 of those districts were eligible for Title III funding because receiving federal dollars requires an allocation of at least \$10,000, resulting in a minimum of at least 70 students with limited English proficiency in a district. In fiscal year 2014, 44 districts that did not qualify for Title III funds created a consortium through which funding can be accessed by pooling students. Although funds do not go directly to the consortium districts, resources, professional development, and staffing from the funding can benefit them.

Program staff have expressed interest in changes to the funding distribution, including weighting funding per student by the extent of their need (indicated by their score on the assessment rather than a decision of does or does not qualify). Another proposal would establish regional language teachers that could provide services to students in neighboring districts.

## Literacy Proficiency

### Program description

Idaho Code § 33-1614–16 was revised in the 2016 session to more clearly define the assessment of literacy proficiency for students in grades K–3 and to establish literacy interventions and remediation for students who score at basic or below basic levels on a fall reading assessment (or an alternate reading screening assessment). Although literacy remediation has long been tied to the Idaho Reading Indicator, this revision has the effect of creating a new statutory appropriation. Whereas, before the revision, remediation was funded as a nonstatutory appropriation. Each district and charter is required to establish an intervention program to be submitted to and approved by the Board of Education.

### Funding sources

For fiscal year 2017, \$9,100,000 was appropriated from the state general fund to the Division of Child Services in the Department of Education.

### State and federal mandates and reporting requirements

Idaho Code § 33-1614–16 establishes the assessment and intervention processes required by the program. Idaho Code § 33-1614 requires that each district report to the department by October 1 of each year. The report provides the number and percentage, by grade, of all K–3 students at basic or below basic levels and the number and percentage of students at proficient or higher levels. Idaho Code § 33-1616 requires that the department adopt reporting forms and establish reporting dates for program reimbursement.

### Distribution method or funding formula

Funds are distributed based on the number of students in a district or charter who are identified as basic or below basic levels on the statewide assessment. For fiscal year 2017, the department combined funds from the distribution for literacy remediation based on the Idaho Reading Indictor (\$2,316,200) with the literary proficiency funds because both were intended for similar

purposes. The department instructed districts and charters to budget \$300 per student at basic or below basic levels.

#### **Additional issues for consideration**

Idaho Code § 33-1616(2)(c)–(d) establishes different hourly minimums of supplemental instruction for students scoring at basic and below basic levels. However, Idaho Code § 33-1002(2)(s), which specifies the distribution method, states that the distribution is to be based on the total number of both groups of students averaged over the previous 3 years. Under this distribution method, if two districts had the same number of qualifying students but widely disparate ratios of basic-to-below-basic students, they would each receive the same funding even though they would provide very different levels of service. Department staff indicated that the actual methods of intervention vary enough across districts that accounting for this disparity would not be worth pursuing.

## Mastery-Based System

### Program description

Mastery-based education is different from the time-based system schools have long used to advance students through academic grades. Mastery-based education focuses on mastery of learning in order to progress. Students demonstrate proficiency in a subject as proven by state assessment standards. Idaho is piloting mastery-based learning in 32 schools. The following schools and districts have been selected for the Idaho Mastery Education Network in fiscal year 2017:

Blaine School District: Silver Creek Alternative High School  
Bonneville School District: Rocky Mountain Middle School  
Coeur d'Alene School District: Venture High School  
Gooding School District: North Valley Academy Charter School  
Idaho Falls School District: American Heritage Charter School  
Kuna School District: Indian Creek Elementary, Ross  
Elementary, Kuna Middle School, and Initial Point  
Alternative High School  
Lake Pend Oreille School District: Clark Fork Junior and Senior High School  
Meadow Valley School District  
Middleton School District: Atlas Alternative School  
Moscow School District: Lena Whitmore Elementary, McDonald Elementary, Moscow Middle School, Moscow High School, Russell Elementary, and West Park Elementary  
Nampa School District  
Nampa School District: Columbia High School, Greenhurst Elementary, and Union High School  
Notus School District  
Salmon School District: Salmon Junior-Senior High School  
Three Creek School District  
Vallivue School District: Rivervue Academy  
West Ada School District: Meridian Technical Charter High School and West Ada Academies-Central Academy, Eagle Academy, and Meridian Academy  
Wilder School District: Wilder Elementary and Wilder Middle/High School

## **Funding sources**

The Legislature appropriated \$1.4 million from the state general fund for the fiscal year 2017 distribution, an increase of \$1 million from fiscal year 2016. Fiscal year 2017 was the program's first year of expanded operations. Federal funds were not appropriated to districts for this program.

