

Approved: 3-7-95  
Date

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Rochelle Chronister at 3:30 p.m. on February 14, 1995 in Room 519-S of the Capitol.

All members were present.

Committee staff present: Ben Barrett, Legislative Research Department  
Dale Dennis, Department of Education  
Avis Swartzman, Revisor of Statutes  
Lois Thompson, Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee: Connie Hubbell, Kansas State Board of Education  
Jim Edwards, KCCI  
Bernie Koch, Wichita Chamber of Commerce  
David Self, Tonganoxie  
Gerald Henderson, United School Administrators

Others attending: See attached list

Representative Horst moved and Representative Hayzlett seconded motion to approve minutes of January 30, January 31, February 1 and February 2. Motion carried.

Hearings opened from opponents of **HB 2092 relating to school districts, rescinding statutory requirements for quality performance accreditation and statewide assessment of pupils and HB 2173 relating to school districts, quality performance accreditation authorized.**

The conferees spoke in opposition to eliminating QPA. They did not necessarily address each bill individually.

Connie Hubbell, Legislative Coordinator of the State Board of Education, opposes eliminating Quality Performance Accreditation from State law and making this system of accreditation voluntary. Either of the proposed bills could have a significant negative impact on the academic achievement of students in the schools of Kansas, on their capability to compete in the job market, and on parental and community involvement in the State's schools. (Attachment 1)

Mark Tallman, Director of Governmental Relations for Kansas Association of School Boards submitted written testimony only. While KASB offers general support for QPA, they would support removing QPA from the statute books because as an accreditation system, QPA is under the purview of the State Board. They suggest the Legislature offer recommendations regarding QPA to the State Board in the form of a resolution. (Attachment 2)

Jim Edwards, Kansas Chamber of Commerce and Industry, testified in opposition to **HB 2173** and **HB 2092**. KCCI has endorsed the QPA process from the beginning. KCCI and its more than 3,000 members statewide are very interested in the final product delivered by public schools in Kansas as these persons are the ones which will be hired by business and industry. Prior to the QPA process being implemented in Kansas, public schools were accredited based on non-educational and irrelevant information. Business quality control programs are constantly reviewed and updated, not scrapped. QPA should and must be viewed in the same manner. (Attachment 3)

Bernie Koch, representing Wichita Area Chamber of Commerce, stated in 1992 his business community asked for the statewide standards language which is in QPA. Their concern began with the shortage of skilled machine operators, but they soon learned all levels of business from manufacturing to retail, from service to trades were saying education was a priority and it needed to change. The work place had changed but schools had not. "If we don't have state standards, we don't know what a high school diploma means.

## CONTINUATION SHEET

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, Room 519-S Statehouse, at 3:30 p.m. on February 14, 1995.

There may be some problems with QPA that need to be fixed like the paperwork and bureaucracy, but the positive parts of QPA should not be abandoned. (Attachment 4)

David Self, Lansing, stated QPA uses effective practices and research for planning and accountability. QPA requires schools to collect data, analyze the information and make intelligent decisions in regard to teaching and learning. Most importantly QPA does not erode local control, but mandates that schools involve the local community in many of its initiatives. (Attachment 5)

Gerald W. Henderson, Executive Director, United School Administrators of Kansas stated USA had been involved in the process and has taken a formal position in support of QPA. "If we want Kansas schools to be better, than we have to agree on what we want all Kansas kids to know and be able to do, gather data on where we are relative to where we agree we want to be, and allow local schools to develop strategies on how we bridge the gap between where we are and where we want to be. QPA provides a system for doing these three things." (Attachment 6)

Sue Chase, representing Kansas National Education Association, submitted written testimony. KNEA believes that school accreditation is the responsibility of the State Board of Education, not of the legislature. They hope both the State Board of Education and the Kansas Legislature continues to work together to bring the highest quality education system to the children of Kansas. (Attachment 7)

Committee members received a copy of a letter from Edward R. Miller, Vice President of Learjet, Wichita, stating Learjet supports the efforts and activities contained in QPA. ". . .without an improvement in the quality of graduates, and thus the quality of our workforce, we will not be competitive in the next decade with other manufacturers located across the world. . . .I believe that QPA is a step in the right direction." (Attachment 8)

The floor was opened to questions by the committee.

Chairman Chronister appointed a QPA subcommittee comprised of Representative Shore as chairman, Representative Deena Horst, Representative Kay O'Connor, Representative Bruce Larkin and Representative Pat Pettey.

Meeting adjourned at 4:55 p.m.

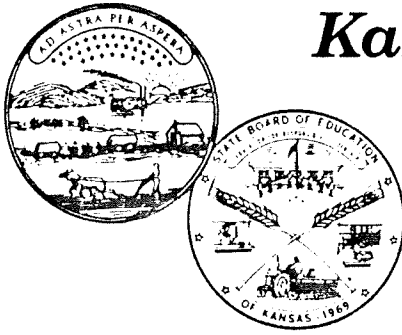
The next meeting is scheduled for February 15, 1995.

