

From the Superintendent

The Nebraska Legislature is in session right now and there are several proposed bills that may involve Wakefield Community School. The following bills, with the sponsor's name listed after, are currently being discussed and may change how the school does business.

LB 697 (Pahls): This bill would prohibit the use of wireless communication devices on school buses. The problem is that some schools, including Wakefield, use cell phones on the bus to communicate when they are out of range of the school. Since the introduction of this bill, federal regulations have been imposed to address this issue.

LB 898 (Haar): This bill would create the Student Expression Act. There is nothing good that would come out of this bill. The bill's purpose is to give permission to students to express themselves through whatever means they see appropriate. A bill is never good when it includes an immunity clause for administrators, teachers, and staff.

LB 899 (Nordquist): This bill would preserve roughly \$7 million in state general funds currently earmarked for the three state defined benefit plans (School employees, State Patrol, and Judges) along with the Omaha Public Schools retirement plan. If passed, there would be a burden to each district in the state to make up the difference in the fund. The school district pays 101% of each dollar placed into retirement. If the \$7 million is not paid from the state's general fund, the money would have to come from the local taxpayers.

LB 966 (Pahls): This bill would require each school district to budget at least 65% of all expenditures toward the classroom. This bill unnecessarily infringes on a school board's choice to budget as it deems most appropriate. A similar bill was debated last year and was not passed. While Wakefield Community Schools is just over 65%, the bill allows the state to control what is best for our school.

LB 1006 (Adams): This bill would change the kindergarten enrollment date to July 31st as per one of the recommendations in a recent interim study conducted by the Education Committee.

LB 1021 (Avery): This bill would impose multiple requirements upon the Nebraska School Activities Association (NSAA). The school board has voted on a resolution to keep the NSAA the same and not in support of the bill.

LB 1028 (Louden): This bill would permit the creation of charter schools.

LB 1069 (Adams): This bill would provide needed technical and substantive changes to the laws governing the Educational Service Units Coordinating Council (ESUCC).

Please call Senator Giese at (402) 471-2716 or email him at bgiese@leg.ne.gov if you have questions on any of these proposed bills. You may also mention to Senator Giese that state aid to our district is important and that all efforts to keep it in Wakefield should be taken.

Please contact me if you have any questions. My email address is cwaddle@esu1.org or give me a call at school during regular business hours.