

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Denise Apt at
Chairperson

3:30 ~~XX~~ p.m. on February 16, 1988 in room 519-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except:
Representative Anthony Lensley, Excused
Representative Charles Laird, Excused

Committee staff present:
Avis Swartzman, Revisor of Statutes' Office
Ben Barrett, Legislative Research
Thelma Canaday, Secretary to the Committee

Conferees appearing before the committee:
Representative Richard Harper
Mrs. Gayla Croan, Fifth Grade Teacher, Ft. Scott
Mrs. Josephine Johnmeyer, Daughters of American Revolution, Ft. Scott
Miss Lucille Freeman, Fifth Grade Teacher, Ft. Scott
Professor Homer Socolofsky, History Department, Kansas State University
Mr. Huber Self, Retired Geography Professor, Kansas State University
Mr. Tom Isern, Professor, History Department, Emporia State University
Mrs. James Greenleaf, High School Teacher, Greensburg
Mr. Robert Bader
Representative Elaine Hassler
Ms. Sue Peterson, Executive Assistant to the Governor
Representative Jeff Freeman
Mr. Joe Snell, Kansas State Historical Society
Ms. Jean Barbee, Travel Industry Association of Kansas
Ms. Connie Hubbell, State Board of Education
Mr. Jack Nethercot

Chairman Apt called the meeting to order and opened hearings on H.B. 2725, an act concerning the teaching of Kansas history.

The chair recognized Representative Harper. Mr. Harper testified in favor of H.B. 2725 stating a complete course of Kansas history needs to be taught in our schools in order for our students to have a greater appreciation for the people who have shaped the history of our state and nation. (Attachment 1)

Mrs. Gayla Croan testified in favor of H.B. 2725 stating the Ft. Scott schools system presently incorporates the teaching of Kansas history into other subjects. Mrs. Croan believes teaching Kansas history will foster a greater sense of state pride and will encourage students to stay in the State of Kansas.

Mrs. Josephine Johnmeyer gave support to H.B. 2725 stating that as a member of the Daughters of the American Revolution she wants to support the teaching of Kansas history as a means of promoting interest in our heritage.

Miss Lucille Freeman testified in favor of H.B. 2725 stating many children are not proud of their state because they have not been taught the role of Kansas in the development of our country.

Mr. David Alford gave support to H.B. 2725 pointing out he is a fifth generation Kansan and feels the legacy of the state of Kansas must be taught to our present day school children. (Attachment 2)

Professor Homer Socolofsky gave support to H.B. 2725 stating without a study of Kansas heritage we fail our student citizens and impoverish our own civic life. (Attachment 3)

Mr. Huber Self urged passage of H.B. 2725 stating that it is important to learn about the history of our state which gives a sense of belonging and pride in the place you call home.

CONTINUATION SHEET

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION,
room 519-S, Statehouse, at 3:30 ~~a.m.~~/p.m. on February 16, 1988.

Mr. Tom Isern spoke in favor of H.B. 2725. Mr. Isern stated according to his research Kansas history is presently being taught at the junior high level and that the middle schools are also involved. If Kansas History becomes a requirement for graduation from high school it may require teachers to become certified to teach this on a high school level. Mr. Isern expressed his belief that recourse to more explicit statutory mandate is justified only should the legislature conclude that the general mandate is not being executed in good faith by local or state officials.

Mrs. Greenleaf testified in support of H.B. 2725 stating her belief we are shortchanging the school children of Kansas by limiting their exposure to the history of our state. Mrs. Greenleaf illustrated the interest in learning Kansas history by relating the good response by college students to a class offered at Pratt Junior College.

Mr. Robert Bader gave support to the passage of H.B. 2725. Mr. Bader said he has been doing research on how Kansans basically think about themselves and he feels our image problem is linked to a lack of a better understanding of our own history. It is Mr. Bader's belief that learning Kansas history will help students establish a personal identity and develop a sense of belonging to a community.

Representative Elaine Hassler gave support to H.B. 2725 stating it was her hope that this bill would be viewed as a supportive move to our schools which would encourage those schools who are presently teaching Kansas history and offer help to those that do not include it in the current curriculum. (Attachment 4)

Sue Peterson presented written testimony from Governor Hayden in support of H.B. 2725. (Attachment 5)

Representative Freeman spoke in favor of H.B. 2725. (Attachment 6)

Mr. Joe Snell testified in support of H.B. 2725 saying he believes there is a desire among our young people to learn more about their heritage. (Attachment 7)

Jean Barbee stated the Travel Industry Association of Kansas favors H.B. 2725 and believes the existing statutes are not being strictly enough adhered to as it relates to teaching Kansas history. (Attachment 8)

Connie Hubbell testified on H.B. 2725 stating the State Board of Education does not have a position on this bill. Ms. Hubbell offered information on what is currently being offered by many unified school districts. (Attachment 9)

Mr. Jack Nethercot expressed his concerns that no reference was made to the religious background of the leaders of Kansas in the testimony presented concerning H.B. 2725.