## GUEST LIST

Committee: Education

Date: 2/14/95

| NAME: (Please print) | Address:          | Company/Organization:            |
|----------------------|-------------------|----------------------------------|
| Jim Edward           | Topoka            | KCCT                             |
| Bernie Koch          | Wichita           | Wichita Area Chamber of Commerce |
| Mark Tallman         | Topoka            | KASB                             |
| Diane Gjerstad       | Wichita           | USD 259                          |
| Jacquie Oakes        | Topoka            | SQE                              |
| John Koehn           | Topoka            | KASB                             |
| Kristen Kay          | Topoka            | Capital Fund                     |
| Craig Shore          | Topoka            | KSBE                             |
| David Self           | Tonganoxie        | Private                          |
| Ken Burgess          | Tonganoxie        | USD 404                          |
| Dan Thomasch         |                   | Rep # 93                         |
| <del>Oran Bunn</del> | <del>Topoka</del> | <del>USD 561#</del>              |
| Walter Stephens      | P.U.              | B.U. USD 229                     |
| Jim Specialty        | Oueland Park      | USD #512                         |
| Gerald Henderson     | Topoka            | USA of KS                        |
| Sharon Stringfellow  | Topoka            | CWA of KS                        |
| Hershel Pea          | Willsnill         | Citizen                          |
| Megan Young          |                   | Swan Wayle                       |
| Christy Bailey       | Topoka            | Senate Staff                     |
| Bob Johnson          | Lawrence          | WU LAW SCHOOL                    |
| Lee Chase            | Topoka            | KUSA                             |
| Craig Grant          | Topoka            | AT&T                             |
|                      |                   |                                  |
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# Kansas State Board of Education

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| Mildred McMillon<br>District 1 | Connie Hubbell<br>District 4        | Bill Musick<br>District 6    | Michael D. Gragert<br>District 8 |
| Kathleen White<br>District 2   | I. B. "Sonny" Rundell<br>District 5 | Wanda Morrison<br>District 7 | Mandy Specht<br>District 9       |
| Kevin P. Gilmore<br>District 3 |                                     |                              | Steve E. Abrams<br>District 10   |

February 14, 1995

To: House Education Committee  
From: Kansas State Board of Education  
Subject: House Bills 2092 and 2173

My name is Connie Hubbell, Legislative Coordinator of the State Board of Education. It is a pleasure for me to appear before this Committee on behalf of the State Board.

The State Board of Education opposes both eliminating Quality Performance Accreditation from State law and making this system of accreditation voluntary. I remind you that Quality Performance Accreditation focuses on improving student academic performance, and requires schools to document improved student academic skills.

Either of the proposed bills could have a significant negative impact on the academic achievement of students in the schools of Kansas, on their capability to compete in the job market, and on parental and community involvement in the state's schools. Following are just some of our concerns in those regards.

1. In an increasingly competitive marketplace, Kansas cannot afford to have its future workforce undereducated. The knowledge and skills needed by today's and tomorrow's work force have been clearly identified by Kansas business leaders. Those skills are among those included in the outcomes, standards, and indicators of Quality Performance Accreditation and among those tested on the state assessments. Many nationally normed tests are still testing just the basic knowledge of students and not requiring them to apply their knowledge, as the state tests do. Students are expected to achieve the results identified in this accreditation system and as a

consequence will be competitive in Kansas, nationally, and internationally. Making participation in Quality Performance Accreditation optional or totally removing it will also remove the assurance that all of the state's students have an opportunity to learn the skills necessary to be successful after high school, whatever their future plans.

2. Under Quality Performance Accreditation, schools are required to collect and analyze data related to the learning of all students in the building. As a result, numerous schools have found significant differences in the academic achievement of sub-groups of their students, such as females and males, the various racial/ethnic groups, and students of lower socio-economic status. Schools have undertaken steps to improve the performance of those students who were found not to be achieving at expected levels. It must be anticipated that schools will not do this sort of data collection and analysis if not required to do so, since many had not done it prior to the Quality Performance Accreditation requirement. The losers would obviously be those students who are not in the upper-achieving groups.
3. Prior to Quality Performance Accreditation, some schools had exemplary programs for significantly involving parents and the community in the school. Unfortunately, many others did not. Removing the requirement of Quality Performance accreditation could significantly reduce the meaningful participation of parents and the communities in schools. With no requirement for participation, some schools may well choose to return to or continue "business as usual," not involving parents and other community members from discussion in the important issues of school mission, learning expectations, and learning results.
4. The Quality Performance Accreditation system requires schools to plan for improvement through identifying areas needing strengthening and then developing, implementing, and evaluating methods for improvement of student learning. A number of schools were engaged in school improvement before Quality Performance Accreditation, but many others were not. If those schools are not required to do such planning, we must assume that some schools will return to or continue prior practices, which did not include specific plans to improve student academic achievement.