## **State and federal mandates and reporting requirements**

House Bill 110, passed during the 2015 legislative session, authorized the department to begin adopting mastery-based education. In response to this legislation, the department identified an initial cohort of schools to pilot the program in fiscal year 2017.

Districts are required to report back to the department the amount of state dollars spent on the mastery-based program and total program expenditures. In other words, any additional expenditures that districts and charters spend on this program will be included in their year-end report.

The pilot schools will be required to report their performance to the department for student achievement on statewide assessments, attendance, graduation rates, and end-of-course tests.

## **Distribution formula**

Of the \$1.4 million appropriation, \$50,000 stays at the department to support the program. The balance of the appropriation, \$1.35 million distributed to districts and charters determined through the grant process, implements the mastery program locally.

Districts and charters submit their mastery education budgets to the department to review and determine distribution amounts.

## Math Initiative

### Program description

The math initiative program is intended to improve students' mathematical skills. The program provides teachers with professional development, statewide online math instruction, and formative assessments to help identify students' skill levels and areas of need and advancement. The math initiative has existed as a program since 2008 but was combined with two other distributions for district flexibility between 2010 and 2016, though program expenses were tracked separately.

### Funding sources

Funding comes from the state general fund. For fiscal year 2017, the entire appropriation of \$1,817,800 went to the Division of Central Services. In prior years, the appropriation for the math initiative had been combined with two other programs and was provided to both the Division of Central Services and the Division of Children's Programs, though the appropriation bills only provided funding for the math initiative to Central Services. Federal funding was not provided.

### State and federal mandates and reporting requirements

Senate Bill 1189, which appropriated \$4,060,000 for fiscal year 2016 for literacy programs, ISAT remediation, and math initiative programs, required that the department of Education report to the Joint Finance-Appropriations Committee and both education committees by February 1, 2017. The report is to include both the uses and effectiveness of the programs. When the math initiative was funded separately for fiscal year 2017, no specific reporting was required. However, the department provides a legislative report of activities to the Legislature each year in January and plans to include the math initiative in the 2017 report.

### Distribution method or funding formula

Funding for the math initiative is not distributed to districts or charters. For fiscal year 2016, nearly all of the funds went to math center contracts with postsecondary institutions and private parties, including a \$1 million contract with Think Through Math,

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a web-based remediation program that directly benefits districts and charters.

## National Board Teacher Certification

### Program description

National board teacher certification is a statutory program and the distribution gives teachers who have been certified by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards a temporary increase in salary. A teacher can receive payments of \$2,000, plus state-paid benefits for the award, in the first five fiscal years after completing certification. To qualify, the teacher must have a contract to teach in one of Idaho's public districts or charters. Board-certified teachers who move into administrative positions cannot receive the award.

To date, funding for this program distribution has paid 382 teacher awards since 1997.

### Funding sources

For fiscal year 2017, the Legislature appropriated \$90,000 for this program. Funding came exclusively from the state general fund. The Legislature appropriates funds according to the department's projection of the number of teachers who will be eligible for the award and historical appropriation amounts.

Some districts and charters may use local or state professional development funds to help support teachers who are seeking board certification.

### State mandates and reporting requirements

Idaho Code § 33-1004E(2) outlines this distribution.