Chairman Apt announced the opponents to H.B. 2725 would be heard at tomorrow's committee meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:40 p.m.

The next meeting will be February 17, 1988 in Room 519-S at 3:30 p.m.

STATE OF KANSAS

RICHARD L. HARPER
REPRESENTATIVE, ELEVENTH DISTRICT
BOURBON, CRAWFORD, AND LINN COUNTIES
R.F.D. NO. 3
FORT SCOTT, KANSAS 66701



TOPEKA

HOUSE OF
REPRESENTATIVES

February 16, 1988

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS
CHAIRMAN: ELECTIONS
MEMBER: INSURANCE
TRANSPORTATION

Madam Chairperson, and members of the House Education Committee.

HB 2725 is a bill requiring the provision of a course of instruction therein by certain accredited schools; imposing a requirement for the study thereof by persons preparing to teach; amending K.S.A. 72-1103, 72-1372 and 72-1388, and repealing the existing sections.

This bill is a follow-up of HCR 5033, which was introduced in the 1986 session. The HCR legislation was a resolution urging the teaching of Kansas History in the Kansas School system, and also commended school districts which would have provided for strong programs of teaching Kansas history.

HB 2725 mandates a complete course of Kansas History be taught in every accredited school, grades 4 thru 8. The provisions of this section shall be implemented prior to or at the commencement of the 1990-91 school year.

I think we will all agree that there is something special about the Great State of Kansas. This is our home and we have every right to be proud of our State. Kansas was born in a time of national tragedy, but born with an ideal -- the ideal that all men are created equal. This is the accepted philosophy now, but it took many lives of Kansans to make the ideal a reality.

In order to appreciate Kansas, it is necessary to know something about the History of Kansas. The young person that studies the thrilling and true story of the transformation of the vast prairie into our productive farms and cities will have a new appreciation of courage and industry.

Attached you will find some of the things that many of us were taught in our grade school years which were known as "red letter dates" in Kansas.

I appreciate your time, and urge each of you to vote favorably on HB 2725.

Thank you for your time and concern on this important legislation.

Representative Richard L. Harper
District # 11

*Attachment 1
House Education 2/16/88*

"Red Letter Dates" and a listing of information material on some of the famous people of Kansas.

- 1541 - The Spanish explorer Coronado entered Kansas.
- 1724 - Etienne Venyard, Sieur de Bourgmont, a french explorer crossed the region from east to west.
- 1803 - Kansas became United States territory as a part of the Louisiana Purchase.
- 1804 - The Lewis and Clark Expedition traveled south of the Kansas River.
- 1822 - Captain William Becknell established the route of the Santa Fe Trail.
- 1827 - Captain Henry Leavenworth built Fort Leavenworth.
- 1850 and 1860-s - Armed clashes between antislavery and pro-slavery forces gave the region the nickname of "Bleeding Kansas."
- 1854 - Congress established the Territory of Kansas.
- 1861 - Kansas became the 34th state on January 29.
- 1873 - Bernard Warkentin, a Mennonite immigrant from Russia, planted the first Turkey Red wheat in Kansas.
- 1881 - Railroads reached Texas, ending the famous cattle drives to Kansas "cow towns."
- 1894 - Kansas oil and gas fields began producing.
- 1903 - The Country's first helium was discovered at Dexter.
- 1912 - Kansas gave women the right to vote.
- 1934 - 1935 - Dust storms ruined much Kansas farm land.
- 1951 - 1956 - Severe droughts caused the driest five-year period in the state's history.
- 1956 - The 236-mile Kansas Turnpike opened to traffic.

Now let me draw your attention to some of the famous Kansans who have helped to make history in our fine state.

A statue of John J. Ingalls, lawyer and statesman, represents Kansas in the Capitol in Washington, D. C.

Now we come to Mary Ann Ball Bickerdyke (1817-1901). This lady was one of the most beloved army nurses in the Civil War, became known as "Mother Bickerdyke." After the war, she started a movement to help veterans move to the west.

Georgia Neese Clark, became the first woman Treasurer of the United States. President Harry S. Truman appointed Mrs. Clark, a Democrat, to the office in 1949, and she served until 1953. Mrs. Clark was a banker, businesswoman, and farm owner in Richland, Kansas, her birthplace.

James Henry Lane (1814-1866), a Democratic politician who became a Republican, was an outstanding leader of the antislavery movement in the Kansas Territory. He helped organize the Free State party in Kansas in 1855, and led the convention that wrote the Free state constitution at Topeka. Lane served in the U. S. Army as a colonel during the Mexican war, and was Kansas' first U. S. Senator.

