

Mollenkamp@house.ks.gov

Re: House Bill 2504

This plan is ill conceived and lacks the thorough research that a plan that affects so many people should reflect.

I will address some of the concerns that I have concerning Jefferson County. Most of these concerns would be applicable to many other Kansas communities.

- Superintendent

Most patrons are not closely in tune with the responsibilities of the superintendent. We have six districts in our county. Our superintendent attends, in a supervisory role, the majority of our events which include academic, fine arts and sport endeavors. Many of these events need multiple supervisors. Who would fill this void? Our principals already spend many hours after school at these events. The public relations generated by the visibility and accessibility of the superintendent at these events is invaluable.

Clearly one superintendent could not perform all of the functions being carried out by the current six superintendents. Would this necessitate having a CFO, a curriculum specialist and a human resources director? Schools are a huge business. They have to be run as a big business. Reducing the number of superintendents would result in very little monetary savings if the districts are still going to be run effectively.

Budget

Would each district still have control over its' own budget? With one superintendent, would this person now prepare and vet six different budgets? This bill shows no appreciation for the complexity involved in the budget process. If one budget is created, then local control is minimized.

Infrastructure

A major point has been made that no buildings would close. Closing buildings is a contentious and traumatic ordeal for communities. This bill obviously does not want the legislature to tackle this responsibility. However, no major monies are saved by eliminating superintendents. Monies are saved by eliminating buildings. Communities have stressed over and over that their local schools are their life blood. It is fairly obvious that the author of this bill would place the decision to close some schools in the lap of the local districts. This would give some control of this issue to local districts but if they should not choose to close schools, where is the savings?

School Boards

Would there now be one school board covering all six districts? Constituents would quickly realize their local control had been greatly diluted. But if each previous district retained their board how would be superintendent be evaluated?

Salary Schedules

If there is one district, would there be one salary schedule? This concept is a nightmare waiting to happen. Each district has a unique plan that is a result of years of negotiations. Would there now be one plan? The result of this would be some people losing money and others getting raises to fit them all into one plan. The fallout from this alone would be horrific.

Benefits

Insurance, sick leave and paid tuitions reimbursement are only a few items that vary greatly between districts. Just one of these items would take great effort and many hours to try to resolve. One district would have to have one, not multiple, salary schedule and benefit plan.

We cannot look only at the fiscal side of this equation. We have to also look at the human side. The money saved by this bill is negligible in comparison to the havoc it will cause.

Listen to your constituents and make the right decision. Do not pass bill 2504.

Betty Majors

USD 340 Board Member