If an instructional staff member has been certified by the national board for professional teaching standards, the staff member shall receive two thousand dollars (\$2,000) per year for five (5) years from the year in which national board certification was earned. The district staff allotment shall be increased by two thousand dollars (\$2,000) for each national board certified instructional staff member who earned national board certification; provided however, that no such awards shall be paid for the period July 1, 2010, through June 30, 2011, nor shall any liabilities accrue or payments be made pursuant to this section in the future to any individuals who would have otherwise qualified for a payment during this

stated time period. The resulting amount is the district's salary-based apportionment for instructional staff. For purposes of this section, teachers qualifying for the salary increase shall be those who have been recognized as national board certified teachers as of July 1 of each year.

Teachers eligible for the \$2,000 award in fiscal years 2011 and 2012 did not receive it because of reductions in the public school's budget. Those teachers received only three or four payments instead of the typical five. However, districts and charters could pay for the award out of their leadership funds.

Districts and charters are not required to report to the Legislature or the department on additional awards they provide to teachers for the national board certification.

#### **Distribution formula**

To calculate the fiscal year 2017 distribution, the department directed districts and charters to budget \$2,379.40 per eligible teacher—\$2,000 to the teacher and \$379.40 for the increase in state-paid employee benefit costs associated with the \$2,000 award. All funds appropriated for this program are distributed to districts and charters.

## Professional Development (Distributed and Contracted)

### Program description

The appropriation for the professional development program supports continual teacher improvement through professional learning opportunities. The department distributes most of the funding to districts and charters for discretionary use. Districts and charters use the funds for teacher improvement and professional development activities. The department also uses the funding directly for services from the Idaho Coaching Network for professional development support. Other programs that provide professional development programs such as i-STEM (Idaho science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) are not funded through this program distribution.

### Funding sources

The Legislature appropriated \$16,388,700 to the program for fiscal year 2017 distribution. Of that total, \$13 million was distributed to districts and charters and \$3,388,700 remained with the department for support services including the following:

Development of a statewide teacher training and professional development portal

Funds directed to the Office of the State Board of Education for school improvement evaluations

Professional development and teacher training

The program is funded exclusively from the state general fund. Federal funds are not appropriated for this program.

### State mandates and reporting requirements

The Legislature included intent language in the appropriation bill that guides how districts and charters should use the funds:

It is the intent of the Legislature that of the moneys appropriated in Section 3 of this act, \$13,000,000 shall be distributed for professional development that supports instructors and pupil services staff to increase student

learning. Professional development efforts should be measurable, provide the instructors and pupil service staff with a clear understanding of their progress, and be incorporated into their performance evaluations. When possible, efforts should focus on teacher mentoring. Funding shall be distributed by a formula prescribed by the Superintendent of Public Instruction and the superintendent shall, to the extent possible, track usage and effectiveness of professional development efforts at the state and local levels through the newly created professional development portal.

—House Bill 618(4), 2016

Districts and charters report to the department their expenditures for state professional development funds and activities. Districts and charters do not report to the department their total expenditures for professional development, including what other fund sources are used for professional development opportunities.

For the department's fiscal year 2017 distribution, the Legislature provided the following guidance:

Of the moneys appropriated in Section 3 of this act, the Superintendent of Public Instruction may expend up to \$3,388,700 for professional development and teacher training and to develop a portal to track usage and effectiveness of professional development efforts at the state and local levels. Of this amount, \$750,000 shall be passed through to the Office of the State Board of Education on July 1, 2016, or as soon as practicable, to be expended for school improvement evaluations.

—House Bill 623, 2016

#### **Distribution formula**

The distribution formula uses both a base amount and a per student factor. The department instructed each district and charter to budget \$15,000 plus an additional \$610 per full-time equivalent for instructional and pupil service (using all fund sources) for school year 2016–2017. For fiscal year 2015, the actual distribution was \$15,000 in base per district or charter and \$422.81 per instructional full-time equivalent. Districts and charters are given considerable discretion on how to use the professional development dollars, as long as their use meets statutory requirements.

## Pupil Transportation

### Program description

Pupil transportation costs in districts and charters are partially reimbursed by the state; and the approach to reimbursement by the state has undergone several changes over the past decade.

