**School-Level Spending Key Points**

*The key points below are designed to help district leaders communicate the shift to reporting per-pupil expenditures at the school level with board members, district principals, community leaders, educators, parents, and media. While based on the key messages, these key points are differentiated based upon audience to help with crafting specific messages for speeches, presentations, and interviews.*

**FOR COMMUNICATING WITH COMMUNITY MEMBERS**

* We are committed to providing all students with a high-quality public education and the opportunity to succeed.
* Part of that is ensuring our schools support the unique needs of every child.
* During the 2018-2019 academic year, [DISTRICT] took the important step from reporting spending at the district level to reporting spending at the district *and* school levels, and the Nebraska Department of Education will begin publicly reporting that information in spring 2020.
* This shift comes as part of a requirement under federal law, the Every Student Succeeds Act, for states to report per-pupil expenditures at the school and district levels on our annual state report card.
* This is an opportunity to gain valuable information about how resources are distributed as we build new reporting systems to track spending at the school level.
* With school-level financial data, districts will be able to raise important questions about how equitably resources have been distributed between schools in the past and how resources should continue to be distributed in the future so that all students receive a fair and equitable education.
* It’s important to note that equity doesn’t mean equal. In order to meet the unique needs of every student and school, we must go beyond providing the same (or equal) experience and resources.
* Over time, our state will be looking to refine how spending information is captured and communicated.
* Data on school-level spending is one piece of a larger conversation. Combined with information about our district and schools, this data can help parents, educators, and policymakers better understand spending within a school’s unique context to inform conversations about improvements that will benefit all students.

FOR COMMUNICATING WITH PRINCIPALS

* Thank you for your commitment to providing all students with a high-quality public education and the opportunity to succeed.
* Part of that commitment is ensuring our district’s schools support the unique needs of every child.
* During the 2018-2019 academic year, [DISTRICT] took the important step from reporting spending at the district level to reporting spending at the district *and* school levels, and the Nebraska Department of Education will begin publicly reporting that information in spring 2020.
* This shift comes as part of a requirement under federal law, the Every Student Succeeds Act, for states to report per-pupil expenditures at the school and district levels on our annual state Report Card.
* This as an opportunity to gain valuable information about how fairly and equitably resources are distributed in our district as we build new reporting systems to track spending at the school level.
* This information will also help you to better understand the connection between how funds are spent and the impact on student outcomes.
* Tracking spending at the school level for items like a teacher’s salary, a textbook, or a desk may seem easy, but becomes more complicated with costs that are spread across multiple schools or even our whole district.
  + This could include buses that transport children to multiple schools, English Language instructors who work in more than one school building, or supports for students with disabilities.
* The Nebraska Department of Education has created the necessary technical systems to accurately track and report how local, district, and state funds are allocated at the school level.
* Understanding how funding is spent at the school level will help drive important conversations about equity and how fairly resources are spent. [Note: principals should be involved in these conversations, along with district-level personnel.]
* This is an important part of working to provide resources that prepare all students to succeed. [*If applicable*: particularly students living in poverty, students who have experienced trauma in or outside of school and our students receiving additional support services, including English Language learners and students with disabilities.]
* As a district, we are committed to providing principals with the necessary training and support to be responsive to questions as they arise. Specifically, we commit to [INCLUDE TRAININGS, MAKE BACKGROUND INFORMATION AVAILABLE, etc.]
* It’s important to remember, however, that no two schools are exactly alike. When considering information about school-level spending, it must be viewed alongside information about your school’s individual environment, such as the number of English Learners you serve or the percentage of your school’s population receiving free or reduced-price lunch.
* We look forward to continuing this conversation with you over the coming months and years as we further refine how spending information is captured.

FOR COMMUNICATING WITH PARENTS

* We are committed to providing all students with a high-quality public education and the opportunity to succeed.
* Part of that is ensuring our schools support the unique needs of every child.
* During the 2018-2019 academic year, [DISTRICT] took the important step from reporting spending at the district level to reporting spending at the district *and* school levels, and the Nebraska Department of Education will begin publicly reporting that information in spring 2020.
* This shift comes as part of a requirement under federal law, the Every Student Succeeds Act, for every state to report how much districts and schools spend per student on their annual state report card.
* Tracking spending at the school level for items like a principal’s salary, a textbook, or a desk may seem easy, but becomes more complicated with costs that are spread across multiple schools or even the whole district.
  + This could include buses that transport children to multiple schools, English Language instructors who work in more than one school building, or supports for students with disabilities.
* This information will help our district and schools better understand how spending supports each child, and where those funds can be spent more equitably, so that every child receives the high-quality education he or she deserves.
* It’s important to note that equity doesn’t mean equal. In order to meet the unique needs of every student and school, we must go beyond providing the same (or equal) experience and resources.
* This is a critical part of working to provide resources to support all students.   
  [*If applicable:* particularly students living in poverty, students who have experienced trauma in or outside of school, and our students receiving additional support services, including English learners and students with disabilities.]

* It’s also critical to remember that, just as one grade doesn’t define the whole student, school-level spending should be viewed in relation to the unique context of your child’s school. Spending may differ from school to school to meet the unique needs of the students each school serves.
* We look forward to engaging in these important conversations with you over the coming months as we work together to provide all students with a fair and equitable education.