

MINUTES OF THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Dave Kerr at 1:30 p.m. on February 16, 1995 in Room 123-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except: Senator Corbin

Committee staff present: Ben Barrett, Legislative Research Department
Avis Swartzman, Revisor of Statutes
Brenda Dunlap, Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee: Patrick Hurley & Jim Allen, Kansas Education Coalition
Mark Tallman, Kansas Association of School Boards
Jim Yonally, Shawnee Mission School District
Helen Stephens, Blue Valley School District
Robin Lehman, Olathe District Schools
Jacque Oakes, Schools for Quality Education
Craig Grant, Kansas National Education Assoc.
Connie Hubble, Kansas State Board of Education
Gerry Henderson, United School Administrators of Kansas
Bill Medley, South Central KS Education Service Center

Others attending: See attached list

SB 189 - School finance, increase base state aid per pupil, definition of state prescribed percentage for purpose of local option budgets

Patrick Hurley and Jim Allen, Kansas Education Coalition, testified in support of the bill. The Kansas Education Coalition's membership is made up of school districts that currently receive low enrollment funding and cannot afford to lose any of it, or have it diminished in the future. The members of the Kansas Education Coalition are united behind four fundamental principles: 1) they cannot withstand and thereby oppose any reduction in low enrollment funding under the school finance law; 2) they cannot withstand and thereby oppose any shifting of funds from one district to another; 3) they can only support adjustments to the school finance law which are funded by new revenues and not from existing revenues; 4) they support increases in the base per pupil funding which are spread across all districts evenly including the low enrollment weighting factor. KEC members fully support U.S.A.'s proposal for additional funding and flexibility in the law which they have presented to the Legislature, and urge the Legislature to adopt these four principles, and the U.S.A. funding proposal. (See Attachment 1)

Mark Tallman, Kansas Association of School Boards also testified in support of the bill. They support an increase in the base budget per pupil to provide every district with a budget that can adequately meet the rising of operating costs. They feel the amount per pupil should be increased from \$3,600 to \$4,500. They also support the U.S.A. proposed finance plan, over the governor's plan. In addition to an increase in the base per pupil amount, they also suggest providing additional funding for districts that do not currently receive low enrollment weighting; to allow the maximum LOB to remain at 25% as the base increases; and to modify the local option budget process by allowing districts to keep LOB authority that has been previously approved with no expiration. (See Attachment 2)

Jim Yonally, Shawnee Mission School District, Helen Stephens, Blue Valley School District, and Robin Lehman, Olathe School District testified in favor of the bill. They also suggested allowing the local option budget to "float" at 25% of the base, which will provide much needed funding for those districts already capped at 25%; amend the LOB for which districts currently have budget authority to become permanent and make only new LOB budget authority subject to protest petition; consider state reimbursement of transportation costs down to a mile and a half and providing additional funding for at-risk pupils. (See Attachment 3)

Jackie Oakes, Schools for Quality Education testified in favor of the bill. However, they suggest an increase of \$100 dollars to the base state aid, in order to meet the cost of living increases. They also favor allowing the 25% local option budget to remain the same while the base state aid increases; and increasing the weighting for at-risk and bilingual programs. (See Attachment 4)

CONTINUATION SHEET

MINUTES OF THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION Room 123-S-Statehouse, at 1:30 p.m. on February 16, 1995.

Craig Grant, Kansas National Educational Association, offered comments on the bill. They are in favor of increasing the base per pupil amount, possibly even more than the Governor recommends in light of the higher increases allotted to the Regents', state employees and other increases in the proposed budget. Cost of living increases alone should merit a higher increase in the base per pupil amount. They also recommend other changes involving an LOB modified float, at-risk changes, transportation changes and low enrollment modifications. (See Attachment 5)

Connie Hubbell, Legislative Coordinator of the State Board of Education, testified in favor of the bill with the following amendments. 1) Increase base state aid per pupil 3.5% per year beginning with the 1993-94 school year; 2) Leave the local option budget limitation at 25%; 3) Grant locally elected boards of education authority to budget up to 10% in their local option budget; 4) Allow school districts permission to count four-year-old at risk preschool students in the enrollment with a 2,500 student limit; 5) Increase the school year up to 3.5 days with a goal to reach 200 days by the year 2000. (See Attachment 6)

Gerry Henderson, United School Administrators of Kansas, presented the USA suggested school finance plan. USA continues to endorse the concept of providing equitable and adequate funding for Kansas schools, and opposes any effort to increase funding for some school districts at the expense of any other school districts. Specifically, USA opposes any reduction to the present low enrollment funding system. A detailed explanation of their finance plan is found in Attachment 7. Onan Burnett, Topeka, USD 501, also endorses the USA suggested finance plan.

