

Approved March 3, 1987  
Date

MINUTES OF THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

The meeting was called to order by CHAIRMAN JOSEPH C. HARDER at  
Chairperson

1:30 ~~xxx~~ p.m. on Monday, March 2, 1987 in room 254-E of the Capitol.

All members were present except:

Committee staff present:

Mr. Ben Barrett, Legislative Research Department  
Ms. Avis Swartzman, Legislative Revisor's Office  
Mrs. Millie Randell, Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee:

SB 281 - Grounds for the suspension or expulsion of pupils (Federal and State Affairs)

Proponents:

Senator Ben Vidricksen, sponsor of SB 281  
Dr. Vernon E. Osborn, dentist, member of the Citizens Coalition on Drug and Alcohol Abuse, Salina; former president of Salina USD 305 Board of Education  
Ms. Jan LeMaster, Executive Director, Citizens Coalition on Drug and Alcohol Abuse, Salina  
Mrs. Gail Bates, President, Citizens Coalition on Drug and Alcohol Abuse, Salina  
Ms. Judy Wilgus, Instructor in nursing and member of the Citizens Coalition on Drug and Alcohol Abuse, Salina  
Mr. Howard W. Tice, Salina, a concerned parent  
Mr. James E. Cople, Legislative Director, Wichita Federation of Teachers  
Ms. Brilla Highfill Scott, Asst. Executive Director, United School Administrators of Kansas  
Mrs. Ann Gafford, Past President, Citizens Coalition on Drug and Alcohol Abuse, Salina

Opponents:

Ms. Cynthia K. Lutz, Staff Legal Counsel, Kansas Association of School Boards

SB 310 - An act concerning school districts; authorizing the development and operation of at risk pupil assistance programs (Education)

Proponents:

Ms. Kathleen White, Shawnee Mission, member of the State Board of Education, District #2

After Chairman Joseph C. Harder called the meeting to order, Senator Kerr moved that minutes of the Committee meeting of February 25 be approved. The motion was seconded by Senator Allen, and the motion carried.

The Chairman then announced that printouts of the House version of HB 2106 had been distributed to Committee members for their perusal prior to the Committee hearing on the school finance bill tomorrow.

The Chairman then recognized Senator Ben Vidricksen, who explained why he had requested introduction of SB 281. Senator Vidricksen said that he has served on the Board of the Citizens Coalition on Drug and Alcohol Abuse in Salina and that the bill is an outgrowth of repeated discussions and concern regarding tobacco usage and drug abuse in the schools. He said he had noted students smoking outside schools in five and ten-degree weather, and he felt this could well be an indication of early addiction to the nicotine drug. Senator Vidricksen related that he had conducted a survey by mailing out questionnaires to the fifteen largest school districts in Kansas, as well

CONTINUATION SHEET

MINUTES OF THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION,  
room 254-E, Statehouse, at 1:30 ~~xxx~~ p.m. on Monday, March 2, 19 87

to four private schools, in order to ascertain what schools around the state are doing regarding smoking policies. Senator Vidricksen said that although the Salina school board had been approached on numerous occasions, it had failed to respond in a positive way to the requests of the Coalition group. Senator Vidricksen said the bill would prohibit any tobacco products or alcohol or other drugs in the schools at the cost of suspension or expulsion of the student.

Dr. Vernon E. Osborn, speaking as a member of the Salina Citizens Coalition on Drug and Alcohol Abuse, stated that nicotine is the most addictive drug known and is one of the most toxic. (Attachment 1) He said that research has established that three-quarters of the adults who currently smoke started before the age of twenty-one; and, therefore, teenage years are critical ones in the life of a smoker.

The executive director of the Salina Citizens Coalition on Drug and Alcohol Abuse, Ms. Jan LeMaster, stated that there are approximately 18,000 such coalition groups throughout the nation that are working with the same goal in mind, prohibition of tobacco and other drug products in the schools. She depicted two glaring images at work in the Salina school system: One is to forbid the sale of tobacco products to minors but allow minors to smoke tobacco in the schools; and, secondly, to teach students regarding extensive health problems that develop from smoking and then give them smoking areas.

Mrs. Gail Bates, president of the Salina Citizens Coalition on Drug and Alcohol Abuse, maintained that nicotine is fourteen times more addictive than alcohol and that the lack of a decision by the school board to prohibit smoking is encouraging an addictive habit. She said that when a local board fails to act responsibly, it is necessary to seek leadership from the state.

