

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Ron Highland at 1:30 pm on Wednesday, February 03, 2016, 112-N of the Capitol.

All members were present

Committee staff present:

Tamera Lawrence, Office of Revisor of Statutes
Sue Mollenkamp, Kansas Legislative Committee Assistant
Sharon Wenger, Legislative Research Department
Edward Penner, Legislative Research Department
Nick Myers, Office of Revisor of Statutes

Conferees appearing before the Committee:

Scott Frank, Legislative Post Auditor
Representative John Bradford
Walt Chappell, Educational Management Consultants
Mike Howerter, Labette Community College Trustee
Brian Koon, Kansas Families for Education
Carolyn Dunn, Executive Director, Stafford County Economic Development
G.A. Buie, Executive Director, United School Administrators of Kansas
Gail Billman, Labette County Board of Education
Greg Tice, Renwick Board of Education
Lori Johnson, Girard Board of Education
Mike Berblinger, Superintendent, Buhler
Pat Happer, Superintendent, Jefferson West
Rob Reynolds, Superintendent, Douglass
Shawn Cardin, Central Heights Board of Education
Tom Benoit, Palco Board of Education and Schools for Quality Education
Dave Trabert, Kansas Policy Institute (KPI)

Others in attendance:

[See Attached List](#)

Possible bill introductions

Chairman Highland asked for bill introductions.

Representative Trimmer introduced a bill on behalf of the Board of Regents. There were no objections to the bill being sponsored by the committee.

Representative Macheers introduced a conceptual bill related to cyber bullying. Representative

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Trimmer asked if the Macheers' bill was being introduced as an individual bill or as a committee bill; it was being introduced as a committee bill. There were no objections to the bill being sponsored by the committee.

Hearing on: HB2504 — School district realignment.

Chairman Highland opened the hearing on **HB2504** and invited staff members to provide background information on realignment of school districts.

Scott Frank provided historical background from a cost study previously performed by Legislative Post Audit on the potential savings of reorganizing school districts. This information was not specific to the language of **HB2504** but was provided to give perspective for understanding the bill. Mr. Frank answered questions from committee members. ([Attachment 1](#)) ([Attachment 2](#))

Edward Penner provided survey documents aligned closely with the bill, noting the survey was not an in-depth cost savings study. Mr. Penner answered questions from the committee. ([Attachment 3](#)) ([Attachment 4](#)) ([Attachment 5](#))

Nick Myers gave an overview of bill and answered questions from committee members. ([Attachment 6](#))

The Chairman invited conferees to speak to the bill.

Representative John Bradford spoke in favor of **HB2504**, clarifying what the bill does and does not do. Representative Bradford provided supplemental material for committee consideration. ([Attachment 7](#)) ([Attachment 8](#))

Walt Chappell supported **HB2504**, providing supplemental materials and emphasizing legislative authority to organize school districts. ([Attachment 9](#)) ([Attachment 10](#)) ([Attachment 11](#))

Mike Howerter spoke in favor of **HB2504**, commenting on geographic settings of the school districts in Labette County. ([Attachment 12](#))

Chairman Highland asked committee members to note written testimony submitted in favor of **HB2504** by Larry Tawney, concerned citizen. ([Attachment 13](#))

Brian Koon spoke against **HB2504**, stating his belief that it was unfair and unnecessary. ([Attachment 14](#))

Carolyn Dunn opposed **HB2504** expressing her concern that it could negatively impact economic development. ([Attachment 15](#))

GA Buie spoke against **HB2504** stating his belief that the timing is bad for this bill in light of the new

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vision being set by the State Board of Education. ([Attachment 16](#))

Gail Billman opposed **HB2504**, expressing her belief that all schools benefit from having building leadership and support. ([Attachment 17](#))

Greg Tice spoke against **HB2504**, providing examples of the negative impact it might have. ([Attachment 18](#))

Lori Johnson opposed **HB2504** and spoke in favor of local control as a means of meeting student needs. ([Attachment 19](#))

Mike Berblinger provided opposing testimony on **HB2504** asking questions about the impact of the bill. ([Attachment 20](#))

Pat Happer opposed **HB2504**, expressing his concerns about the effect the bill would have on hiring teachers. ([Attachment 21](#))

Rob Reynolds spoke against **HB2504**, citing the ways in which he believed the bill would have a negative impact on his local school district. ([Attachment 22](#))

Shawn Cardin opposed **HB2504**, giving support for local control. ([Attachment 23](#))

Tom Benoit expressed his belief that consolidation should be decided locally; he opposes **HB2504**. ([Attachment 24](#))

The Chairman asked the committee to review written testimonies submitted in opposition to **HB2504** by:

Amy Futhey, Caldwell Board of Education ([Attachment 25](#))

Mark Tallman, Kansas Association of School Boards (KSAB) ([Attachment 26](#))

Becca Flowers, Superintendent, Skyline Schools ([Attachment 27](#))

Betty Majors, Jefferson West Board of Education ([Attachment 28](#))

David Hand, concerned citizen ([Attachment 29](#))

Denise Sultz, Kansas PTA ([Attachment 30](#))

Elizabeth Tracy, concerned citizen ([Attachment 31](#))

Greg Clark, Superintendent, Central Plains ([Attachment 32](#))

Greg Rinehart, Superintendent, Macksville ([Attachment 33](#))

Judith Deedy, Game On for Kansas Schools ([Attachment 34](#))

Jared Long, grade 11 student, Beloit ([Attachment 35](#))

Julie McPherron, Superintendent, Argonia ([Attachment 36](#))

Jerry Minneman, Superintendent, Ell-Saline ([Attachment 37](#))

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John Rundle, Superintendent, Mayetta ([Attachment 38](#))
Jeff Travis, Superintendent, Beloit ([Attachment 39](#))
Kelly Arnberger, Superintendent, Bucklin ([Attachment 40](#))
Kenneth Harshberger, Superintendent, Meade ([Attachment 41](#))
Katherine Kersonbrock-Ostmeyer, Special Ed Director, NW Kansas Service Center ([Attachment 42](#))
Mark Desetti, Kansas National Education Association (KNEA) ([Attachment 43](#))
Marcel Harmon, Lawrence Board of Education ([Attachment 44](#))
Marvin Miller, concerned citizen ([Attachment 45](#))
Penny Hargrove, Superintendent, Hiawatha ([Attachment 46](#))
Patricia Wellicky, Bonner Springs-Edwardsville Board of Education ([Attachment 47](#))
Ryan Flickner, Kansas Farm Bureau ([Attachment 48](#))
Russell Miller, Assistant Superintendent, Newton ([Attachment 49](#))
Rod Stewart, Washington County Board of Education ([Attachment 50](#))
Sean Gatewood, Kansas Farmers Union ([Attachment 51](#))
Sandy Halling, Bucklin Board of Education ([Attachment 52](#))
Shane Morrison, Argonia Board of Education ([Attachment 53](#))
Troy Damman, Superintendent, Waconda ([Attachment 54](#))
Tom Dolenz, Superintendent, Fowler ([Attachment 55](#))
Susan Beeson, Superintendent, Centre ([Attachment 56](#))

Dave Trabert provided neutral testimony on **HB2504** encouraging the committee to consider instead the benefit of cost savings from establishing regional services in place of multiple district services. ([Attachment 57](#))

The conferees answered questions from the committee. The hearing on **HB2504** was closed.

The meeting adjourned at 3:00 p.m.

The House Education Committee will meet next on Thursday, February 4, at 1:30 p.m. in Room 112-N of the Capitol.