



Wyoming Education Association

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Wyoming Education Association Suing State Over Inadequate School Funding

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CHEYENNE, Wyo. (Aug. 18, 2022) — The Wyoming Education Association (WEA) has filed suit today against the State of Wyoming, asserting that the state has violated the Wyoming Constitution by failing to fund public schools adequately.

"Our students deserve better," said WEA President Grady Hutcherson. "WEA felt compelled to file this suit because the quality of education in our state is beginning to suffer. If the Legislature continues to violate our constitution by failing to fulfill their duty to fund our schools adequately, things will only continue to get worse," he said. "Already students are being disadvantaged with increased class sizes, aging buildings and infrastructure, and insufficient school security measures," said Hutcherson. "As we face a growing education employee shortage in our state, districts are being robbed of the financial resources they need to hire qualified teachers and Education Support Professionals (ESPs)."

The Wyoming Supreme Court has repeatedly upheld the state's constitutional obligation to finance high-quality, fair, and equitable public education for every Wyoming student. Landmark rulings upholding this mandate have been awarded in favor of districts filing suit after they became victims of funding disparities.

"The WEA has exhausted possibilities for correcting the funding deficit outside of litigation," says WEA Legal Counsel Patrick Hacker. "The point of the litigation is to get the Legislature to do its Constitutional duty," he said. "The goal is to enforce the Constitution to secure proper funding for safe, high-quality schools everywhere in Wyoming and to stop the deterioration of public education due to legislative failures."

The Wyoming Supreme Court has ordered the state to keep the school financing system current with actual costs by adjusting the model for inflation and adding any new items necessary for equitable, high-quality public education. The Legislature has failed to keep the model current.

"Kids can't wait, they need their quality education now, and the WEA is committed to solving this problem as quickly as we can," said President Hutcherson. "Wyoming children and families are promised access to high-quality, equitable education. In too many ways, that promise is going unfulfilled. We are committed to seeking justice for our students."

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