Ms. Judy Wilgus, a Coalition member, nurse, and nursing instructor, reinforced previous testimony by stating that allowing smoking areas in schools gives students the idea that schools are saying it is okay to smoke. She emphasized the health hazard to non-smokers who also inhale the smoke caused by the consumption of tobacco products. Ms. Wilgus felt that if a school board does not exercise its proper responsibility to ensure good health conditions for students, then the state has every right to protect the health of its students.

A concerned parent from Salina, Mr. Howard W. Tice, described the Salina school board as being inconsistent in its anti-drug policies by condoning the use of designated smoking areas by students but forbidding the usage of cough drops without a doctor's permission slip.. Mr. Tice also noted inconsistency of the law which forbids the sale of tobacco products to minors but allows those minors to smoke in the schools. He, too, felt it is up to the state to exercise its proper authority when the school board fails to act responsibly regarding the health of its students. (Attachment 2)

Mr. James E. Copple stated that both the Wichita Federation of Teachers and the newly organized Kansas Federation of Teachers support SB 281. (Attachment 3) Mr. Copple did express concern regarding lines 55-58 and the impact this section might have on continuing education students enrolled in alternative programs in the public schools.

The Associate Director of United School Administrators, Ms. Brilla Scott, also supported SB 281 (Attachment 4), but she, too, said she had reservations regarding lines 55-58 which state that no area of a public school should be set aside for pupils to use tobacco products. She said she felt this might be a handicap for encouraging students who already smoke to return to school.

CONTINUATION SHEET

MINUTES OF THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION,  
room 254-E Statehouse, at 1:30 ~~xxx~~ p.m. on Monday, March 2, 19 87

Ms. Ann Gafford, a parent, past teacher, and past president of the Salina Citizens Coalition on Drug and Alcohol Abuse, described her experience with the Salina school board as being negative. She, too, felt it to be hypocritical to prohibit students under eighteen from buying tobacco products but allowing them to smoke in designated areas in the schools. She also felt that if the local board did not take the initiative to alter this inconsistency, then the state should intervene.

Ms. Cynthia Lutz, representing the Kansas Association of School Boards, maintained that the decision mandated by new subsection (b) should be left to the discretion of local boards of education. She also felt that the amendments in (a) (5)-(7) are unnecessary, since the local board already has this authority. (Attachment 5)

Following testimony by Ms. Lutz, the Chairman said the hearing on SB 281 was concluded and that the bill would be taken under advisement.

SB 310 - The Chairman said that although there is not much time remaining for the hearing on SB 310, also scheduled for today, he would like to call upon Ms. Kathleen White, who had driven here from Shawnee Mission, to testify. He then introduced Ms. White, a member of the State Board of Education representing District #2. Ms. White encouraged the Committee to consider the State Board's recommendation for an initial \$1,000,000 appropriation to school districts to help meet the needs of "at risk" students (Attachment 6); although, she added, \$4million would be necessary should all the students in need be taken into consideration.

Following testimony by Ms. White, the Chairman announced that the continuation of the hearing on SB 310 would be at a future time yet to be announced and apologized to those conferees who had come to testify today.

The Chairman adjourned the meeting.

SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Monday,

TIME: 1:30 p.m.

PLACE: 254-E

DATE: March 2, 1987

GUEST LIST

NAME	ADDRESS	ORGANIZATION
Jim Cymb	Wichita	WFT
Jan LaMaster	PO Box 1881, Salina	Citizens Coalition for Day Care
Maile Bates	810 Pentwood Dr SALINA	" "
Brilla Scott	Topeka	USA
Cindy Lutz	Topeka	KASB
Clare Dunn	El Dorado	
Kay Denny	El Dorado	BCSBC
Gerald Andrus	Topeka	USA
Jacque Oakes	Topeka	KC K Schools
Guth Wilbin	Topeka	S.A.
Thomas Dysart	Wichita	USD 259
Charlene Wilson	Topeka	
Conie Leases	Topeka	SLBC 460
Bud Stas	Topeka	
Jim Youally	Overland Park	USD #512
Cheryl Burnett	Topeka	USD 301

SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Monday,

TIME: 1:30 p.m.