5. Quality Performance Accreditation requires schools to target the areas of mathematics and reading for improved student performance. Without Quality Performance Accreditation, there will be no assurance that schools are seeking to improve the learning of all students in these key academic areas.
6. Under Quality Performance Accreditation, schools are accountable for student academic achievement and for reporting student progress to parents and community members as well as to the state. This accountability for expenditure of state tax dollars is not at all unreasonable, but we cannot be certain it would continue if the Quality Performance Accreditation system were not required of schools.

The State Board of Education deliberately developed Quality Performance Accreditation as a dynamic system which would be amended and changed as the state's schools implemented the system and found areas needing to be improved. That should be allowed to happen. Rather than seeking to end a promising system which has already helped schools to identify areas of strength as well as those needing improvement, we urge the Committee to join with us in seeking to improve a results-focused system which will improve student academic achievement and allow Kansas students to continue be high achievers. Without the continuous improvement called for by Quality Performance Accreditation, we believe too many Kansas students can count only on a future of academic mediocrity, not one of improved academic achievement.



TO: House Committee on Education  
FROM: Mark Tallman, Director of Governmental Relations  
DATE: February 14, 1995  
  
RE: Testimony on H.B. 2092 and H.B. 2173

Madam Chair, Members of the Committee:

We are appearing today because we anticipated a number of conferees yesterday in opposition to Quality Performance Accreditation. We are here today to offer general support for QPA. But at the same time, we would support removing QPA from the statute books, as proposed in the two bills before you, because as an accreditation system, QPA is under the purview of the State Board. If you do so, we suggest that the Legislature offer recommendations regarding QPA to the State Board in the form of a resolution. Perhaps some of our comments will suggest the direction such a resolution should take.

KASB is not unalterably committed to whatever goes by the name of QPA. In fact, we publicly stated this past fall that we would withdraw our support if the State Board allowed QPA continue developing in the direction we felt it was then heading. We understand and share many of the concerns which have been expressed to this committee. But we believe that looking at what has really transpired since QPA was adopted - right up to the beginning of this Legislature - shows that QPA still offers the hope of school improvement.

One thing that each Legislator should try to resolve is this: what was the state of Kansas education in the late 1980's and early 1990's? Critics of QPA suggested that QPA started - or at least accelerated - a serious erosion of education quality, and that if school boards and educators were just left alone, everything would be OK. But several years ago, the consensus of the Legislature - especially conservative members - was that Kansas education was not OK, that public schools had been in decline for at least ten or twenty years, and that "local control" was not up to the challenge of educating our students to high performance levels. In the debate over the 1992 school finance act, the clear message of many legislators was that they would not support more money for public education if the only accountability was "local control." They wanted state standards and assessments and reports. That's how we got the system we now have.

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Let me suggest that if schools are going to be restructured, it's going to mean doing things differently and learning to change. It's going to mean more time and money for committee meetings and inservice and technology. If you're comfortable with the way schools have operated for the last twenty years, then we don't need to change and you probably won't hear many complaints - except from the employers and colleges whose complaints prompted the school reform movement in the first place. If you think schools need to change - whether to "transformational outcomes based education" or to "back to the basics" courses and assessments like we had in the 1930's - it's going to require time, effort, and money (because time equals money) and it's going to mean complaints from people who don't want to change.

The next question is: does QPA threaten academic achievement and erode support for tradition family roles? That is closely linked to the question: does QPA infringe on local control? We believe it does not. Sincere critics of QPA believe that it does. How can the committee determine what is the case?

Let me concede the following. You can find plenty of evidence in the documents put out by the State Department of Education that suggests certain instructional strategies or curricula are better than others, and many educators and patrons disagree with the department's assessment. It's obvious that some district personnel have felt pressured into adopting decisions they were not comfortable with. And it's certainly obvious that many educators feel too much paperwork is required. We understand these concerns, and told the State Board as much last fall. We argued that the accreditation criteria then under development did begin to intrude into local control of curricula, and that far too much paperwork was being required.

We think the State Board took a very big positive step in December when it voted to limit the accreditation criteria for QPA to the local school improvement plan targets, plus a "short list" of student improvement indicators. Our only major disagreement was the addition of items from Student Outcome V. We testified yesterday that we believe these items should be removed because they do not focus on student academic performance.

The list of accreditation criteria are the true heart of QPA because the only ability the State Board really has to force schools to do anything is through accreditation. Nothing in that list - which will be used to write accreditation regulations - requires schools to adopt any particular curriculum, instructional strategies or techniques, grading or testing policies. It does not require any particular mission statement. Although schools are required to administer and report on the state assessments, the State Board specifically says that accreditation will not be based on any single indicator, such as those assessments. The only other testing requirement is that districts adopt their own local testing programs, which can certainly include nationally normed standardized tests, so that the state tests are not the only source of information on student performance.

