

MEMORANDUM

TO: Joint Budget Committee

FROM: Craig Harper (303-866-3481)

SUBJECT: CSDB Teacher Salary Proposal

DATE: March 14, 2014

During figure setting for the Department of Education on March 6, 2014, the Committee approved the Department's request (R11) and the staff recommendation to provide salary increases for teachers at the Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind (CSDB) in FY 2014-15 based on salary increases provided by El Paso District 11 (D-11) in FY 2013-14. However, the Committee was unable to act on staff's recommendation to sponsor legislation associated with CSDB teacher salaries.

Current law requires CSDB to compensate teachers according to D-11's combination salary schedule and salary policies. **Based on discussions with CSDB leadership, staff recommends that the Committee sponsor legislation in the 2014 Session that would continue to require CSDB to use the D-11 salary schedule but would allow CSDB to implement its own salary policies.**

Original Section from Figure Setting Document

Recommended legislation: At the CSDB's hearing with the Committee in December, the Committee expressed interest in modifying the statutes governing CSDB teacher salaries to improve the school's ability recruit and retain teachers. The discussions at the hearing raised two major potential areas of change: (1) whether to maintain the linkage to D-11 for salary purposes or tie salaries to a different district or entity; and (2) whether to adjust the timing of CSDB salary increases to provide increases in the *same year* as D-11 (current law provides increases in the year following increases in D-11).

- *Linkage to D-11:* Having considered available options, the CSDB staff and the CSDB Board agree that maintaining a linkage to D-11 is the preferable solution. D-11 entirely surrounds the CSDB campus and is the most logical reference point for CSDB. However, the CSDB staff is proposing (and JBC staff is recommending) that the Committee sponsor legislation that would maintain the linkage to the D-11 salary schedule (dictating the pay for a teacher with a given level of education and experience) but allow the CSDB to adopt its own policies for placing and "moving" teachers on the salary schedule. For example, under the proposed system, the CSDB would be able to fund educational increases for teachers (according to the D-11 salary schedule) *based on available CSDB funding regardless of whether D-11 was funding such increases in a given year.*
- *Timing of Increases:* The CSDB staff and board also discussed the idea of eliminating the one-year lag and providing increases during the same year as D-11. Doing so would

March 14, 2014

presumably require a mid-year increase through the supplemental appropriation process. The CSDB staff would prefer to maintain the current timing (and continue lag D-11 increases by one year). The school believes that lagging by one year increases certainty for CSDB teachers and recruits. CSDB staff and JBC staff agree that managing the school based on potential mid-year salary increases would be problematic. Thus, under the proposed legislation, if D-11 modified the *salary schedule* for a given school year, then CSDB would continue to do so in the following year.

Given the Committee's interest in providing additional flexibility to the CSDB to improve recruitment and retention, staff believes that the CSDB proposal is promising compromise. The proposal would maintain the logical linkage to the D-11 salary schedule (dictating how much a teacher with a given amount of educational attainment and experience would be paid) but allow the school to adopt its own salary policies to place and move teachers on that salary schedule. The proposal would allow the General Assembly and the CSDB to do so based on available State funding rather than the budgetary constraints of a specific school district. Staff recommends that the Committee sponsor legislation in the 2014 Session making the proposed statutory change.