PLACE: 254-E

DATE: March 2, 1987

GUEST LIST

NAME

ADDRESS

ORGANIZATION

Ann Dufford	140 W. Hillside Tr Salina	Citizens Coalition on Drug & Alcohol Abuse
Judy Wilgus	2242 Country Hills Rd Salina	Citizens Coalition on Drug & Alcohol Abuse
Ann Harrison	KSD E Topeka	
Kathleen White	7137 Booth, Prairie Vd -	Ks. St. Bd. of Educ
Harold Pitts	Topeka	OBSERVER
Caroleyn Schmidt	Topeka	KNEA
Kay Lotts	Topeka	KNEA
BRUCE GOEDEN	TOPEKA	KANSAS-NEA

3-2-87

Chairman Joe Harder and Senators of the Federal and State  
Affairs Committee:

I am Dr. Vernon Osborn of Salina, and am here to support  
Senate Bill 281 by Senator Ben Vidrickson. My professional  
background includes my practice of dentistry and a M.S. in  
Rehabilitative Counseling, which has taken me into the field  
of adolescent chemical dependency counseling since 1969. My  
intense interest in youth led me to political office as a member  
of the Salina USD 305 Board of Education upon which I served  
as President. I, therefore, consider myself as an experienced  
and educated representative of education, health, and chemical  
dependency issues.

Today I will present researched facts to justify your  
unwavering support of S.B. 281.

The most important fact for you to learn today is that  
nicotine is the most addictive drug known and is one of the most  
toxic! "Smoking is the single, largest preventable cause of  
death in America! Three-quarters of the adults who currently smoke  
started...before the age of twenty-one; therefore, teenage years are  
critical ones in the life of the smoker." Our present policy of  
providing set-aside smoking areas makes us part of the "most  
extensive human induced epidemic in the history of man." Futher-  
more, we are helping. "...the cigarette industry (which) sell a  
product that has killed more Americans more painfully than have all  
our wars and all our traffic accidents combined."

Here is what the Board of Education and the administration of  
USD 305 is now providing for the youth and teachers in our education  
enviroment:

- a. An opportunity to learn and practice tobacco usage  
within the board approved enclaves called "smoking areas".
- b. Research has demonstrated that of each youth who has a  
second cigarette, 85% will become addicted.
- c. Sanctioned usage of a drug; specifically a very strong  
stimulate, that increases the blood pressure, heart rate,  
release of adrenalin, gastro-intestinal activity,  
respiration rate, EEG arousal patterns in the brain and  
the blood sugar of students ]4, ]5, 16, ]7, and ]8 years  
of age in our schools.
- d. This most incidious drug brings a "brain hit" from deeply  
inhaled smoke in 5 to 7 seconds. That not only makes it  
more addicting, but actually yields a response in the  
brain quicker than main-lined heroin.

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- e. We encourage usage on school grounds of a drug which produces annually 11,000,000 more chronic cases of illness, 300,000 extra heart attacks, and an extra million cases of chronic lung disease and stomach ulcers each year.
- f. Almost all adults are concerned about contracting any of the many forms of cancer, yet we support smoking which annually yields 2 to 5 times more pancreatic cancer, 80,000 more lung cancer cases and 22,000 other cancers including those affecting the lips, tongue, mouth, larynx, esophagus, bladder, and liver.
- g. We therefore produce people that will join the work-force who, as smokers, will suffer 3.5 times more illness than nonsmokers. These damaged people will also have twice as many accidents, twice as much absenteeism and will suffer an 86% higher death rate in the 35 to 44 age group with a 152% increase in the 45-54 age group.
- h. Smoking 1½ packs per day yields potential radiation exposure to the user equal to that of 300 chest x-rays per year. This is due to the presence in modern tobacco of lead and plutonium 210 which is used by the tobacco farmer in their fertilizer.

All the above is substantiated by research. I did not cover the deleterious effects to the pregnant mother, the fetus or the high damage to all who are around smokers that suffer many increased physical and psychosocial problems, including a shorter life from the famous "side-stream smoke".

Moving away from medical research and sampling our more immediate area; Governor Carlin stated in his February address to the 1984 Legislature that "...we continue to face emerging threats to our health...KDHE (Kansas Department of Health Education) will concentrate significant resources to increase the public awareness of the dangers and consequences of the use of tobacco products." Moving closer, Dr. Jarus of Ellsworth (a Board of Education member) wrote to Karl Gaston, editor of the Ellsworth Reporter, "As a taxpayer, I can see no reason why my money should be used to utilize an area on school property for smoking that will be used to injure a person's own health or the health of others."

