

School Funding Resolution February 2013

Now, therefore, be it resolved:

Over recent years, the failure of the Legislature to provide sufficient and increased annual funding to Iowa's school districts has a cumulative effect and significantly threatens the ability of Iowa schools to meet the current needs and demands of improved student achievement.

Be it further resolved:

To ensure appropriate annual educational funding and fiscal solvency the New Hampton Community School District Board of Education resolves that to prepare for the 2013-14 and 2014-15 years, the legislature should, as statute dictates, approve allowable growth in the first thirty days of the 2013 Legislative Session.

Therefore; the New Hampton Community School District Board of Education requests that the Iowa Legislature set a 4% allowable growth rate for the 2013-14 and 2014-15 school years prior to consideration of educational reform measures. This request is based on:

- Recent years allowable growth has not kept pace with the educational needs of the district to support student learning. Iowa wants - and needs - to be a world leader, which will require a stronger educational program and funding to support that program. Iowa is failing to annually invest sufficient resources into this system.
- If education is truly the state's priority, then allowable growth funding should be prioritized and passed in compliance with Iowa law – within 30 days of the presentation of the governor's budget.
- The allowable growth figure has a direct impact on the number of districts on the "budget guarantee." Adequate allowable growth of 4% reduces the number of districts on the guarantee from 223 to 62. Consequently, the additional statewide property tax asking for the budget guarantee could be reduced from \$33,637,871 to \$3,982,365.
- Improving student achievement is not just about changing policy. It is about providing the necessary resources to strengthen our educational system. Recent across-the-board cuts, low-to-no allowable growth rates and an increase in expectations have left school districts with little capacity to fund programs.
- Budgets must be passed and certified by April 15; collective bargaining agreements have to be approved; curriculum needs to be purchased; and staffing decisions need to be made. Districts must have funding information in order to plan for next school year.
- There are funds available to support 4% allowable growth. As of February 4, budget experts project the state treasury will end fiscal year 2013 with an \$822 million surplus after cash reserves and emergency accounts are full. That ending balance will likely grow because it is based on a 3.3% growth projection, which is now projected to be at least 4%.

Therefore;

With 4% allowable growth established for 2013-14 and 2014-15, we believe the funding would support the Educational Reform Proposal. We support:

- Opportunities for teacher instructional leadership with full funding provided and prescription for implementation determined at the local level for flexibility in staffing.
- A reconciliation of the Legislative Services Agency estimate versus the Department of Education funding estimate. There must be a clear understanding of the cost to districts and appropriate funding provided to support these costs.
- Funding established to ensure the sustainability of the Education Reform Proposal.
- Continued review and improvement of the current teacher evaluation system based on the Iowa Teaching Standards to include measures of student achievement.
- This positive move in Educational Reform that must include the development of a world-class curriculum with scope and sequence alignment to the statewide assessment.

This resolution is approved by the New Hampton Community School District Board of Education in support of providing adequate current funding for Iowa schools requests 4% allowable growth is approved by the Iowa Legislature for 2013-14 and 2014-15 and conceptual implications of the Education Reform Proposal.

Board President

Date

Superintendent

Date