Andrew Horatio Reeder (1807-1864), a Democrat, served as the first territorial governor. President Franklin Pierce, who had appointed him removed Reeder from office in 1855 because of voting frauds. Reeder later served as a Free State delegate to Congress. He was born in Easton, Pa.

Susanna Medora Salter, (1860), was the first woman mayor in the United States. The people of Argonia elected her on the Republican ticket in 1887, and she held office for one year. Mrs. Salter was born in Lamira, Ohio.

Andrew F. Schoeppel, A Republican, served as governor from 1943 to 1947. He received national attention for signing a labor-control bill that required union agents to be licensed and that prohibited sit-down strikes. He became a U. S. Senator in 1948. Schoeppel was born in Claflin.

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Land of the Konza
By David C. Alford

My list of qualifications to speak to you good people of the Kansas Legislature regarding the importance of continuing to teach Kansas History in our high schools is short.

I too am a native son of the land of the Konza, the Bluestem and blue skies. As a fifth generation Kansan, my ancestors came to this land seeking opportunity, freedom and fertile soil.

Well, my friends, they must have found it because I'm still here.

My legacy to this great state was born on the backs of farmers, muleskinners, boilermakers, pioneer mothers, state legislators, mayors and one United States Senator. I would like to think they taught me well.

Yes indeed, I believe that we should continue to teach Kansas history in our high schools. Who are we to decide that our young people should be denied the pride all of us feel from the lives of Dwight Eisenhower, Amelia Earhardt, Alf Landon, and William Allen White.

Because of my grandfather, the late Senator Harry Darby, I was able to tour Abilene with General Eisenhower. Because of my school, The University of Kansas' William Allen White School of Journalism, I was able to work in the same brick lined newsroom where Mr. White penned his famous editorials. A few weeks ago I had occasion to introduce myself to Peter Stauffer over at the Topeka Capitol Journal. He told me I looked familiar. I replied, " I should. Our families have been causing trouble in town together for almost one hundred years."

Yes, my friends, I think we should continue to teach Kansas history in our high schools.

*Attachment 2
House Education 2/16/88*

Remarks on H.R. #2725 Kansas Heritage, Feb. 16, 1988
by Homer E. Socolofsky, Professor of History and University Historian, Kansas State University

During most of my teaching career I have been privileged to offer at Kansas State University a course in History of Kansas which has been taken by thousands of students. The usual answer to the query, "Why are you taking this class?" evokes a response from these students showing state loyalty and interest in what has happened around them. Students often admit, "I've never had a chance to take a course in Kansas history." There is an ingrown affection for Kansas noticed by many authors, who in doing so, find Kansas almost unique among the states.

This causes me to ask what has happened to the teaching of Kansas Heritage in Kansas public schools, courses which I had many years ago in a Kansas school system? Almost all of my university students, over the past thirty years, deny ever having had such a course. Consequently, many of these students regard history or a historical event as something far removed from them, something occurring on a national or international scale. They say sadly, "Nothing has ever happened in my home town," or "There's no history at all in my community." They fail to comprehend that everything that has happened has contributed in some way to history. While history is the sum total of human experience, it is true that certain elements in historical happenings, such as national and international events dominate written history. Each person contributes to overall history but it is too often unrecognized by people of all ages. Something has happened to the teaching of Kansas heritage in our public schools. At least the products of those schools seem not to recognize ever having taken anything that they identify as state history. Outside events and administrative decisions have weakened the teaching of the state's heritage in Kansas.

The gravest problem because of the absence of a required course in local and state heritage in Kansas public schools, is the lack of recognition by the products of these schools that there is any connection between their lives and the immediate area in which they live. In my estimation a major goal in studying Kansas heritage is to gain a better understanding and appreciation of the past and how we arrived at the place where we are. Such an understanding of state and local heritage should help young people to cope with the future whether they stay in Kansas or move elsewhere.

Without a study of Kansas heritage we fail our student citizens. We impoverish our own civic life by not providing an understanding of our state's heritage. Such a study will help the young Kansan learn of the different groups of people who have made Kansas their home, of the explorers and traders who passed through the area, of the pioneers who began settlement in Kansas some one hundred-thirty years ago, of the conflict which marked all Kansans then and since, of the economic, political and cultural activities which have created unity and diversity within this land called Kansas. These pioneers and their descendants faced many difficulties and their contributions were immense to those of us who as Kansans today represent a mere one per cent of all Americans. This ability to survive innumerable hardships and tests of courage causes me to identify Kansans of yesterday and today as survivors. They have faced the challenge and they remain steadfast.