Then locally Dr. Richard Brummett stated that, "There is virtually nothing left to be said in favor of smoking. The balance

of public opinion seems currently to favor not smoking."

Policy statements from your most prodigious and authoritative organizations dedicated to combating the gross loss of human suffering and life, follows:

POLICY STATEMENT FROM THE AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY

"The American Cancer Society believes its first priority in helping to dissuade students from taking up cigarette smoking should be to provide an educational program designed to help them make this decision. To support the objectives of this health education program, the society holds the position that cigarette areas should not be provided on school grounds or in school buildings. Smoking areas in schools represent a social approval of cigarette smoking by both the school and the community. They negate constructive attitudes and habits developed in health classes." (Chris Martel, American Cancer Society Kansas Division, Director of Public Education and Field Service)

POLICY STATEMENT FROM THE AMERICAN HEART ASSOCIATION

"Insomuch as the American Heart Association has taken a firm position that cigarette smoking is detrimental to an individual's health, it is therefore recommended that smoking areas not be established in high schools because such locations promote a set of stimuli which encourages and develops that smoking habit". (Bill Stanley, Program Director, American Heart Association, Topeka, Kansas)

Arguments that will be posted by various boards of education will include the following:

a. A significant number of students smoke.

Now I agree that in the spring 1975 there were a notable number of smoking pupils. Today, 1987, twelve years later, this is no longer a fact.

b. Smoking is not illegal.

That position was weak in 1975 and is absurd in the here and now. We can no longer suffer the obvious indefensible position of providing a sanctuary on school grounds for the consumption of a drug that one must be at least 18 years of age to purchase! Even today this statute is being updated to include all tobacco products!

c. The restroom caper.

This is the one argument that is surfaced year after year. The School Board defense always rests upon the statement that the set-aside smoking areas will yield smoke free restrooms for the rest of the students. How can you trade off the future health and welfare of even a small portion of the student body on such a groundless and hollow argument? "While the (current) policy may end illicit restroom smoking and its associated problems, it also makes a significant statement about public education's commitment to social responsibility."



d. The cry for local option

I am sure that boardsmen will be filling the air with this pitiful plaintive. And I agree in the policy of local option for school boards. But, citizens who understand the sick philosophy of providing this "gateway" drug to developing youth in their schools, have been appearing before education boards only to be repeatedly turned away. Rather than utilize discipline to implement direction away from chemical abuse, school boards would rather provide special rooms or areas of the schools within which our youth can experiment and learn to use addictive substances.

This entire situation is a travesty on the patience of even the most ignorant. You can no longer sanction this form of flagrant drug usage in our schools. Or as KSAL said in an editorial, "... that the board has taken the path of least resistance... As far as KSAL is concerned, it is time to change the present policy for the health of the current generation." This form of hypocrisy, i.e., teaching the dangers of tobacco usage in the curriculum on the one hand and then dismissing the students for a tobacco break in the next breath, can no longer remain in the policy of a viable and enlightened school district. We should not be guilty of inviting students to form a dependence on cigarettes in the board-approved smoking areas.

The other example of hypocrisy that must be changed with our school policy will be to remove smoking rooms for the staff. The best policy will be to prohibit use of tobacco products by Board members, staff, and students on school premises. Consider the following policy on tobacco use by Tonganoxie, USD 464:

It is the policy of Tonganoxie Unified School District No. 464, that neither Board Members nor staff nor students shall use tobacco on school premises. However, it is recognized that nonemployed patrons and visitors may wish to smoke on school grounds outside of the school buildings, while attending school events. This policy recognizes the Board's and staff's responsibilities to model desirable health habits while in the presence of students. (September 1979)

Here is the bottom line. We know that cigarette smoking is no longer a matter of social etiquette or civil rights. To rest a defense on problems that may initially appear with the closing down of the setaside smoking areas, is to totally misunderstand school board leadership responsibility. What ← should be understood is that we are discussing the most addictive

drug known in the world. To teach consumption of nicotine or not, that is the question.

I have carefully researched and documented all information included in this presentation. My intention has been to provide you with current and replicable research information, the state of the art, if you will, to aid in making a new and proper decision in smoking in our schools. I pray that you will study this question and demand a no smoking policy for our school.

