

Senate Education Committee

Testimony on SB 136

Delivered by Cheryl L. Semmel, Executive Director, USA|Kansas

on behalf of

United School Administrators of Kansas
Kansas School Superintendents Association
Kansas National Education Association
Kansas Association of School Boards

February 10, 2015

Thank you for the opportunity to appear today in support of SB 136, a bill to amend the Professional Negotiations Act.

I am testifying today on behalf of United School Administrators of Kansas (USA|Kansas), the Kansas School Superintendents Association (KSSA), the Kansas National Education Association (KNEA), and the Kansas Association of School Boards (KASB).

At the conclusion of the 2013 legislative session, following long and often contentious debates on a number of collective bargaining bills, our organizations were charged with working together to craft recommended changes to the Professional Negotiations Act (PNA).

Over the past 18 months, our leaders have taken that challenge seriously, meeting on a regular basis, and seeking consensus on how to make collective bargaining more effective, more efficient, more focused, and less contentious.

SB 136 encompasses the elements of the agreement reached by our associations on January 21, 2015.

In addition to conversations with members of the House and Senate Education Committees, we have had conversations about the agreement with Representative Marvin KleeB, who initially asked us to take on this task. This bill was also introduced in the House Education Committee last week (HB 2257).

The agreement includes the following proposed changes to the PNA:

1. Both sides agree to negotiate compensation every year. Compensation includes salary and wages, supplemental contract salaries, and pay for overtime.
2. Each side could then submit up to five items from the list of thirty mandatorily negotiable items. The negotiations team would be required to negotiate all of those

five. This makes the maximum number of mandatory items to be negotiated in any given year between five (if both sides noticed the same items) and ten (if both sides noticed five different items).

3. All other items would then be considered permissive. If both sides agree to negotiate them, they could be discussed. This would include any leftover items from the current mandatory list of thirty, or any other item the two sides want to negotiate that might currently be considered permissive.
4. Joint training for members of the negotiations team will be mandatory. Content and format would be determined by the local negotiations team.
5. The notification date would be changed from February 1 to March 31.
6. The impasse date would be changed from June 1 to July 31.
7. KNEA and KASB agree to have their legal staff work on common model language for disciplinary procedures that could be included in future contracts. (Ready for implementation 2016-2017.)
8. KNEA and KASB agree to have their legal staff work on common model language for wearing apparel that could be included in future contracts. (Ready for implementation 2016-2017.)
9. All new or merged entities created after the effective date of these changes shall not be limited to the restrictions agreed to by the parties and presented to the Legislature for approval during the 2015 legislative session.
10. All parties agree to support this and only this change to the PNA language during the 2015 Legislative Session.
11. This agreement takes effect upon adoption by each group's governing board.
12. If adopted into law, the new process would be effective July 1, 2015.

On behalf of our organizations, I urge this committee to recommend SB 136 favorably for passage.