Before fiscal year 2005, the state paid 85 percent of allowable costs based on the previous year's expenditures. Allowable costs were costs of transporting students for regular school attendance during regular days and hours and excluded most capital expenses, indirect staff costs, and legal fees.

In fiscal year 2003, the Legislature initiated a phase-in of funding caps to begin in fiscal year 2005. These caps applied to the funding amounts calculated by applying the 85 percent of allowable costs. Transportation reimbursements were limited, with some exceptions, to percentages of a statewide cost per mile or cost per rider, whichever was higher. In fiscal year 2005, the cap was 110 percent. It dropped to 105 percent in fiscal year 2006 and leveled out in fiscal year 2007 to its current reimbursement of 103 percent.

In fiscal year 2010, the 85 percent reimbursement rate was still in effect for assessment fees, bus depreciation, and bus maintenance, but the rate was reduced to 50 percent for all other expenditures. The reduction was meant to incentivize districts and charters to be more cost-effective. The cost difference in funding was converted into a block grant with a separate formula for annual adjustments. What distinguished the block grant dollars from the funding amount before the rate reduction was that the block grant was no longer tied to an accounting of allowable expenditures. The block grant for fiscal year 2015 (the period of analysis for this evaluation) was \$23.1 million.

Another change occurred in fiscal year 2011: 10 percent of the reimbursement, or \$7.5 million, was converted into discretionary funds. As of fiscal year 2013, this \$7.5 million became a fixed amount per Idaho Code and was no longer based on 10 percent.

With all funding considered, including the \$7.5 million in discretionary dollars, districts and charters received, on average for fiscal year 2015, an 86.8 percent reimbursement of the previous year's allowable costs (the range was 68–111 percent). If

the \$7.5 million is excluded from the calculation, the percentages are lower (range of 62–100 percent, with a mean of 78 percent). Because the \$7.5 million is discretionary, there is no guarantee that it is directed to pupil transportation. According to department officials, the decision is made locally and varies by district and charter.

For additional information of state funding of pupil transportation, a thorough chronology and explanation is in the [FAQ](#) section of department's pupil transportation website.

#### Funding sources

State funds cover varying percentages of the costs of pupil transportation in districts and charters, with the difference, if needed, paid by state discretionary funds or local funds.

In fiscal year 2015, the amount of state funding directed to pupil transportation was \$76.4 million, or \$68.9 million when the discretionary \$7.5 million is excluded.

#### State and federal mandates and reporting requirements

There are state reporting requirements for the previous year's allowable costs subject to partial reimbursement. Pupil transportation system metrics (e.g., bus costs including age for depreciation calculations and transportation mileage and ridership) also have reporting requirements. The reporting requirements differ for bus systems that are contracted from those that are district or charter operated. The department performs audits each year—half on-site and half as desk audits.

#### Distribution formula

Four parts comprise the transportation funding formula:

1. **85 percent and 50 percent of the previous year's allowable costs.** The percentage applied depends on the category of expenditure. For districts and charters with contracted transportation, a blended rate of approximately 60 percent accounts for different payment structures.
2. **Funding cap.** The funding cap is 103 percent of statewide mileage or ridership, whichever is more beneficial to the district or charter. Certain waiver provisions apply that can modify a capped amount. Transportation programs can

apply for a waiver if they meet two of the three following criteria: (1) Student riders per mile less than 50 percent of the statewide average, (2) Majority of miles on unpaved surfaces, and (3) Over 10 percent of miles on slopes of 5 percent or greater.