Thank you for your concern,

Dr. Vernon E. Osborn

SENATE BILL 281

Senate Committee on Education - Chairman, Senator Joseph Harder

Testimony submitted by Howard W. Tice - Salina, Kansas - Parent

As the father of three children, two of which are students in the Salina school system, I appear before this committee in support of Senate Bill 281. I commend Senator Ben Vidricksen for introducing this bill, and this committee for hearing it.

I don't know how closely the Salina School Board's policies parallel those of other school districts. On this issue, I hope they are in a very small minority. At any rate, I will restrict my comments to the Salina School Board, and the policies in effect in Kansas City when I was in school.

When I was in junior and senior high school, I was a well-hooked smoker. By the time I was a sophomore, I regularly consumed a pack a day. I wanted very badly to answer the request of our track coach, to go out for high jump and high hurdles, but cigarettes turned out to be more important. Since there was a strict rule against smoking and athletics, I was not allowed to compete. Had I been allowed to skirt this rule, I believe I would have been the moral loser. Instead, I learned to play by the rules, or not play at all.

We also had a prohibition against smoking on the campus, whether involved in athletics or not. Faculty and staff were only permitted to smoke in special lounge areas, thus preventing an appearance of inconsistency.

In Salina, the school board, and all the schools present a very strong public stance against drugs. So strict is their anti-drug policy, that my daughters have had to obtain a note signed by our doctor, in order for them to take prescribed doses of medication that same doctor ordered for them. They have taken this scenario to the ridiculous extreme that their printed policy states that students have to have that same type of note, from a doctor, to be permitted to take cough drops. In the case of medication, either prescribed or over the counter, parental permission is not sufficient. Parental rights to determine what is best for the student are non-existent. All under the banner of preventing drug abuse.

On the other hand, a student with a note from home can go to a designated area of the campus and smoke a cigarette during his free time.

Tobacco contains drugs that are every bit as addictive as heroin or cocaine. True, withdrawal symptoms are more severe with the "harder" drugs, but the body does become dependent on tobacco, and withdrawal is painful. Worse yet, are the deadly diseases that are now definitely linked to smoking: cancer, emphysema, and heart disease. The latest statistics, released earlier this month, show that smoking is the cause of more deaths than anything else in the United States.

Where is the consistency, necessary to maintain authority and respect, in a system that refuses a student cough drops, but condones the use of today's most abused and dangerous drug. How can our schools maintain the discipline which is absolutely necessary to the learning process, when they back away from important issues, and actually wind up teaching the lesson that if enough people insist on defying the rules, they can wind up getting their way. They learn that school administrators don't have the strength of their convictions, so they obviously must be wrong. Additionally, teachers lose their credibility because they are a part of the same system.

The authority to maintain a strict, consistent policy against dangerous substances on school property, including hard drugs and drug paraphernalia, alcohol and tobacco is a must, now more than ever. Prohibiting special areas where any one of these substances is allowed simply makes all the rest of the rules more believable and therefore, more enforceable. In addition, such a consistent, positive policy makes teaching easier and more effective.

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Attachment 2

# Wichita Federation of Teachers

Local 725, American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO

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## TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SENATE BILL NO. 281

James E. Copple  
Legislative Director  
Wichita Federation of Teachers

Mr. Chairman, members of the Senate Education Committee, the teachers of the Wichita Federation of Teachers and the newly organized Kansas Federation of Teachers, rise in support of Senate Bill No. 281. Of particular importance to us, is the further clarification of the right of a Board of Education to suspend or expel students who are found in possession of or under the influence of controlled substances at any school sponsored activity. Further, SB. 281 extends this same power to the Board of Education when students are found to be in possession of drug paraphernalia as defined by K.S.A. 64-4150.

Our public schools should be drug free. Students and teachers are entitled to work in an environment that is free of the intimidation of drugs or alcohol. While this legislation gives the BOE the right to suspend or expel, we should also be sensitive to the forces which compel these students to perform this inappropriate and illegal behavior. Drug awareness, prevention and intervention programs, such as school team training, currently operating in communities like Wichita, Garden City and Salina, are seeking to identify at risk students and then intervening on their behalf. These programs are preventive in nature. However, when prevention fails, we must have statutory authority to suspend and expel students found in possession of drugs and drug paraphernalia. This legislation will send a direct message to the community that our schools

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will no longer tolerate the possession or distribution of drugs or drug paraphernalia. While our efforts to intervene on behalf of the alcohol or drug dependent student sends a message of mercy and assistance, we must also be prepared to exercise justice and protection for the majority of the student community.