Nothing in that list requires curriculum committees to meet, inservice workshops to be held, or principals and teachers to fill out extensive paperwork. Nothing requires



teaching mediocrity, letting student retake tests as often as they want, or abandoning teaching of "facts." Just about every recommendation you received yesterday for improving or replacing QPA can already be done by any school district wants to.

KASB believes that QPA can and should allow districts and buildings to decide for themselves the best way to implement school improvement. The only role for the State Board is check and see if improvement has occurred, and that improvement should be measured by clear, defined standards of student progress. You have heard that QPA is too vague. We believe that it has been clarified. You've heard that QPA is forcing schools to do things that the local community does not support. We believe you should challenge every school to adopt whatever school improvement that they want and are willing to be judged by. If that school shows improvement on its plan, and the State Board refuses to accredit it, then the Legislature will have evidence that QPA really infringes on local control, and KASB will be the first to agree that QPA must go.

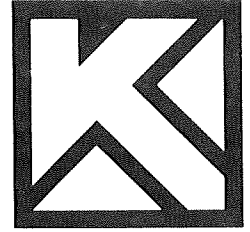
The State Board has a process to allow districts to seek waivers from State Board regulations. I am not aware of any district that has requested a waiver because of the objections you heard yesterday. Senator Dave Kerr has repeatedly asked educators to send him examples of excessive paperwork that should be eliminated. He reports almost no response. Last year, the Legislature passed the charter school bill, which would allow parents and teachers who are dissatisfied with the current structure of public education to propose schools that could receive waivers of regulations and even state statutes. No one applied. Last year, KASB had legislation introduced to expand local control through school board "home rule." It never came to a vote. My point is that there are a host of avenues available to those who are dissatisfied with the current state of public education that are not even being used.

We believe the Legislature should work to reaffirm what QPA was originally conceived to be. Local communities - school boards, site councils, parents and educators - develop formal plans to improve their schools. These plans must be measurable and progress must be reported to the community every year. Each school and district must also report on certain measurable indicators of student academic progress, so the state has an overall picture of student performance. School accreditation is based solely on whether or not the school is improving in its target areas.

We believe that QPA should be nothing more and nothing less. We urge the committee to adopt the same position.

# LEGISLATIVE TESTIMONY

Kansas Chamber of Commerce and Industry



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HB 2092 and 2173

February 14, 1995

## KANSAS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY

Testimony Before the  
House Education Committee

by  
Jim Edwards  
Director, Chamber and Association Relations

Madam Chair and members of the Committee:

I appear before you today to reaffirm KCCI's support for QPA and rise in opposition to the two measures you have before you. KCCI has endorsed the process from the beginning.

The Kansas Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI) is a statewide organization dedicated to the promotion of economic growth and job creation within Kansas, and to the protection and support of the private competitive enterprise system.

KCCI is comprised of more than 3,000 businesses which includes 200 local and regional chambers of commerce and trade organizations which represent over 161,000 business men and women. The organization represents both large and small employers in Kansas, with 55% of KCCI's members having less than 25 employees, and 86% having less than 100 employees. KCCI receives no government funding.

The KCCI Board of Directors establishes policies through the work of hundreds of the organization's members who make up its various committees. These policies are the guiding principles of the organization and translate into views such as those expressed here.

KCCI and its more than 3,000 members statewide are very interested in the final product delivered by public schools in Kansas as these persons are the ones which will be hired by business and industry. And, it is instrumental that these persons be competent in basic skills as well as be able to work effectively as a team. Prior to the QPA process being implemented in

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Kansas public schools, schools were accredited based on non-educational and irrelevant information.

For this reason, KCCI believes we must reiterate our position of needing a system of accrediting public schools rather than the old method of counting books, meals, or seat time. There must be a system which constantly reviews a student's performance, modifies the instruction needed, and reviews the student's performance again. Just as in business and industry, this process is unending and constantly modified.

The Kansas Legislature took an unprecedented and bold step several years ago when it modified the manner in which public schools were accredited. It also gave new hope for Kansas business by assuring them that a quality control system of sorts was being put in place. Kansas schools are being faced with many of the same questions that businesses were when they adopted company quality control programs. Just as businesses have made a go of it, so will schools.

Business quality control programs have had to be constantly reviewed and updated so that they addressed the goal of providing a product the customer will buy. Please note that I said programs are constantly reviewed and updated, not scrapped. QPA should and must be viewed in the same manner.

Thank you for the opportunity to present this testimony. I would be pleased to answer any questions you might have for me.

**HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE  
TESTIMONY ON HB 2092 AND 2173  
February 14, 1995**

**Bernie Koch  
Wichita Area Chamber of Commerce**

Representative Chronister, members of the committee, I'm Bernie Koch with The Wichita Area Chamber of Commerce. Thank you for the opportunity to appear today and make remarks on House Bills 2092 and 2173.