I do not know where a study of Kansas heritage should be placed in the students' curriculum. I do not claim for the learner an immediate economic advantage. Neither do I say that by studying Kansas heritage the student will, thereafter, always stay in the state. However, I do see a better appreciation and understanding of Kansas people and Kansas places, and I'm sure that it will help to make any student a better informed citizen. If Kansas heritage, in its own right, has a value to its student citizens, and I believe it does, it should find its rightful place in the life of every student in our state.

*Attachment 3
House Education 2/16/88*

STATE OF KANSAS

ELAINE R. HASSLER
REPRESENTATIVE, SIXTY-EIGHTH DISTRICT
DICKINSON AND MORRIS COUNTIES
ROUTE 2
ABILENE, KANSAS 67410



TOPEKA

HOUSE OF
REPRESENTATIVES

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS
VICE CHAIRMAN PUBLIC HEALTH AND WELFARE
MEMBER EDUCATION GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION
CHAIRMAN KANSAS DAY CARE COMMITTEE
MEMBER ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH

House Education Committee
HB 2725

February 16, 1988

A recent editorial on this subject of Kansas History instruction was entitled "Kansas History - Know Thyself" and perhaps, too, your mind silently finishes that phrase as mine does "Know thyself and let thyself be free" or "Know thyself and to thyself be true." That thought does very fittingly apply to the purpose of HB 2725. It supports understanding ourselves by learning from whence we come, "our roots". Our young people today face such an information saturation with rapid decision making required that they need all advantage of insight that understanding who they are and why that they can get and that's what adequate instruction in Kansas History can do for our students; thus the concern that all schools are providing it to all students in adequate, up-to-date courses.

As a former school board member, I'm well aware of the inherent resistance to having the state tell the local districts what to do. Also, I'm aware that it's not expected that the legislature should command curriculum. I would hope rather that HB 2725 would be viewed as a supportive move to our schools, saying "Great" to those schools who are already presenting a good Kansas History course (more than a couple of weeks) and saying to those districts who haven't been able to provide an adequate course "here's help".

*Attachment 4
House Education 2/16/88*

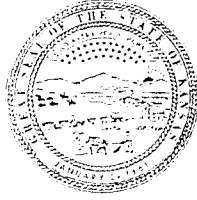
House Education Committee
HB 2725
February 16, 1988

For by highlighting the desire of our state in this way renewed interest in textbooks, preparatory courses in the education degree, and awakened support from the populace should make it easier to institute a better Kansas History instruction. There is now a wealth of writings and audio-visuals from which to craft courses if we just get busy and use them that we no longer have to settle for a Kansas Day program and making a picture booklet of our state symbols as a way of teaching Kansas History.

The date in the bill has been set for enough in advance that any teacher who is asked to instruct in the subject will have had time to take the preparatory courses to assist them to do an adequate job.

"Those who are in school today will be the builders of a better Kansas if they are true to the Kansas spirit" - Bill Isely. It is the belief of the sponsors of the bill and many others across the state that HB 2725 will put our students in contact with that Kansas spirit.

STATE OF KANSAS



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

State Capitol
Topeka 66612-1590
(913) 296-3232

Mike Hayden Governor

February 16, 1988

The Honorable Denise C. Apt
Chairperson, House Education Committee
State Capitol
Topeka, Kansas 66612

Dear Denny:

Today your Committee is considering HB 2725 sponsored by Representative Harper and several other House members. I applaud these representatives for introducing such a measure.

In my message to the 1988 Legislature, I recommended the Legislature address a major educational shortcoming in Kansas and mandate the teaching of a comprehensive course in Kansas history in Kansas schools. I believe the state of Kansas has a rich historical heritage steeped in individual courage, sacrifice and perserverance. We have had many colorful figures in Kansas history who have made contributions to the political field, the arts, the film industry, aviation and nearly every field of human endeavor. Yet many Kansans, particularly our young people, are unaware of our historical character.

These are the reasons why I have recommended legislation which mandates action by the Board of Education and the Board of Regents that assures every high school graduate in Kansas has completed a comprehensive course in Kansas history.

Denny, thank you very much for the opportunity to express to you and your committee my recommendations on this important education issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mike".

MIKE HAYDEN
Governor

MH:jb

*Attachment 5
House Education 2/16/88*

Coffey County Historical Society

11 & Neosho
Burlington, Kansas

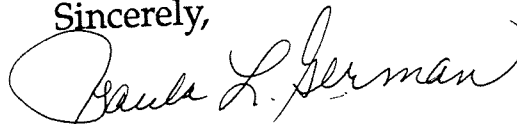
February 3, 1988
Coffey County Historical Society
Burlington, Ks.

Rep. Jeff Freeman
State Capitol Building
Topeka, Ks. 66612

Dear Jeff:

Our board was delighted to hear of the introduction of your bill to mandate the teaching of Kansas History in the schools of Kansas. During our meeting February 1, we voted unanimously to support your effort in this matter. We further wish to thank you for your support of the furtherance of education and history in our great state.