If Senate Bill No. 281 is given a favorable reading, we would urge Boards of Education to be cautious in their use of their power to expel. Once a student is expelled, we lose the ability to influence and guide that student's future behavior. Galen Davis, the Director of Wichita's Substance Abuse Prevention and Intervention program, has seen dramatic results with intervention. Student's lives are being changed and are being restored to useful service within the community. We must give these programs both time and support if they are to truly work. Expelling without the flexibility for intervention will serve neither the community nor the student.

Lines 55-58 of this proposed legislation is consistent with national efforts to make smoking an endangered activity. We support this effort, but have reservation about the impact of this section on continuing education students enrolled in alternative programs in the public school. These are usually older students who merit some flexibility in the administration of rules and procedures.



SENATE BILL 281

Testimony presented before the Senate Education Committee  
by Brilla Highfill Scott, Associate Executive Director  
United School Administrators of Kansas

March 2, 1987

Mister Chairman and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to speak in support of Senate Bill 281. Most Kansas school districts now exercise suspension and expulsion policies which include possession or use of tobacco products, controlled substances, and/or drug paraphernalia. United School Administrators of Kansas appreciate the Senate's desire to provide support and specificity to the suspension and expulsion laws.

There is, however, one part of the bill which we would like for you to reconsider. Lines 55-58 state that no area of a public school be set aside for pupils to use tobacco products.

During the past few days, I have visited with a number of secondary principals about this section of the bill. These men and women understand the intent of this portion of the bill in its response to society's concern about the medical implications of smoking. The high school principals do, however, feel this issue should be decided at the local level.

As an example, many districts in Kansas have already banned the "smoking patio" or "smoking area" at their local high school. Some districts have chosen, however, to continue a smoking area at their high schools and/or alternative schools. The alternative high school is designed to keep the at-risk student in school or to encourage the older student to return to school. Administrators see this portion of the bill as a handicap for encouraging students who already smoke to return to school. Let us provide the encouragement for the at-risk-student smoker to return to school so that student can finish his/her education and be educated about the dangers of smoking.

United School Administrators of Kansas request that you reconsider lines 55-58 as you report SB 281 favorably.

Brilla Highfill Scott  
Associate Executive Director

BHS:mfw

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3/2/87  
Attachment 4

KANSAS  
ASSOCIATION



OF  
SCHOOL  
BOARDS



5401 S. W. 7th Avenue Topeka, Kansas 66606  
913-273-3600

TESTIMONY ON SENATE BILL NO. 281  
BEFORE THE SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

By

CYNTHIA K. LUTZ, STAFF LEGAL COUNSEL  
Kansas Association of School Boards

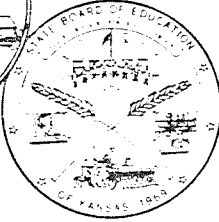
March 2, 1987

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today on behalf of our member school districts.

We oppose Senate Bill No. 281 for two reasons. First, we believe the addition of the amendments in (a)(5)-(7) are unnecessary since the local board may already suspend or expel a student on these grounds by prohibiting such behavior through regulation in their published code of student conduct. Second, we feel that the decision mandated by new subsection (b) should be left to the discretion of local boards of education, who have a better understanding of local needs and are in a better position to deal with the realities of the situations existing in their districts.

Therefore, we request that you recommend Senate Bill 281 unfavorably for passage.

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Attachment 5



# Kansas State Board of Education

Kansas State Education Building

120 East 10th Street Topeka, Kansas 66612-1103

Mildred McMillon  
District 1

Connie Hubbell  
District 4

Bill Musick  
District 6

Evelyn Whitcomb  
District 8

Kathleen White  
District 2

Sheila Frahm  
District 5

Richard M. Robl  
District 7

Robert J. Clemons  
District 9

Paul D. Adams  
District 3

March 2, 1987

Marion (Mick) Stevens  
District 10

TO: Senate Education Committee

FROM: State Board of Education

SUBJECT: 1987 Senate Bill 310

My name is Kathleen White, State Board of Education member from Prairie Village, District #2. I appreciate the opportunity to appear before this Committee on behalf of the State Board.