I'm here because in 1992, my business community asked for the statewide standards language which is in QPA. We asked for statewide standards in math, science, social studies and communication. We asked for the language that required the State Board of Education to consult with outside entities that had experience in world-class education standards. We are pleased that the language is retained in House Bill 2173.

It was our idea, or more correctly, it came from our major economic development agency in Sedgwick County, the Wichita/Sedgwick County Partnership for Growth.

Our interest goes back to 1986, when we began looking seriously at restructuring our local economic development efforts, much the way the State of Kansas was doing. In looking at our economy, it was clear that we live and die by the quality of our work force. We have highly skilled manufacturing jobs that need highly skilled people. For us, education is an economic development issue, and we compete with the rest of the world.

It began with concern over a shortage at the time of skilled machine operators, but we quickly learned there were concerns at all levels of business, from manufacturing to retail, from service to the trades. Business people, both large and small, were telling us education was a priority and it needed to change.

The work place had changed and schools had not changed with it. Schools were teaching shop students how to read blueprints while blueprints weren't being used any more in much of the real world. Computers were being used.

There's a lot of blame to go around, much of it being the fault of business. Business has not done a very good job of communicating with educators about their needs. My wife is a high school counselor. She can tell you in five minutes what it takes to get into any college or university in this country. She can't tell you where to go to become an x-ray technician, or sheet metal worker. We're trying to communicate that to our schools because most of the new good jobs of the future are not going to require a college degree, but they are going to require some technical skills.

We also recognize that schools have had other problems to deal with like safety, teen-age pregnancy, drugs. Society has changed and the schools have been forced to deal with

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that. It was clear to us that education needed attention and that we, as the business community, had to be part of that restructuring.

There's the old saying, "If it ain't broke, don't fix it." We say, "If you don't fix it, we're going to go broke."

The competition is fierce out there. Belden Daniels, the consultant who helped Kansas put together its economic development focus ten years ago, is in the Statehouse today. I heard him this morning talk about the international climate.

Poland is now the fastest growing economy in Europe. They have a highly educated, highly motivated work force.

Bangalore, India is now the second largest software center in the world, after Silicon Valley. India has the third largest concentration of engineers and scientists in the world, after the U.S. and the former Soviet Union. The world economy is changing. We can't insulate ourselves from it. The best way to prepare for it is with a skilled, productive work force.

So, we watched with a great deal of interest as the State Board of Education started to put together QPA, and frankly, we didn't like what we saw. Like the teacher from Shawnee who testified here yesterday, we wanted to see "rigorous academics," and we thought QPA was kind of weak. QPA language was put into the 1992 school finance bill in the House. We went to the Senate and asked for the stronger state standards language and it went in. We wanted it in the law because we didn't think the State Board of Education would maintain rigorous academic standards on their own.

I urge you to keep this language in the law. I understand the frustration about local control of education, but if we don't have state standards, we don't know what a high school diploma means. I know employers who would rather hire someone with a GED instead of a high school diploma because they know what a GED is. They know that person has met a standard. With 304 school districts in this state, employers don't know what a high school diploma means.

I don't believe we can put \$2 billion dollars a year into K through 12 in Kansas and not know what a high school diploma signifies.

That's not to say there are not problems with QPA that need to be fixed. I've heard for some time about the paperwork and the bureaucracy. I think they are real problems which need to be addressed. Please don't abandon the positive parts of QPA.

## QPA AND THE KANSAS LEGISLATURE

Larry Lezotte of the National Center for Effective Schools stated, "*We are going to have to lead and push people into educational reform if it is to come about.*" and I believe that the Kansas Legislature and State Board of Education are demonstrating excellent leadership to schools by their "gentle" push. While this paper will contain very little that is new to the Committee, it will address the Legislature's initiatives, the school improvement process and the need for continued support of both of these governing bodies if true statewide reform is to occur and if schools are to make a difference.

QPA was mandated by FY 92 legislation and attached to the school finance law. The law required all public schools to participate in QPA by 1996 and mandated that all public schools have Site Councils by January 1, 1993. Other requirements dealing with assessments and organizational needs were required. While there has been some grumbling, compliance and good quality appear to be the benchmark.

Local control was mandated early in the process, as well it should be. Local citizen and patron input was ear marked from the beginning as schools began studying and developing their own school improvement process. From generating the district mission statement to reviewing the school improvement plans and participating in the on-site visit, community input is vital and appreciated.

The school improvement process puts into place questions which could rarely be answered in the affirmative prior to the mandated QPA process:

- Does the district (schools) have an organizational structure clarifying the decision-making process for school improvement?
- Does the district have an organizational structure for securing citizen input as it relates to teaching and learning?
- What is the plan for aligning curriculum?
- What is the district plan to demonstrate that staff development is making a difference in student achievement?