Sincerely,



Paula L. German
Pres., Coffey County Historical Society

*Attachment 6
House Education 2/16/88*

DATE: Mon. 2-8-88

Opinions

- MANHATTAN MERCURY
- OLATHE DAILY NEWS
- PARSONS SUN
- PITTSBURG MORNING SUN
- SALINA JOURNAL
- WINFIELD DAILY COURIER

Courier views

Kansas history: know thyself

We Kansans are not inclined to ask our legislature to pass laws setting curriculum requirements in our public schools.

The case of Kansas history is different.

Lawmakers should spell out in plain language a statutory requirement that a specific course in Kansas history be offered in every one of Kansas' 310 districts.

Questions of what, when and how should be left to educators.

But the legislature needs to act because Kansas history is lost in the confusion of our present social science curricula. In spite of official protestations to the contrary, our children do not learn the history of their state.

If you doubt this, just ask them.

And why should they bother learning Kansas history?

Because until an individual understands the world around him, he has no context in which to understand the larger world. Before embarking on the study of international social forces or the psychology of mass society, young students need to know about the state where they live.

They need some ground on which to stand.

Bringing Kansas history back into our public schools in a coherent, up-to-date course with high quality materials could do a lot to help students deal with the information explosion and the fast-moving future they face.

After all, Kansas history helps us understand ourselves. Nothing in education can be more important.

DATE:

Sunday 1-24-88
 TOPEKA CAPITAL-JOURNAL
 WICHITA EAGLE-BEACON

 GARDEN CITY TELEGRAM
 HAYS DAILY NEWS

 MANHATTAN MERCURY
 PARSONS SUN
MORNING SUN
IAL

Losing memory of Kansas

Young Kansans grow up ignorant of state history

By Homer E. Socolofsky

During more than three decades I have been privileged to offer at Kansas State University a course in the history of Kansas that has been taken by more than 3,000 students. The usual answer to the query, "Why are you taking this class?" evokes a response from these students showing state loyalty and interest in what has happened around them. Students often admit, "I've never had a chance to take a course in Kansas history."

This ingrown affection for Kansas was noticed by Kenneth S. Davis in his book, "Kansas: A Bicentennial History," when he wrote that he knew "of no other state, save Texas, whose citizens are as strongly, intensely, personally identified with it as Kansans are with Kansas." Certainly, it is also true, as noticed by Robert Smith Bader in his soon-to-be-published "The Imperfect Rectangle: The Twentieth Century Images of Kansas," that such a view is not unique for Kansans. It is typical of almost all humans to "identify profoundly with a particular place and culture."

This causes me to ask what has happened to the teaching of state history in Kansas public schools? I'm proud to have been born in Kansas and I realize now that my elementary school and high school were not especially innovative in courses that were offered. Yet, I remember taking Kansas history in grade school and Kansas civics in high school. Almost all of my university students over the past 30 years deny ever having had either course. Many of these students regard history or a historical event as something far removed from them, something occurring on a national or international scale. Students often remark that "Nothing has ever happened in my home town" or "There's no history at all in my community," without realizing that everything

that has happened has contributed in some way to history. While history is the sum total of human experience, it is true that certain elements in historical happenings, such as national and international events, dominate written history. That each person contributes to overall history is too often unrecognized by people of all ages. Is this typical in your experience that some people do not feel that they are a part of history? Many people have no understanding of the significance of local and state history even though every Kansas school district is legally obligated to provide training in the history of Kansas in elementary schools.

THE Legislature in 1903 mandated that among the subjects to be taught in elementary schools was the "history of the United States and of the state of Kansas." Yet something has happened to Kansas history teaching in our public schools. At least the products of those schools seem not to recognize ever having taken anything that they identify as state history. Still, the same wording of the 1903 law is carried in the 1985 annotated revision of the general statutes of Kansas, yet the mandate seems to be more honored in the breach than in its fulfillment.

Through the years there has been much discussion among members and officers of the Kansas State Historical Society about the lack of Kansas history offerings in the public schools. Also, I have attended meetings called by the staff of the Kansas State Department of Education seeking ways to fulfill the requirement in Kansas history. The usual outcome

from both these forums has been avoidance of any demands that would "rock the boat!" Suggestions that would require additional legislation have been avoided, although a feeling persisted that the Legislature would respond favorably to requests for a sterner law to make sure that every public school student was exposed to a course in Kansas history. However, outside events and administrative decisions have weakened the teaching of state history in Kansas.