The State Board of Education has been quite concerned about the number of students who do not meet state standards on the minimum competency tests in reading and mathematics or students who have been retained one or more grades. The State Board has studied this issue during the past year and it is our recommendation that the state provide some emphasis for remedial programs to meet the needs of "at risk" students. "At risk" pupils are defined in Section 1(b) of Senate Bill 310. We realize a program of this nature will not solve the problem but early intervention could alleviate many problems in the future.

The programs would be approved by the State Board of Education and designed to assist students in meeting the minimum requirements established for the Kansas minimum competency tests and high school graduation requirements.

Each school district who wishes to participate in the program would be required to submit an application outlining a process for identifying the "at risk" students within their schools and establishing a plan describing how the district will address the needs of such children through curriculum modification and alternative programs.

It is the State Board's recommendation that \$1,000,000 be appropriated for this program during the first year. Grants to school districts which exhibit progress in meeting the needs for "at risk" pupils may be renewed each school year for two years. After receiving grants for three years, eligibility of a school district would be terminated.

The State Board of Education recommends you report Senate Bill 310 favorably for passage.

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Attachment 6



## **SUMMARY OF PHASE TWO: IMPACT OF HIGHER STANDARDS ON POTENTIAL DROPOUTS\***

### **Background**

Although the reform recommendations of the recent education reports on the state of American public schools have been acclaimed by both the lay public and educators, there is some concern about their alleged failure to give balanced emphasis to the idea of quality and equality of education—precepts that have alternated in dominating the attention of policymakers and educators in the past two decades. Of particular concern is the reports' overall lack of attention to the dropout problem in secondary schools as both an equity and an excellence problem. Moreover, it became apparent that the very recommendations made by the reports could exacerbate the unnoted dropout problem. This strong concern with the lack of attention to dropouts initiated a study of the magnitude of the dropout problem in the nation and Kansas in Phase One. The intent of *Phase Two: Impact of Higher Standards on Potential Dropouts* is to investigate the impact that raising standards might have on the "at risk" or marginal students who are potential dropouts.

The reform recommendations called for higher standards in three general education areas: course content, the use of time, and student achievement.

### **Potential Negative Effects of Raising Standards**

#### *Course Content*

The curriculum reforms recommended in the reports typically involved a move towards a uniform set of core courses to be taken by all students. The courses proposed for inclusion in the core curriculum are typically academic courses, all of which tend to test in a relatively narrow range of subjects. Implementation of a core-type curriculum will likely restrict the variety of school experiences or students, limit the number of dimensions of ability deemed legitimate in the school, and reduce student choice in constructing a program of study. Students with limited ability in one dimension may face repeated failure with little opportunity to engage in other activities that might afford them some success.

A 1986 survey of a sample of Kansas high school principals supported this concern.\*\* Although the majority of respondents said the "increased graduation requirements in Kansas had not caused an increase in the percent of dropouts," many qualified their "no" by saying 1) it was too early to determine the impact or 2) the school had made adjustments to help students meet the standards. In agreement with the principals' response is the state dropout yearly average which has declined in the past five years from 4.9 percent in 1981-1982 to 4.0 percent in 1985-1986. (See Appendix B.) All four categories of USD enrollment size show a decrease in the annual dropout average in this time period.

The survey of high school principals also disclosed that the increase in academic courses in Kansas has influenced the enrollment in elective courses, especially in vocational education. The charts provided in Appendix C support the principals' observation that student enrollment in vocational education courses had decreased. However, it should be noted the depressed economy and the total population of grades 9-12 which declined slightly also could have influenced the interest and enrollment in vocational education courses. The survey showed that some principals had increased the number of classes offered in the school day in order to provide students the option of taking vocational education courses.

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\* A copy of the complete study is available in the Program Planning and Evaluation Section.

\*\* Sample survey of 53 (15 percent) high school principals selected randomly by enrollment size of school district had an 83 percent response rate. See Appendix A.

### *Use of Time*

Schools can demand more time of students in two major ways: first, by lengthening the school day, and second, by assigning more homework, which raises the amount of time required of students outside the school. The major concern is that, because time is a fixed commodity, these increasing time demands might create conflicts between time needed for school commitments and time needed for families or job commitment.

The survey of Kansas principals shows that some districts (36 percent) in the sample had increased their school day and only a few (9 percent) had increased the length of the school year since 1982-83 to allow more in-school time. The majority had increased the number of classes (61 percent) and the number of units available (71 percent) to help students meet the increased standards.