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- What school improvement model is the school using to improve itself?
- Does the school have a mission statement or vision, and does it have broad based support?
- Does the school/district have a systematic process for collecting data to be used in the decision making process as it relates to student achievement?

The list of questions goes on and on and only a few districts in Kansas were attempting to influence teaching and learning in a professional manner as outlined by these questions. With the data generated by QPA, most of the above questions can be answered in an affirmative, honest manner as districts begin to evaluate and plan for school improvement.

QPA uses effective practices and research for planning and accountability. QPA requires schools to collect data, analyze the information and make intelligent decisions in regard to teaching and learning. Most importantly QPA does not erode local control. In fact, it mandates that schools involve the local community in many of its initiatives.

For those who would destroy or weaken this major component of school improvement, I would ask what would be put in its place? School leaders from the State Board to classroom teachers have fought a great deal of resistance to this process but many schools are winning the battle. Everyday more and more schools are developing improvement plans which, in time, should lead to increased student learning.

I request that the Kansas Legislature continue to require, push, and cooperate with schools in this difficult initiative called school improvement.

David Self  
613 Bittersweet Lane  
Lansing, KS 66043  
913-727-5875



## HB 2092 and HB 2173

Testimony presented before the House Committee on Education  
by Gerald W. Henderson, Executive Director  
United School Administrators of Kansas  
February 14, 1995

Madam Chairman and Members of the Committee:

I am Gerry Henderson, Executive Director of United School Administrators of Kansas (USA). I appreciate this opportunity to share some thoughts with the committee concerning the elimination of statutory requirements for Quality Performance Accreditation in Kansas. I feel strongly that for many of the schools of our state, the elimination of statutory language will change very little of what goes on in Kansas schools. For a few, removing statutory requirements for school improvement may provide the reason to slip back into business as usual. My purpose here today is to share with you why I believe this to be true.

I will concentrate my comments in answering three questions: 1) What is the USA history with Quality Performance Accreditation? 2) What is the USA position relative to Quality Performance Accreditation? 3) What is Quality Performance Accreditation, and why is statutory mention of the system important?

### **USA History with Quality Performance Accreditation**

Nearly six years ago we approached the state board of education and suggested that the state board needed to take a close look at how we were making judgments about schools. Our suggestion was that we needed to start accrediting schools based on what kids know and are able to do rather than via the input system then being used. It was our further suggestion at that time that the state board simply had to assume the leadership in two specific areas. One, the state board needed to facilitate agreements amongst all the players in school accreditation--teachers, administrators, state board members, patrons, business people, legislators, whomever--on what we want kids to know and be able to do. At this same time considerable discussion was surfacing concerned with the accountability of schools based on student performance. The second task the state board needed to provide leadership on, was to facilitate agreements on what assessments would be needed to demonstrate that Kansas students were making progress towards whatever was agreed upon. While these two tasks appear to be very simple on the surface, let me assure you they are not.



The state board did assume a leadership role in the discussion of school accreditation based on outcomes by creating the task force on outcomes-based accreditation. The report that was generated by that task force provided the foundation document for the Quality Performance Accreditation document that is now being used in Kansas schools. QPA, very simply, is a system for making judgments about schools based on what kids know and are able to do. Under the QPA accreditation system, no longer would we make judgments about schools based on things such as the number of books in the library or the number of credit hours on a teacher's transcript. Judgments under the QPA system are made solely on what students know, are able to do, and in fact are like.

While we have not agreed with everything that has come out of the state board during this process of changing from accreditation based on inputs to accreditation based on outcomes, we believe that the state board has indeed assumed the leadership role and has provided an essential focus on where we ought to be going. And we firmly believe that this new system of accrediting schools on demonstrated student performance will provide the accountability that Kansas citizens require.

### **What has been the USA position relative to QPA?**

From the outset USA has been involved in the process, and through our committee structure and my board of directors, has taken a formal position in support of Quality Performance Accreditation. We believe the new system will work. But like any radical change in the way an organization does business, errors have been made. Working together with all of the essential players to make sure that the new system works, has caused some of the problems and much of the controversy in the new program. For QPA, or any other system of improvement, to work, we believe there are three things that need to happen.

First of all we have to agree on what we want regarding student learning. Secondly, we have to take a careful look at where we are right now. Thirdly, after agreeing on what we want and carefully determining where we are, we have to design a plan to bridge to gap. This all sounds very simple, but again it is not. Let's review all three for just a moment. First we must agree on what we want from our public schools. What do we want all Kansas kids to know and be able to do? The QPA document is very specific in that first, we want improved student performance in the essential or basic skills. While the definition of essential or basic in itself causes some problems, the system does call for demonstrated improvement in mathematics, communications, science, and social studies.

