

MINUTES OF THE SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Steve Abrams at 1:30 pm on Thursday, February 18, 2016, 144-S of the Capitol.

All members were present

Committee staff present:

Steven Wu, Legislative Research Department
Jason Long, Office of Revisor of Statutes
Lauren Douglass, Legislative Research Department
Erna Fabert, Kansas Legislative Committee Assistant

Conferees appearing before the Committee:

No conferees present

Others in attendance:

[See Attached List](#)

Possible action on bills previously heard SB356 — Creating the school district bond project review board.

Chairperson Abrams called for discussion and possible final action on **SB356**. He then asked for Revisor Long to distribute and review a substitute bill that had been requested by Senator Baumgardner. ([Attachment 1](#))

Senator Baumgardner briefly explained that the substitute for **SB356** was requested because legislators are constitutionally mandated to provide funding and set limits and guidelines for those funds, rather than physically overseeing capital improvement projects. This substitute would provide persons with expertise in those areas to perform those duties.

Discussion followed concerning the late arrival of the substitute, concern over lack of minority representation on the Oversight Committee, the potential for having several members of the Committee from one geographic location, technical details such as the number of Committee members and their proper titles, and whether this legislation is premature as a new school funding formula might resolve some of the issues addressed by the bill and substitute bill.

The chairperson indicated that **SB356** is not an exempt bill and therefore if the bill does not pass out of Committee before turnaround the oversight and accountability issues addressed in the bill will not be resolved this calendar year.

Further discussion addressed timing issues of bond proposals, how assessed valuation per pupil numbers were derived, whether there would be an appeal process from the Committee's decision,

CONTINUATION SHEET

MINUTES of the Committee on Education at 1:30 pm on Thursday, February 18, 2016 in Room 144-S of the Capitol.

possible workload and compensation for the Committee members and/or staff, and a seeming over-representation of school officials on the Committee.

Senator Schmidt specifically asked for a written response identifying the entity responsible for making compensation payments to the Oversight Committee.

In response to a question from Senator Fitzgerald, Senator Abrams responded that the total outstanding obligation for bond issues is approximately \$5.3 billion. Dale Dennis of the Kansas State Department of Education responded to the question concerning workload of the Committee by stating there are approximately twelve bond issues per year and further stressed that timing is a critical component in their issuance.

Recognizing that there are many factors that need to be considered before approving a substitute bill, and the critical nature of the timing, Senator Fitzgerald moved that measures to receive exemption for the bill be pursued so that further work can be done by the Education Committee after turnaround. Motion carried.

In response to Senator Schmidt's question about whether the substitute bill would receive further vetting during an open hearing, Chairperson Abrams agreed that should be the next step if it is returned to the Education Committee.

There being no further business before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 2:10 pm.

The next meeting of the Senate Education Committee will be on Wednesday, March 2, 2016 at 1:30 pm in Room 144-S of the Capitol.