3. **Block grant.** For the fiscal year 2010 appropriation, the amount of the block grant was initially based on the difference from reducing the reimbursement rate, from 85 percent to 50 percent, for an array of allowable costs. Since then, for purposes of making annual adjustments, the fiscal year 2010 block grant amount is divided by the district's or charter's fiscal year 2010 support units and then multiplied by the district's or charter's current year support units. The resulting amount is then modified by the percentage change in total statewide transportation reimbursements from the first year to the current year, minus the percentage change in total statewide enrollment from the first year to the current year. This complicated calculation is discussed more below.
4. **\$7.5 million in discretionary dollars.** The \$7.5 million was originally based on 10 percent of what would have been the fiscal year 2011 reimbursement for fiscal year 2010 allowable costs. Subsequently, the \$7.5 million became a fixed, permanent amount in fiscal year 2013. As discussed above, as a discretionary amount, the \$7.5 million is not dedicated to pupil transportation. It is distributed to the districts proportionally to what their distributions would have been before deducting the \$7.5 million.

#### **Additional issues for consideration**

The state has been moving further away from tying pupil transportation to an accounting of allowable costs. In aggregate, the state is appropriating an amount close to the historical 85 percent of allowable costs (the mean for fiscal year 2015 was 87 percent and the range was 68–111 percent). However, of the \$76.4 million appropriated in fiscal year 2015, \$7.5 million (nearly 10 percent) is fully discretionary to be used as a district or charter chooses and not necessarily for pupil transportation.

The annual adjustment calculation for the block grant attempts to recognize changes in the number of units measured and costs of the units. The units measured, however, are support units, which are a weak surrogate for changes in the demand for pupil transportation. Support units vary based on factors such as district size, kindergarten, elementary, secondary, and special education. Two districts with relatively similar pupil transportation needs could have quite different funding because of student demographics. More relevant measures are available, such as enrollment, ridership, and mileage.

The creation of the block grant was originally intended to be an incentive for more cost-effective operations. Districts and charters were given responsibility for 50 percent of various expenditure categories instead of the 15 percent before fiscal year 2010. For this incentive to work, however, the state would have had to reduce its overall appropriation per district and charter. For some districts and charters, this reduction has occurred, but for others it has not (note the range of 68–111 percent discussed above). For fiscal year 2015, most of the districts and charters with funding caps fell below the average 87 percent.

In response to our request to the department for comments on the funding cap, officials offered several observations:

Although the intent of the funding cap is to keep expenses in check and run efficient operations, sometimes districts are not positioned to do so. For example, districts in rural settings may have to send buses farther away to pick up fewer children as compared with counterparts in an urban setting.

Some districts and charters have a competitive disadvantage in costs and transportation operations when they have only one vendor with whom to contract.

To move away from being capped, a district or charter might have to provide more services, such as increased ridership without increased mileage and attendant costs, such as fuel and labor. Achieving this increase presents a challenge if there are not enough potential student riders.

If transportation costs rise in ways beyond district or charter control and reimbursement is already limited by the funding cap, the additional expenses will not be reimbursed.

## Remediation Based on Idaho Reading Indicator (IRI)

### Program description

Remediation based on the Idaho Reading Indicator is a program aimed at literacy for students in grades K–3. Before fiscal year 2017, the appropriation was combined with two other programs and the appropriation line was labeled “math initiative, reading initiative, remediation.” Though the appropriations for those programs were combined into one line, the expenses for remediation based on the Idaho Reading Indicator were tracked separately.

The appropriation bill for fiscal year 2017 for the Division of Children’s Services (House Bill 620 (6)) specified that \$2,150,000 be “distributed for literacy programs in kindergarten through grade 3.”

### Funding sources

The program received \$2,316,000 from the state general fund: \$2,150,000 for the Division of Children’s Services and \$166,000 for the Division of Central Services.

### State and federal mandates and reporting requirements

House Bill 620 (section 6) requires that the Superintendent of Public Instruction report to the Joint Finance-Appropriations Committee and both education committees by February 1, 2018, on the uses of funds and the effectiveness of the programs and efforts.

### Distribution method or funding formula

The appropriations bill states that funding is to be distributed in “dollar amounts to be determined by the Superintendent of Public Instruction.” For fiscal year 2017, the funding was combined with the new \$9.1 million appropriation for literacy proficiency and distributed based on the number of students performing at basic or below basic levels on the assessment, averaged over the prior three years. For 2017, districts and charters were instructed to budget \$300 per student.