Is there anything else that we want beyond mastery of essential or basic skills? Some Kansans would say no. Some believe that's where the accreditation system ought to stop. QPA, however, does not stop at this point. It talks about higher level thinking skills as being important in Kansas schools. These higher level skills include such things as being able to work collaboratively to solve problems. Many critics of QPA question the wisdom of including these higher level skills in school accreditation. But research by such organizations as the US labor department which produced the SCANS report, suggest

that these higher level skills are essential to a productive life in the 21st century. A survey taken of business people in the midwest recently said exactly the same thing. The state board of education has, thereby, expanded the scope of the word **what**. The **what** we want Kansas kids to know and be able to do goes beyond reading, writing and arithmetic.

An essential element in agreeing upon what we want lies in developing our basic belief system. After we have agreed upon what we want, we have to decide what we really believe about those agreements. For example, an idea basic to the effective schools research now driving much of our thinking, is that "all children can learn and learn well over time." Do we really believe that statement? Who should your definition of "all children" include? What do you as members of this committee believe about "all children" learning? If you really believe that all children can learn and learn well, you will behave one way. If you do not believe that all children can learn, you will behave in yet another way. There are still a lot of elitist things happening in our state. There are some people who still believe and act on those beliefs. They would have us "educate the best and drown the rest." If you truly believe that all children can learn and learn well, there are some things that you are going to have to do in that second step in determining where you are at any particular point. No longer will you be concerned with just average test scores. The name most often used in describing this phenomenon is the disaggregation of data. This means that instead of looking at an entire group and taking average test scores, you split the data down into several groups, such as social/economic status, or race, or gender. What you then ask about that data is simply, "Are all children learning, or are there certain groups that are not learning as well as others who could be. When you have such information, teaching strategies can be specifically targeted to specific problem areas. The bottom line is that in the short time that Kansas schools have been involved in school improvement models and have been disaggregating data, we have learned that Kansas kids are failing to learn for all kinds of reasons. Again, I challenge you to decide on what you want. And if you want to ensure that all Kansas kids learn and learn well over time, and if you discover that not all are, you have to be prepared to take some action. If you find that poor kids are not learning, and that their failure to learn is a product of being hungry or ill-clothed, than you have to solve those two problems before those children can learn. There are many other examples.

This brings us to the final step in the process. Once you have decided what you want and have taken a careful look at where you are, a plan must be developed to bridge the gap. It is in this area that we, in our judgment, have made the most errors. All of the research that I know anything about says that **how** one closes that gap needs to be developed, designed and implemented by the people who are going to do the work. That is what Total Quality Management principles say to business and industry. That's why we have site councils and on-site decision-making in this process. Simply stated, the state has every reason and right to be involved with the **what** of school improvement. The state, as a whole, has every right to be involved in reaching those agreements on **what** we want all Kansas kids to know and be able to do. But the **how** we reach those goals must

be left to individual schools. I understand why the state board of education has been involved in a bit of the **how** of this process. Many of my members have consistently asked the state board to simply "tell us how to do this." In my judgment, the response of the state board and the state department ought to be, "the **how** of the process is your job, Mr. or Ms. Educator." Again, simply stated, once the agreements have been made as to **what** Kansas kids should know and be able to do, **how** they get there should not be the state's business. Within reason, the **how** should be determined by the local school.

There is a very important reason why the **how** of school improvement must be left to local communities. To get back to the social problems we talked about earlier. If in the process it is determined that certain social problems must be solved before all kids can learn and learn well, it is only the local community that can solve the problems. There is no other way. If a child is hungry, if a child is homeless, or cold, or has no stability, or has no advocate, the local community must address those problems or all children will not learn and learn well. There are communities in this state who are doing a tremendous job of involving the entire community in the solution of children's problems. The extent of these problems are clearly documented in the *1995 Kansas Kids Count Data Book* published by the Kansas Action for Children. The point is that entire communities must solve the problems of children, or they will not be solved. If they are not solved the goal identified by the nations governors several years ago that all children come to school ready to learn will never be realized. Schools can indeed be the focal point of solving the problems of children, but schools can't do it all. It comes down to what we believe about **all** children.

#### **Why is statutory reference Quality Performance Accreditation Important?**

In summary, Quality Performance Accreditation is a system of making judgments about schools based on results. What ought kids know and what ought they be able to do when they finish the process. That's as simply as I know how to state it. That's what QPA is. Schools in Kansas which are now engaged in school improvement activities will continue to be so engaged. Those schools which have been at the process for a time can right now provide empirical data demonstrating improved student performance. Those schools did not need Quality Performance Accreditation to get them started. There is a second group of schools which are beginning to gather data about where they are concerning the learning of **all** students, and are beginning to design strategies to address discovered problems. There is a third group of schools which have come reluctantly into the process. Take away the requirements to engage in continuous school improvement and to stand accountable for that improvement, and I do not know what they will do.