Strong pressure coming from other disciplines — especially after the first flights of the Soviet spaceship Sputnik I — has put increased emphasis in the public school curriculum on sciences, math and English, by taking time from history, the social sciences and other areas of study. Because there was reluctance to expand the school day and there was only so much room in a student's schedule, decisions were made to reduce the content of state history in Kansas public schools, then drop the teaching of state history altogether. According to Emporia State Professor Thomas D. Isern, who made a recent study of this issue, the recommendations for social studies curricula coming from the Kansas State Department of Education in 1986 no longer contain any specific requirement for the teaching of the history of Kansas at any grade level in Kansas schools. Yet the state law of 1903 has neither been repealed nor amended. Who should be asked to assure that the statutory requirement agreed to by almost all 20th century Kansas Legislatures be followed in the apparently arbitrary specifications handed down recently by the State Department of Education?

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DATE: Sunday 1-24-88

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| <input type="checkbox"/> TOPEKA CAPITAL-JOURNAL | <input type="checkbox"/> GARDEN CITY TELEGRAM | <input type="checkbox"/> MANHATTAN MERCURY |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> WICHITA EAGLE-BEACON | <input type="checkbox"/> HAYS DAILY NEWS | <input type="checkbox"/> PARSONS SUN |
| <input type="checkbox"/> KANSAS CITY STAR | <input type="checkbox"/> HUTCHINSON NEWS | <input type="checkbox"/> PITTSBURG MORNING SUN |
| <input type="checkbox"/> KANSAS CITY TIMES | <input type="checkbox"/> LAWRENCE JOURNAL WORLD | <input type="checkbox"/> SALINA JOURNAL |
| <input type="checkbox"/> EMPORIA GAZETTE | <input type="checkbox"/> LEAVENWORTH TIMES | |

SCHOOL districts in Kansas respond in a variety of ways to the law requiring the teaching of Kansas history. A token response for many schools comes on Jan. 29 when Kansas Day rolls around. Many elementary grades throughout the state use the occasion to study Kansas history briefly. Nevertheless, the gravest problem because of the absence of local and state history in Kansas public schools is the lack of recognition by the products of these schools that there is any connection between their lives and the immediate area in which they live.

No doubt you've heard it said that those who do not know their own history are condemned to repeat it. While I have no quarrel with that statement, a major justification for learning Kansas history in Kansas schools could be something quite different. In my estimation a major goal in studying Kansas history is to gain a better understanding and appreciation of the past and how we arrived at the place where we are. Someone has put it succinctly, "how we got into the mess we are in today!" An understanding of state and local history should help young people better understand Kansas habits and hopes. They will better be able to cope with the future whether they stay in Kansas or move elsewhere.

WITHOUT a study of Kansas history we fail our student citizens. We impoverish our own civic life by not providing an understanding of our state's heritage. Such a study will help young Kansans learn of the different groups of people who have made Kansas their home, of the explorers and traders who passed through the area, of the pioneers who began

settlement in Kansas some 130 years ago, of the conflicts that marked all Kansans then and since, of the economic, political and cultural activities that have created unity and diversity within this land called Kansas. These pioneers and their descendants faced many difficulties and their contributions were immense to those of us who, as Kansans today, represent a mere 1 percent of all Americans. This ability to survive innumerable hardships and tests of courage causes me to identify Kansans of yesterday and today as survivors. They have faced the challenge and they remain steadfast.

Homer E. Socolofsky is a professor of history at Kansas State University.

*Page
2 of 2*

Kansas history requirement ignored

2-7-88 WICHITA

KANSANS who truly love their state were overjoyed when Gov. Hayden included a Kansas history plank in his recent State of the State address. Now the people who have been sitting on their hands all these years when they should have been promoting the study of Kansas history are starting to chip away at the governor's proposal.

They say they are shocked — shocked! — that anyone would think the current state mandate on Kansas history isn't being followed. Matters of curriculum should be left in the hands of the State Board of Education, they say, and the Legislature — and, by extension, the governor — essentially should butt out.

It's because the teaching of Kansas history in the elementary schools has been left in the hands of the State Board of Education, however, that Kansas history isn't being taught in many schools today. The Kansas Association of School Boards is quick to jump to the defense of the school districts, using half-a-dozen lame excuses for why there's nothing they can do.

Horsefeathers. There are all kinds of things the state board and the local school boards can do, if they'd only do it. The governor's State of the State remarks, and the favorable response they have received from all over Kansas, may help sensitize them to that.

THE Kansas Association of School Boards makes a big deal of the fact there's a law already on the books requiring the teaching of Kansas history.

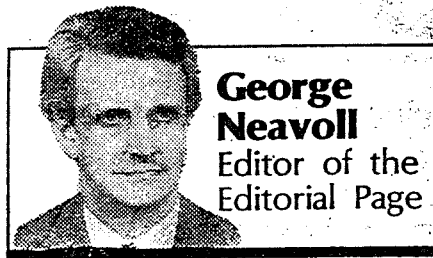
Here's the law, KSA 72-1101 (Required Subjects in Elementary Schools): "Every accredited elementary school shall teach reading, writing, arithmetic, spelling, English grammar and composition, history of the United States and of the state of Kansas, civil government and the duties of citizenship, health and hygiene, together with such other subjects as the state board may determine. The state board shall be responsible for the selection of subject matter within the several fields of instruction and for its organization into courses of study and instruction for the guidance of teachers, principals and superintendents."

