

Senate Ways and Means Committee

Testimony on SB 499

USD 229 Blue Valley Schools

March 14, 2016

Chairman Masterson and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony **on SB 499**, which would require school districts to procure specific goods and services through the Kansas Department of Administration. Blue Valley Schools wants to be a good partner with both the state and its patrons, and, therefore, want to ensure this A&M recommendation will achieve the projected savings *without compromising the services and standards our district sets for our students*.

SB 499 has only recently been drafted and we are concerned that not enough research has been done to determine whether the state's procurement program has the capacity to serve our needs and whether it will yield the cost savings projected by Alvarez & Marsal.

Blue Valley's first priority is ensuring that the quality and specifications established for programs and services will meet the ~~the~~ standards our district sets for our students. Currently, we simply don't know whether the Department of Administration's procurement program will meet those same standards and we have not seen evidence that a real savings to districts can be realized, without sacrificing quality.

Our district's size and geographic location provide a particular advantage when negotiating contracts for programs and services. The Johnson County and Kansas City Metro area provide us with direct access to vendors servicing our immediate area. We don't currently know how many vendors are contracted through the state or whether there will be an adequate selection of vendors in each of the categories identified in this bill.

For these reasons, we would recommend holding passage of ~~this~~ SB 499 for at least one year, so we have time to study the recommendation further and can have appropriate evidence that it can achieve the intended goal, without compromising our students' learning needs and outcomes.