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#### **Additional issues for consideration**

The department combined funding for this program with the literacy proficiency program established by House Bill 526 in 2016 for purposes of distribution. Because the intent and function of both programs are similar, this appropriation could be combined with the literacy proficiency program.

## Remediation Based on Idaho Standards Achievement Tests (ISAT)

### Program description

Remediation based on the Idaho Standards Achievement Tests (ISAT) is a program aimed at remedial course work for students not showing proficiency on Idaho's standards achievement tests. Before fiscal year 2017, the appropriation was combined with two other programs and the appropriation line was labeled "math initiative, reading initiative, remediation." Though the appropriations for those programs were combined into one line, the expenses for remediation based on the ISAT were tracked separately.

The appropriation bill for the Division of Children's Services (HB 620 (6)) specified that \$4,715,000 be distributed "for remedial course work for students failing to achieve proficiency on Idaho's standards-based achievement tests."

### Funding sources

The program received \$4,715,000 for the Division of Children's Services and \$741,300 for the Division of Central Services from the state general fund.

### State and federal mandates and reporting requirements

House Bill 620 (6) requires that the Superintendent of Public Instruction report to the Joint Finance-Appropriations Committee and both education committees by February 1, 2018, on the uses of funds and the effectiveness of the programs and efforts. Although the results of both the ISAT and the ISAT-Alt (an alternative test administered to students with severe cognitive disabilities) are reported, districts do not report how the funding is spent. The department is in the process of establishing district and charter reporting.

### Distribution method or funding formula

The 2016 appropriations bill stated that the funding was to be distributed in "dollar amounts to be determined by the Superintendent of Public Instruction." In fiscal year 2017, schools

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were instructed to budget \$28 per student for each section in which the student did not meet proficiency on the ISAT.

## Safe and Drug-Free Schools

### Program description

Established in 1995, the safe and drug free schools program aims at ensuring the health and safety of students and staff. Funds were redirected to discretionary funds from 2011 to 2014, and the line-item appropriation was reestablished in 2014. The appropriation is approximately \$4 million.

### Funding sources

State funding for the program comes from revenues raised from taxes on tobacco products and lottery winnings.

*Tobacco taxes.* Idaho Code § 63-2506 and § 63-2552A establish taxes on tobacco products (57 cents per package of cigarettes and 5 cents on the wholesale price of tobacco products). Both statutes specify how much of the tax revenue is to be appropriated.

**Idaho Code § 63-2506:** Three million three hundred fifteen thousand dollars (\$3,315,000) shall be subject to appropriation to the public school income fund to be utilized to facilitate and provide substance abuse programs in the public school system.

**Idaho Code § 63-2552A:** Fifty percent (50%) of the tax collected pursuant to this section shall be subject to appropriation to the public school income fund to be utilized to develop and implement school safety improvements and to facilitate and provide substance abuse prevention programs in the public school system [less \$280,000 for other agencies in additional substance abuse efforts].

*Lottery taxes.* Idaho Code § 63-3067 states that the amount of taxes withheld from lottery winnings (when Internal Revenue Code requires withholding) be distributed to the public schools.

(1) A sum equal to the amount withheld under section 63-3035A, Idaho Code, shall be distributed fifty percent (50%) to the public school income fund to be utilized to facilitate and provide substance abuse programs in the public school system.

Additional funding for related support is provided in Idaho Code § 33-1002(2)(q), which states

For the support of provisions that provide a safe environment conducive to student learning and maintain classroom discipline, an allocation of three hundred dollars (\$300) per support unit.

This funding is not included in the safe and drug free appropriation but is intended for building safety and safe schools.

#### **State and federal mandates and reporting requirements**

Statutes establishing funding do not include reporting requirements. However, Idaho Code § 33-1631 establishes requirements for bullying policies, and many districts and charters use funds from safe and drug free schools to meet those requirements. Section (4) of the statute requires districts to report annually on bullying incidents and requires the department to establish the reporting format in rule.