Now granted, some laws are pretty imprecise by their very nature, but this one sets a new standard for imprecision. The clincher is that the state board is given the responsibility for making the teaching of the "required" subjects a reality — and that's where the whole thing falls apart.

TOM ISERN, history professor at Emporia State University, has been studying this problem for a very long time. He says one big reason



Gov. Hayden and young Kansan: Will he know the history of his state?



George Neavoll
Editor of the
Editorial Page

for the lack of Kansas history instruction is that the State Department of Education, in its recommendations on social studies curricula — where Kansas history usually ends up — does nothing to encourage it.

The department's current "Guidelines for Program Development in Social Studies" (1986), according to Mr. Isern, includes "nothing whatsoever that may be construed to satisfy the state requirement for the teaching of Kansas history."

The nearest the guidelines come is in their recommendations for Grade 4. There, in a section on the study of world regions, they say that "Where the local school district requires a study of the state, . . . the state should be studied as a political region" ("whatever that is," adds Mr. Isern).

That isn't exactly a lightning charge from the responsible agency of state government, any way you look at it.

As Homer Socolofsky, history professor at Kansas State University and dean of Kansas historians, told the "Kansas Habits, Kansas Hopes" conference in Topeka recently: "Thirty years after a brief unavailability of new Kansas history texts the teaching of state history apparently has been

dropped as a requirement, at the very time when a relative abundance of Kansas history textual material has become available."

FOR years, the state education people and local school boards have used the excuse that no Kansas history texts were available, and therefore Kansas history couldn't be taught.

Emporia State's Mr. Isern and Fort Hays State's Ray Wilson now are completing a Kansas history text for Grades 7 and 8, however. Marsha Gladhart, in Wichita State University's College of Education, wrote me last week about an activity book, "This Is Kansas!", that she and a colleague put together several years ago. Other works either are on or are coming on the market.

No amount of Kansas history teaching material is going to make a bit of difference, though, if those responsible for its use don't get serious about exposing young Kansans to the rich heritage of their state.

Regardless of what anyone may say, that isn't happening now, and the governor is absolutely right to call the offenders to account.

Fifty-eight House members on both sides of the aisle have answered the governor's call and introduced legislation requiring "a complete course of instruction in Kansas history" in Grades 4-8. Already, the naysayers are giving all the reasons it won't work. For them, the state motto should be changed from "To the stars through difficulties" to "To the stars if it isn't too much work."

STATEMENT OF JOSEPH W. SNELL, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, KANSAS STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY, BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, REGARDING HOUSE BILL 2725, FEBRUARY 16, 1988.

The statement I wish to make is partially me speaking as a private citizen and partially me speaking as the director of the Kansas State Historical Society.

I would never have gotten into this business had I not had a deep appreciation for the history of our state and nation so my feelings about the value of teaching Kansas history in our schools is colored by personal preference and professional duty.

I remember very well when I, as a young second lieutenant, was stationed at Fort Monmouth, N.J., the home of the army's signal corps during the Korean conflict. Because the post contained the corps' signal laboratories it was the station of some of the brightest young brains in America. When I was at Monmouth I became acquainted with many many young people who spoke with fervor and dedication about their home states. Texans, New Yorkers, Coloradoans, Californians and others volunteered the fact that they were from the best state in the union. But Kansas soldiers mostly did not. Their residence had to be prided out of them.

Over the years I have noticed that many Kansans still do not freely admit they are from the sunflower state and some even go so far as to run it down to others.

This bothers me a great deal and I have thought about the probable cause for a long time.

It has been my conclusion that if our residents could learn more of the fascinating history of Kansas they would once again, as they did around the turn of the century, praise Kansas to the skies.

*Attachment 7
House Education
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Kansas has been the hub of historical activity in the West and can serve as a microcosm for a number of historical events such as the Civil War, railroad development, progressive politics, and so on.

We have learned at the Kansas Museum of History that young people almost absorb history if it is presented to them correctly. Last year alone we reached 100,000 Kansas young people through our museum outreach programs and about another 50,000 with the exhibits and resident programs we provide.

At our historic sites we are told that the only Kansas history some people get is what they learn at the site and often that exposure then triggers a desire to learn more about a particular subject or Kansas history in general.

We find more and more young people getting involved in our annual history day activities and more attend historical meetings than ever before.

I firmly believe there is a desire among our young people to learn more about their heritage.

