

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee;

My name is Lisa Wilson and I am a Licensed Specialist Clinical Social Worker. I've been employed with Insight School of Kansas since 2011. I appreciate the opportunity to share on behalf of my school this morning.

I am here to testify only to the portion of SB 273 that pertains to funding of virtual education students. I, therefore, was hesitant to identify myself as a proponent or opponent.

This morning, I wanted to take a moment to discuss concerns regarding the funding of virtual students over the age of 18.

At Insight School of Kansas, we have three main concerns regarding this proposed change:

1. It will impact students who are over the age of 18 but in a traditional high school diploma program. These students may be ones who repeated a grade at some point in their educational career or students who are on an Individualized Education Plan. This second example is great cause for concern. Schools are responsible for the education of a student on an active IEP until the end of the school year, the year the student turns 21. Funding for these students for those years of education after they turn 19 is necessary for schools.
2. Many students nowadays need more than four years to complete high school. Many are facing outside issues and circumstances that cause them to need a bit more time. They could be dealing with health issues – for themselves or a family member; many are working outside the home to help their family pay bills or to save for post-secondary plans they have; some are parents themselves and are working to balance those duties with their schooling. These students should not be punished for their circumstances and should be able to continue working past their 19<sup>th</sup> birthday to achieve their goal of a high school diploma.
3. We currently have students over the age of 18 who have been working hard the last year or more on their path toward a true high school diploma. Should this funding change be put into effect, they will most likely lose the opportunity to earn their high school diploma through Insight, as Insight will not have the funding necessary to continue serving these students.

We strongly believe that every student in the great state of Kansas, no matter his or her age, should have an opportunity to earn a true high school diploma. We know the statistics of having a high school diploma versus not. We have seen, first-hand, the impact that diploma has on our students' lives and the lives of those around them, and we would very much like to continue to be able to provide this opportunity for students over the age of 18.