A final word on the concept of *Continuous Improvement*, and then I'm finished with my "dissertating" or "pontificating" or whatever this has been. As has been discussed by several conferees early in the 1995 Session, Quality Performance Accreditation is based on the concept of continuous improvement as developed by the Total Quality Management ideas of Edward Demming. To get an idea of what continuous improvement means outside of education circles, I asked an executive of Cessna Aircraft

if the concept of continuous improvement was used in his company. He assured me that it was at the center of his primary responsibility, that of evaluating production lines in his manufacturing plant. After Bill's explanation of the evaluation process, I asked if one line was ever compared with another. His response was immediate and adamant. Never!! Each line is evaluated on its ability to get continuously better, and not on how it stands in comparison with another line. U.S. manufacturers ignored Demming for years only to be clobbered by Japanese companies who listened.

If we want Kansas schools to be better, then we have to 1) agree on **what** we want **all** Kansas kids to know and be able to do, 2) gather data on where we are relative to where we agreed we wanted to be, and 3) allow local school to develop strategies on **how** we bridge the gap between where we are and where we want to be. Quality Performance Accreditation provides a system for doing these three things. Quality Performance Accreditation allows schools to know whether or not they are making a difference for children rather than guessing about it. We believe the statues which have held school people's feet to the fire of continuous improvement ought to be retained. At the same time I would caution you that the question of what we collectively believe about **all** children still needs to be answered.

In thinking about that issue, I came to a prayer offered by Chaplain Fred Hollomon of the Kansas Senate. I have kept copies of the Senate Journal since 1989 just to have a record of Chaplain Hollomon's conversations with his Lord and mine. On the seventh day Pastor Hollomon asked if state government could "...be a Good Steward and a Good Samaritan at the same time?" He went on to retell the Parable of the Talents where the two good stewards produced a 100% return on their investment. Another parable told about the Good Samaritan who gave what he had to someone in need. The prayer asked for wisdom to play both roles well. As you think about what you believe about the concept ***all children can learn well over time***, consider both your responsibility to be good stewards of Kansas resources and good Samaritans for Kansas children.

Thank you Madam Chairman. I'll be happy to respond to any questions.



KANSAS NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION / 715 W. 10TH STREET / TOPEKA, KANSAS 66612-1686

Written Comments from Susan Chase  
For House Education Committee  
Monday, February 13, 1995

The Kansas National Education Association urges the committee to be cautious in their approach to HB 2092 and HB 2173. KNEA believes that school accreditation is the responsibility of the State Board of Education, not of the legislature. That is not to say the legislature should not make known to the state board its feelings on the way the state board conducts its business. We believe the appropriate mechanism for expressing these concerns is through resolutions.

We do also understand that the accreditation system is currently in the law, and therefore open to amendment by this body. Our concern is that with both the state board and the legislature trying to regulate the school accreditation process it will become disjointed and confusing. We would hope that instead of trying to control the accreditation system through amendment of the current statute, you would look at making recommendations through resolutions and allow the state board to implement the appropriate changes through their rules and regulations.

KNEA believes this body has some important concerns, many of which mirror our concerns with the school accreditation process. We would hope both the State Board of Education and the Kansas Legislature would continue to work together to bring the highest quality education system to the children of Kansas.



February 14, 1995

Edward R. Miller  
Vice President  
Human Resources

House Education Committee  
Topeka KS

Dear Ladies & Gentlemen:

I am sorry that I cannot be present today to testify before the House Education Committee on Quality Performance Accreditation.

Learjet supports the efforts and activities contained in the Quality Performance Accreditation that has been issued by the State of Kansas. We believe that the improvements in reading, writing and mathematics skills are critical to the success of Learjet as we compete in the global market to sell our Kansas products. Without an improvement in the quality of graduates, and thus the quality of our workforce, we will not be competitive in the next decade with other manufacturers which are located across the world. Q.P.A. is an example of improving the schools responsiveness to the needs of employers within the State. Without an initiative of this type, we are willing to say that "status quo" is acceptable.

Q.P.A. also focuses upon improvement in communication, team building and working together. These are also critical skills for the citizen of the State of Kansas to have if they are to be successful in the world of work and society.

I realize that Q.P.A. is under a lot of focus for its involvement in the social and moral issues of society. If the House Education Committee wants to refocus their efforts in this area without destroying the primary basis for Q.P.A., so be it. If the paperwork of Q.P.A. is burdensome, fix it. However, do not lose the ability to obtain measurable results from local school board initiatives so that it can be multiplied into other schools across our State.

Although I am not nor have I been employed in education, I serve on the Wichita Area Chamber of Commerce Education Committee, the Business Education Success Team in the Wichita area, serve on the Business Education Partnership for the State Board of Education and chair the Kansas Chamber of Commerce Education Committee. I have a vested interest in seeing an improvement in the quality of the students graduating from Kansas. I believe that Q.P.A. is a step in the right direction. Please consider the value of it in improving our education.

Sincerely,

ERM/ej

House Education  
Attachment 8  
2-14-95