

Please **SUPPORT** House Bill 14-**1208**

Title: Authorizing Multi-district Administrative Units

Sponsors: Rep. **Wright** & Rep. **Hamner**, Sen. **Zenzinger** & Sen. **King**

What the bill does: Defines a multi-district administrative unit (AU) as a group of school districts that did not form a board of cooperative services (BOCES), but were parties to an agreement as of January 1, 2011, to jointly provide special education services.

Supporters: CDE and BOCES

History:

1. Under the Exceptional Children’s Educational Act (ECEA), responsibility and funding for delivery and administration of special education and related services at the local level is assigned to an AU.
2. For a school district to qualify as an AU it must meet minimum requirements for staffing and administration.
3. For decades, three small groups of rural school districts formed multi-district AUs by entering into agreements between themselves to share AU responsibilities, and CDE approved and recognized these arrangements. This benefitted the districts not having the resources to meet AU requirements on their own.
4. CDE has advised these groups that they must now discontinue their agreements because the ECEA does not authorize their multi-district AUs. The affected AUs and their member school districts are:

<u>Mesa County Joint AU</u>	<u>Gunnison AU</u>	<u>Fort Lupton/Keenesburg Consortium</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mesa County Valley - D51 • Plateau Valley - D50 • De Beque - D49-JT 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gunnison Watershed - RE-1J • Hinsdale County - RE-1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weld County - RE-8 • Weld County - RE-3J

Reasons to Support HB 14-1208

1. Each of the three AUs above tailored their own arrangements for meeting AU requirements, and all three have worked well and without controversy for the benefit of the students residing in the school districts they serve.
2. By amending the ECEA to expressly authorize the three pre-existing Multi-District AUs the affected school districts may continue their longstanding joint agreements without disruption or increased expense.
3. The bill grandfathers the three pre-existing AUs and will not lead to proliferation of new AUs or increase CDE’s administrative responsibilities.
4. The bill prohibits other school districts from forming new AUs except through the existing statutory process of meeting the requirements to be their own AU or forming a BOCES.

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