

House Education Budget Committee
Testimony on House Bill 2729
USD 229 Blue Valley
March 14, 2016

Chairwoman Grosserode and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments **on HB 2729**, a bill relating to school district procurement. The Blue Valley school district is committed to providing a quality education for our students and to *being good stewards of taxpayer dollars*.

We appreciate the efforts undertaken by this committee to solicit feedback. While we oppose the bill *in its current form*, we would withdraw our opposition if the following amendments were incorporated:

- **Restore “services” to the list of exceptions** (*Section 2 – page 2, line 16*)
This change is essential to allow Blue Valley schools to retain the services necessary to operate the district. Sometimes, these professional services are retained for a limited time or for a specific purpose. We believe that the process for procuring and negotiating professional services (e.g., financial advisors) can be managed more effectively through an administrative process.
- **Strike the following language** “*that would negatively impact student performance or outcomes as long as the secretary agrees with such determination in writing*” (*Section 1 – page 1, lines 25-27*).
Blue Valley’s first priority is ensuring that the quality and specifications established for programs and services will meet the standards our patrons expect for our students. Submitting information to the Department of Administration about a decision to purchase goods or services that may not be the least expensive can provide valuable information about the procurement process; however, we do not believe that the final determination should be made by the secretary of DOA.
- **Increase the deviation allowed for local purchases from 1 percent to 3 percent.** (*Section 1 – page 1, line 20*)
Blue Valley believes there is great value in partnering with businesses in our local economy. When our school district contracts with local vendors, those dollars are often reinvested in the community and in our schools.
- **Eliminate the sunset provision on existing procurement contracts.** (*Section 1 – page 1, line 28*)
To achieve greater cost savings and long-term continuity in services,

contracts may extend beyond the June 30, 2018 sunset date. In some cases, the district and service providers/vendors have made significant investments in anticipation of fulfilling a contract whose term was negotiated to extend beyond this deadline.

We would like to thank this committee for giving so much time and thoughtful consideration to this portion of the Alvarez & Marsal recommendations. We thank you, again, for inviting our feedback and look forward to working together to resolve the differences we currently have on HB 2729.

We would be happy to answer questions as requested.