I strongly support the mandatory teaching of Kansas history in our schools. Learning of our rich heritage would give students a sense of belonging, pride of residency and an appreciation for the contributions of their forebearers. This, in turn, would make them better, more effective citizens who would base at least part of their lives on an understanding of the past.

Kansas has an excellent, a proud history, and I would support any measure that exposed more of our young people to it over a longer period of time.



Travel Industry Association of Kansas

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Topeka, Kansas 66612 913/233-9465

STATEMENT

DATE: February 16, 1988
TO: Members of the House Committee on Education
FROM: Jean Barbee, Executive Director
Travel Industry Association of Kansas
RE: HB-2725

Madam Chairperson and members of the Committee, my name is Jean Barbee. I am the Executive Director of the Travel Industry Association of Kansas (TIAK). TIAK membership is comprised of hotels and motels, restaurants, attractions, museums, chambers of commerce, convention and visitors bureaus -- anyone interested in promoting tourism in Kansas.

TIAK is in favor of House Bill-2725. Travel industry people deal with image making and image marketing on a daily basis. They are convinced that the teaching of Kansas history in our school systems is one of the better ways to instill pride and loyalty in our Kansas citizenry at an early age.

We agree that Kansas history is an integral part of our national history. But U.S. history textbooks are written from a national viewpoint so as to be utilized all over the country. With a curriculum based on such a text, we believe the existing statutes are not being strictly enough adhered to when it comes to teaching Kansas history.

Kansas has so much history. And that history is recognized by the travel industry as one of the major tourism attractions. If I try to name them all, I'll leave out something important, but just to mention the forts - Leavenworth, Fort Dodge, Fort Larned, Fort Scott and Fort Riley, brings to mind nearly every major historical battle and war within the last century and a half. We do not believe that our children are often reminded of this relationship, this aspect of their heritage. We believe they should be.

We hope, of course, that sparking the pride and loyalty in a student for his home state will promote travel within the state. A child would coerce his parents into taking him to Boot Hill or the Museum of Natural History in Lawrence; or that when he's grown, he'll take his own children to Cheyenne Bottoms or the Eisenhower museum or the Kansas Cosmosphere.

Most of all, we believe that image making and image marketing begins at home. Without the support of the populace, we will lose many of our historical attractions. We will lose a part of our heritage. We will lose tourism dollars. If we do not tell and sell our own children, we cannot possibly tell and sell the rest of the world.

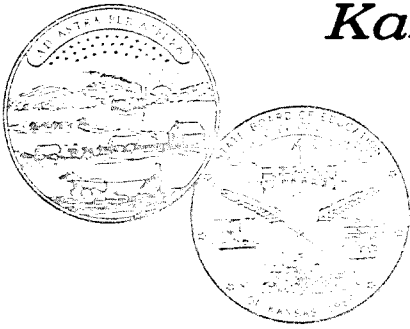
We appreciate your consideration. We ask you to recommend HB-2725 favorably for passage.

*Attachment 8
House Education 2/16/88*

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

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District 5

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District 7

Robert J. Clemons
District 9

Paul D. Adams
District 3

Marion (Mick) Stevens
District 10

February 16, 1988

TO: House Education Committee
FROM: State Board of Education
SUBJECT: 1988 House Bill 2725

My name is Connie Hubbell, Legislative Chairman of the State Board of Education. I appreciate the opportunity to appear before this Committee on behalf of the State Board.

The State Board of Education does not have a position on House Bill 2725 but wishes to provide information on what is currently being offered by many unified school districts.

Kansas statutes require that Kansas History be taught in the elementary school. The State Department of Education does not specify the grade levels for this instruction or the amount of time that should be spent on the instruction.

Elementary schools approach this requirement in several ways:

Kansas History is integrated into topics within the social studies curriculum (e.g., in a fourth grade study of regions, Kansas is studied as an example of an agricultural region);

Kansas History is taught at grade four as a nine-week unit; and

Kansas History is taught during the month of January in celebration of the anniversary of statehood.

Secondary schools do not have a statutory or KSDE requirement that they offer instruction on Kansas History. Many schools provide nine or eighteen weeks of instruction on Kansas History at grade seven, while several provide eighteen weeks at one of grade levels nine through twelve. The seventh grade offering is usually required, while the offering at grades nine, ten, eleven, and twelve is an elective.

Textbooks on Kansas History are available for grades four, seven, and nine through twelve. These books are dated and in need of revision or replacement. A new text is being developed for grade seven, but it has been difficult to interest publishing companies in developing a state history for a market the size of the one in Kansas.

Elementary teachers and secondary social studies teachers are not required to have course work in Kansas History for certification for teaching in Kansas. Some Kansas teachers have had preservice course work on Kansas, but the majority of the teachers having this type of course work gained it after starting their teaching careers.