Under Administrative Code, IDAPA 08.02.03.160, each district is required to have a comprehensive policy and procedure encompassing the following:

- School climate
- Discipline
- Student health
- Violence prevention
- Gun-free schools
- Substance abuse—tobacco, alcohol, and other drugs
- Suicide prevention
- Student harassment
- Drug-free school zones
- Building safety including evacuation drills

#### **Distribution method or funding formula**

Though the funding of the program is required by statute, the method of distribution is found in the annual appropriation bills. Appropriations since fiscal year 2015, when funding for the program was reestablished after several years being discretionary, have included language establishing that each district or charter is to receive \$2,000 in base funding, with the remainder to be

distributed relative to the prior year's average daily attendance. The department sets aside \$90,000 for program administration.

Districts and charters are given wide discretion on how funds are spent. In fiscal year 2015, 48 percent was spent on personnel (e.g., resource officers, drug or alcohol counselors, supervision staffing), 24 percent on equipment (mainly security equipment), and 13 percent on training. The remaining 15 percent was spent on supplies, travel, contracts, and other expenses.

#### **Additional issues for consideration**

Though the appropriations bills specify the distribution method, both Idaho Code § 63-2506 and § 63-3067 are written such that funds are to be distributed quarterly based on each counties' proportion to the state population.

Idaho Code § 63-2506(1) establishes a 57 cent tax on packages of cigarettes and

Beginning July 1, 2014, and every year thereafter, of the tax collected pursuant to this subsection, three million three hundred fifteen thousand dollars (\$3,315,000) shall be subject to appropriation to the public school income fund to be utilized to facilitate and provide substance abuse programs in the public school system.

The statute also appropriates the same amount to the Department of Juvenile Corrections. Further, section (2) specifies that funds be distributed quarterly to the counties based on population. This section appears to be intended for Juvenile Correction funds, but as written, the language applies to the safe and drug free schools program too.

Idaho Code § 63-3067 states that the amount of taxes withheld from lottery winnings (when Internal Revenue Code requires withholding) be distributed to the public schools and Juvenile Corrections

(1) A sum equal to the amount withheld under section 63-3035A, Idaho Code, shall be distributed fifty percent (50%) to the public school income fund to be utilized to facilitate and provide substance abuse programs in the public school system, and fifty percent (50%) shall be distributed to the counties to be utilized for county juvenile probation services. These funds

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shall be distributed quarterly to the counties based upon the percentage the population of the county bears to the population of the state as a whole."

This statute also states that the funds, regardless of the recipient, be based on county population.

The variability in funds available for disbursement is another issue. Because revenues are based on tobacco and lottery taxes, revenues vary in both amount and when they are available. Department staff have reported that the method of disbursement causes unnecessary processing work and delays in the purchase of school safety items.

## **School District Strategic Planning (Continuous Improvement Planning)**

### **Program description**

The distribution of funds for the strategic planning program provides necessary resources for districts' and charters' to develop continuous improvement plans as required by Idaho Code § 33-320. The statute directs districts and charters to develop plans with the follow criteria:

Data-driven information, specifically in student outcomes, which includes analyses of demographic data, student achievement and growth data, graduation rates, and college and career readiness

Clear and measurable targets based on student outcomes

Clearly developed and articulated vision and mission

Key indicators for monitoring performance

Statewide student readiness and student improvement metrics

Report of progress toward the previous year's improvement goals

The statewide student readiness and student improvement metrics are set by the Board of Education in Administrative Code, IDAPA 08.02.01.

### **Funding sources**

The Legislature appropriated \$652,000 from the state general fund for distribution for fiscal year 2017. Federal funds were not appropriated for this program.

### **State mandates and reporting requirements**

Idaho Code § 33-320 has guidance on the development of annual continuous improvement plans to increase student performance. Each district and charter should have a plan in place and make it available on the district's or charter's website. A district's board of trustees and superintendent or charter's board of directors and

administrator are required to collaborate on the plan and engage students, parents, educators and the community (as appropriate). The Board of Education provides documents to guide districts and reviews plans to ensure they meet statute and administrative rule. Staff at the Board of Education work with individual districts and charters to help them comply with the plan's requirements.

