

One Hundred Seventh Legislature - First Session - 2021

Introducer's Statement of Intent

LB529

Chairperson: Senator Lynne Walz

Committee: Education

Date of Hearing: February 02, 2021

The following constitutes the reasons for this bill and the purposes which are sought to be accomplished thereby:

The primary focus of Legislative Bill 529 is to set the distribution of education lottery dollars for the five-year period from 2021-22 through 2025-26 as follows:

- 2.5% to the Access College Early Scholarship Cash Fund
- 9.5% to the Behavioral Training Cash Fund
- 1% to the Career Mentoring Grant Fund
- 2% to the Career-Readiness and Dual-Credit Education Cash Fund
- 1% to the College Credit Testing Fee Cash Fund
- 4.5% to the Community College Gap Assistance Program Fund
- 7.5% to the Excellence in Teaching Cash Fund
- 3% to the Expanded Learning Opportunity Grant Fund
- 1.5% to the Mental Health Training Cash Fund
- 3% to the Nebraska Education Improvement Fund for distance education incentives
- 58% to the Nebraska Opportunity Grant Fund
- 1.5% to the State Department of Education Cash Fund for the purpose of funding an online education and career planning tool
- 4.5% to the State Department of Education Leadership Cash Fund
- 0.5% to the State Department of Education Technology Cash Fund

LB529 allows the existing 10% statutory retainer to sunset along with the requirement that the allocation funnels through the Education Improvement Fund. It moves the Excellence in Teaching Program from the Nebraska Department of Education to the Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education and makes some technical changes to the program.

LB529 also makes some technical changes to the Expanded Learning Opportunity Grant Program and the Community College Gap Assistance Program, along with adding requirements for departments, agencies, recipients and subrecipients to file annual reports to the Auditor of Public Accounts. There are additional clean-up provisions included in the bill related to education lottery dollars and the programs they currently or have previously funded.

Finally, LB529 requires the Education Committee to submit a report in five years with recommendations on how the education allocation of lottery should be used for the five-year period beginning with fiscal year 2026-27. That report will be due December 31, 2024.

Principal Introducer: _____

Senator Lynne Walz