

Hello. My name is Mike Howerter and I am a retired businessman from Labette County. I hold a bachelor's degree in business administration with a major in management. I have been elected to the Labette Community College board of Trustees four times and am now starting my thirteenth year serving in that position.

Labette County would make a great poster child for why we need to pass the bill that you are considering today. Labette County has a total student population of about 3,850 students. We have four districts and four superintendents in Labette County. Compare this to USD-259 in Wichita which has one superintendent for about 46,000 students.

Here is one example of how screwed up the present situation is in Labette County. USD-505 is made up from Chetopa and St. Paul. They have a total of about 463 students. It is distance of over fifty-two miles from these two towns. You would have to pass by three other in county school districts to drive from one town to the other. You don't need to have a half of a MBA to understand there is something really wrong and wasteful with this situation.

Parsons High School is located one block away from the district boundary for the Altamont school district. Yesterday, I walked the length of that distance in under two minutes, and I'm old and kind of fat. Every school day, buses are driven from Altamont to Parsons to pick up students that are a block away from Parsons High School. The distance from PHS to Labette County High School is about twelve miles. The very minimum total distance driven by these buses to pick up and return the students is forty-eight miles. This money could be better spent in the classrooms.

A team of efficiency experts visited USD-503 a few years back and come up with a bunch of suggestions on how we could save money. The superintendent later announced these ideas would not work because the unified school district was already operating the school as efficient as possible.

With today's modern office technology and communication equipment, one superintendent could easily handle the job of administration for this county. In fact, during the early 1960's, Labette County only had one superintendent for the entire county.

Here is the good news. I have taken a random informal survey among my friends and have found a very interesting result. Both my Liberal's and Conservative's friends agree on the overwhelming need for this reform. This

bill will be well received by the majority of taxpayers. It will be good for the people and students in our county.