The department does not require districts and charters to report all expenditures for the distribution. Districts and charters may supplement state funds with local funds to cover the entire cost of the program.

#### **Distribution formula**

The department distributes funds on a reimbursement basis. Statute allows a district or charter to receive up to \$6,600 after the department reviews supporting documentation and verifies that planning activities are reimbursable. Idaho Code § 33-320(4) lists specific guidance:

Of the moneys appropriated in the public school's educational support program, up to six thousand six hundred dollars (\$6,600) shall be distributed to each school district and public charter school to be expended for training purposes for district superintendents and boards of trustees, public charter school administrators and boards of directors. Funds shall be distributed on a reimbursement basis based on a process prescribed by the superintendent of public instruction. Qualified training shall include training for continuous improvement processes and planning, strategic planning, finance, superintendent evaluations, public charter administrator evaluations, ethics and governance.

During the development of the fiscal year 2017 budget, the department instructed districts and charters to budget \$4,000 for this distribution. House Bill 617(5), passed in 2016, had intent language that directed \$4,000 per district and charter be distributed for fiscal year 2017 despite statute's allowance for \$6,600. Funding is not dependent on districts or charters having a compliant continuous improvement plan.

## Wireless Infrastructure (Wi-Fi)

### Program description

The Legislature began distributing state funds for the wireless infrastructure program in 2013 with the passage of Senate Bill 1200. It provided one-time funds that assisted high schools with building the infrastructure necessary to allow for either district-owned computing devices or personal mobile devices to access high speed internet. The department allows districts and charters to choose from two different models of internet access: participate with a state contract provider, Education Networks of America, or receive funds to contract with their own local provider.

The main purpose of this program is to ensure schools serving grades 9–12 have the necessary infrastructure in place to allow for online learning opportunities without relying on wired technology. Per the department, 177 schools are using the statewide contract model and 41 schools have opted out and are receiving state funds to contract with their own local provider. An additional 30 schools are neither receiving state funds nor using the state contract provider.

### Funding sources

In fiscal year 2017, the Legislature appropriated \$2.1 million from the state general fund for program distribution. Federal funds were not appropriated. The department anticipates to distribute approximately \$550,000 to districts who have opted out of the state contract provider and expects to pay the state contract provider \$1,424,000 to provide services to 177 schools.

### State mandates and reporting requirements

Idaho Code § 33-1025 outlines wireless technology standards. Standards for grades 9–12 include functionality, validation testing, and content filtering. Districts and charters are required to demonstrate to the department that their wireless infrastructure is compliant with statute to receive funds.

In addition to Idaho Code § 33-1025, House Bill 623(7) gives specific guidance to districts, charters, and the department for the distribution and use of state funds:

Of the moneys appropriated in Section 3 of this act, \$2,100,000 of one-time moneys shall be expended or distributed, in whole or pro rata, by the Superintendent of Public Instruction for the installation, repair, replacement and support of a wireless technology infrastructure, in each public school serving high school grades, of sufficient capacity to support utilization of mobile computing devices by all users in the following ways: (1) Expend for any current contracts entered into by the State Department of Education for wireless technology infrastructure; or (2) Distribute \$21.00 per student, certified staff, and administrative staff to school districts and charter schools that have wireless technology infrastructures that meet or exceed the standards established in Idaho Code and that opted in fiscal year 2014 not to participate in the statewide contract for such services.

—House Bill 623(7), 2016

Districts are not required to report total program expenditures for this distribution, which includes use of local funds. Staff at the department do not know to what extent districts use local funds to supplement the cost of this program.

#### **Distribution formula**

Per House Bill 623(7), each qualifying district and charter will receive \$21 per student, certified staff, and administrative staff for the use of wireless technology infrastructure.