### *Student Achievement*

In the past two decades school systems were criticized for social promotion of students.\* To counteract that criticism, states began to rely on minimum competency testing in their efforts to increase academic standards. Although the purpose of Kansas Minimum Competency Testing Program (MCT) is to identify remediation needs, a few school districts use the competency or proficiency scores for grade promotion and graduation.

Specific studies on the adverse effects of MCT on potential school dropouts are unavailable. Still, speculation can be made about the effect by comparing the results of studies which show the failure rates on competency tests are much higher for economically disadvantaged students and those students from minority racial/ethnic backgrounds with the results of studies that identify these same two groups as having disproportionately high rates of dropping out and truancy from school (Robins and Ratcliff, 1980 and Quay and Allen, 1982). It appears that, if academic standards are raised and students are not provided substantial help to attain them, the academically disadvantaged students will be more likely to experience frustration and failure, resulting in an increase in dropouts.

### **Conclusion**

Although there are a few valid studies that provide some perspective on the probable consequences of raising standards as suggested in the reform reports, it is clear that extensive research is needed before there can be a clear understanding of the impact of new standards. However, a review of the research available clearly shows some students will find that the new core curriculum, increased demands on their time, and higher achievement levels required of them enhance their motivation and performance. Other students will suffer from being at the bottom of a more pronounced stratification system, from being forced to choose between devoting more time to school work or to their other responsibilities, and from being placed in a position where standards are correctly perceived as unattainable. These are the potential dropouts who will suffer greatly under the new standards unless appropriate measures are taken to provide them with additional learning resources to meet the new challenges they will confront.

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\* Social promotion is grade advancement based on age and peer group considerations.

### DROPOUT RATE 1981-1986

	State %	USD Enrollment 0-399 %	USD Enrollment 400-1,999 %	USD Enrollment 2,000-9,999 %	USD Enrollment 10,000 and over %
1985-1986	4.0	1.9	3.0	4.4	5.2
1984-1985	4.3	1.7	3.0	4.7	6.0
1983-1984	4.2	1.7	3.0	5.4	5.0
1982-1983	4.6	2.2	3.5	6.2	5.1
1981-1982	4.9	2.3	3.7	6.4	5.8

## REMEDIAL PROGRAMS TO REDUCE ILLITERACY AND DROPOUTS

Proposed: That the State of Kansas provide special incentive funding to the unified school districts of Kansas to encourage the development and implementation of local plans to meet the needs of "at risk" students enrolled in their schools. "At risk" students refers to dropouts, pupils who have an excessive rate of unexcused absences, pupils who are parents, pupils who have been adjudicated delinquent, pupils who are two or more credits behind their age group in the number of graduation credits attained, pupils who have been retained one or more grades, and pupils who have failed to meet the standard on one or more of the Kansas Minimum Competency Tests in grades 2,4,6,8, or 10.

By October 15, 1987, each local school district which wishes to participate in the program will have submitted an application outlining a process for identifying the "at risk" students within their schools, and setting forth a plan describing how the school will address the needs of such children through curriculum modifications and alternative programs. The plan should also describe how remedial instruction, parental involvement and pupil and community support services will be used to meet the needs of the children at risk. The program should be designed to assist these students in meeting the minimum standard established for the Kansas Minimum Competency Test and/or meeting the high school graduation requirements for the district.

### Program Requirements

Specific program requirements and funding priorities will be developed prior to implementation. Elements that should be considered would include the following: (1) dropout rate for the district, (2) number and/or percentage of students failing to meet the standard score on the Kansas Minimum Competency Test, (3) level of effort exhibited by the district in addressing the problem of "at risk" students in the past years, (4) an evaluation design to measure the effectiveness of the program, (5) the potential effectiveness of the program design in meeting the needs of targeted students as judged by a state panel of reviewers, and (6) cooperative efforts among two or more districts with similar needs. Projects may address the needs of "at risk" students at any and all grade levels, K-12.

### Financing

The State will provide an amount of \$1,000,000 during the first year of this program to be used in funding a limited number of projects designed to meet the needs of "at risk" students in the local school districts of Kansas. These projects may be funded for a three year period, with yearly renewal dependent upon the ability of the district to show progress in meeting the needs of the "at risk" population identified in the project. A maximum dollar amount will be established, not to exceed a set amount per "at risk" student identified. A local, non-federal matching will be required, using a declining state percentage over the three year period.