Bill Medley, South Central Kansas Education Service Center, provided written testimony that presents another suggested school finance plan. Their goals are to improve the equity and adequacy of the existing school finance program, fund the excess cost of providing special education, increase KPERs funding for prior service to 1.75%, and establish a procedure that will provide full funding for all mandates. A detailed summary of their finance plan is found in Attachment 8.

Senator Emert made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 15, 1995 meeting. The motion was seconded by Senator Lawrence, and the motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:30 p.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for February 20, 1995.

SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE COMMITTEE GUEST LIST

DATE: 2-16-95

NAME	REPRESENTING
Robin Lehman	USD 233
Jim Yonally	USD # 512
Aue Gumble	USD # 512
Scott Brown	USD # 347
Alvin Hamant	USD # 375
B. J. Eickow	USD # 320
Jim Allen	KEC
Patty Jancloka	USD # 358
Richard W. Stone	USD # 469
Tom Smith	USD # 469
Mike Bailey	USD # 462
Stephen Bohrer	USD # 462
Jacquie Dakes	SQE
Bill Musick	St Bldg Ed
Dennell Schooler	USD 262 Valley Center, Ks
BERNIE REGNIER	USD 240 TWIN VALLEY - BENNINGTON
Larry Geil	USD 240
Bill Hedley	SCKESC - Clearwater
Julia Crain	USD 499

SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE COMMITTEE GUEST LIST

DATE: _____

NAME	REPRESENTING
Craig Grant	KNEA
Anna Burnett	USD 501#
Robert E. Mendel	USD #24
Paul W. Dall	USD 424
Lea Munchew	USD 424
Leah Kaufmann	USD 424
Jerry McGreevy	USD #355
Donald Snodgrass	KFD#
Jane Lee	USD 456
David Brax	USD 311
Sue Brax	USD 311
Courtney Brax	USD 311
George Stover	USD 610
GERALD HENDERSON	USA of KS
Michael Weiss	USD 437
Hal Jell	SM #572
Vladimir Solovey	
Denise Apt	USA
Mark Tallman	KASIS

TESTIMONY

Presented on Behalf of the
KANSAS EDUCATION COALITION

by Patrick J. Hurley and Jim Allen

to the
SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Statehouse
February 16, 1995
1:30 p.m.

*Senate Education
2-16-95
Attachment 1*

2-16-95

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

This testimony is presented on behalf of the members of the Kansas Education Coalition. The Kansas Education Coalition was formed by a number of Kansas school districts which share one common concern. They each currently receive low enrollment funding and cannot afford to lose any of it, or have it diminished in the future.

The membership of KEC is 110 school districts and growing. They range in size from the smallest to the largest of those districts currently receiving low enrollment funding. They are located in all geographic parts of the state.

The coalition took shape in response to the District Court decision striking down the 1900 student threshold for low enrollment weighting. Most low enrollment districts feared that the Supreme Court would uphold that ruling. There was considerable discussion in the media at that time about "dividing up the low enrollment pie" and redistributing it to other districts.

It was against this background that low enrollment districts organized for the explicit purpose of retaining and protecting this essential funding.

The members of the Kansas Education Coalition are united behind four fundamental principles:

1) they cannot withstand and thereby oppose any reduction in low enrollment funding under the school finance law;

2) they cannot withstand and thereby oppose any shifting of funds from one district to another;

3) they can only support adjustments to the school finance law which are funded by new revenues and not from existing revenues.

4) they support increases in the base per pupil funding which are spread across all districts evenly including the low enrollment weighting factor.

Once formed, the KEC began meeting with representatives of other school districts to expand their base of support and find common ground for improving the law without damaging low enrollment districts.

KEC members began discussions with the United School Administrators association and made clear their position on these basic principles which were necessary to protect low enrollment districts.

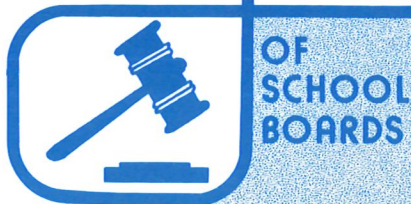
After several discussions, U.S.A. adopted a position statement which incorporates these fundamental principles and thereby allows KEC members to fully support U.S.A.'s proposal for additional funding and flexibility in the law which they have presented to the Legislature.

KEC urges this Committee and the Legislature to adopt these same four principles as absolute requisites for any funding increases in the school finance law. We believe it is in the State's best interest to do so and will avoid pitting districts against other districts resulting in harm to some and aid to others.

Such an approach would create lasting dissension among districts and force legislators to take sides, often within their own legislative districts. In the end there would be no real winners under such an approach.

Instead, the Legislature should focus on reasonable adjustments in the law which will have the support of virtually every school without harming any single district. We believe that is the position being proposed for you by U.S.A. and which the members of the Kansas Education Coalition are pleased to support.

We thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony.



1420 S.W. Arrowhead Rd, Topeka, Kansas 66604
913-273-3600

TO: Senate Committee on Education
FROM: Mark Tallman, Director of Governmental Relations
DATE: February 15, 1995

RE: Testimony on S.B. 189 - School Finance

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on S.B. 189, which represents the Governor's proposals for changes in school finance. KASB offers the following observations:

First, members of our association are deeply concerned about the fact that the base budget per pupil has not been increased in the three years since the 1992 school finance act was adopted. Since that time, inflation has certainly increased operating costs per student in every district. At the same time, there are clearly pressing needs for improved instruction, more services to students at risk, and other services. Districts which can turn to the local option budget to fund those costs must use increased local property tax - which reverses another positive aspect of the 1992, significant property tax reduction. Districts which cannot use the LOB face an erosion of budget and services. We therefore support an increase in the base budget to provide every district with a budget that can adequately meet these ongoing costs.

In 1992, KASB supported many of the major features of the new system which replaced the School District Equalization Act. These included: (1) a base budget for all students which represented an equitable foundation for funding; (2) a system of pupil weighting which recognizes the fact that different students with different educational needs require different levels of expenditure in order to achieve equity; (3) a statewide minimum mill levy which insures an equitable level of contribution by all Kansas taxpayers; and (4) a local option budget system which allows each district to respond to the special needs of its students.

However, there were several features of the 1992 act we did not support, and believe should be changed by the Legislature. The major concerns are as follows:

First, the base budget per pupil was set too low. In 1991, the Legislature adopted amendments to what turned out to be the final year of the SDEA. Under those amendments, the budgets per pupil of school districts the "Fourth Enrollment Category" (between approximately 2,000 and 10,000 students) were to be increased to the level of school districts in the Fifth Enrollment Category (over 10,000) during a three-year phase-in period. The budgets of districts in the First, Second and Third Enrollment Categories would not have been changed.

In the 1992 act, the \$3,600 base did provide budget increases for many - but not all - Fourth Enrollment Category Districts. But that base was far below the budget per pupil of every Fifth

Senate Education
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Attachment 2

Enrollment Category District. Merging the "Fourth" with the "Fifth" should have required a base of well over \$4,000. The low enrollment weighting factor was set so that most districts below 1,900 enrollment (the former First, Second and Third Enrollment Categories), either received budget increases or at least as much budget as they had previously. But every school above 10,000 students had to make extensive and disproportionate use of the local option just to maintain their budget levels, because \$3,600 was far below the actual spending in each of those districts.

As you know, the LOB is subject to protest petition. But there were two special features included in the act during its first year of operation. In the first year, the LOB was not subject to protest. This meant that districts needing the LOB simply to maintain budgets could adopt them without protest. In the second year, those LOB's were subject to protest, but because they were already in place, no tax increase was required and the districts could rightly point out that defeating the LOB would mean cuts in current services. On the other hand, all school districts were limited to a 10% budget per pupil increase for the first year of the act. Many districts did not even get to the \$3,600 level. As a result, these districts - the lowest spending districts in the state - were not allowed to even propose an LOB in the first year without protest. If these districts propose an LOB now, it will be subject to protest and it will require a tax increase.

Although the 1992 act made a big step toward equalizing school budgets in its first year, that process has been frozen. The low enrollment weighting maintains the same ratio between large and small districts as was present in 1991; the first year of the act allowed some districts to begin LOB's without protest while other districts could not. The fact that a district's LOB authority expires after a maximum of five years means that long term budget stability is always threatened, especially in the state's largest school districts (which enroll over one-third of the state's children). The fact that the LOB is subject to protest means that school boards are limited in their ability to determine and finance the educational needs of their students.

That is why we believe the state's goal should be a base budget of \$4,500. That's what it would take to provide the largest districts with the resources they are already spending with local option budgets, and to bring the medium-sized districts up to a similar level. At the same time, the low enrollment weighting factor should be adjusted so that smaller districts receive the same amount of budget authority they currently receive, plus an increase that recognizes inflation over the past three years. In principle, the approach presented by the USA Task Force moves us in this direction. It provides some increase for all districts, with additional resources for the districts that receive little or no low enrollment weighting.

The Governor's budget and policy recommendations do provide a very limited increase for all districts by increasing the base and "floating" the maximum LOB. We support that effort, but we want to stress this proposal will not even cover increased operating expenses in most districts. The USA proposal is a far better plan, but even under that proposal, funding will simply not be available for the kind of improved educational services that we believe Kansas students need to maintain our state's historic educational superiority.

In summary, our recommendations are as follows:

1. Raise the base budget for all districts in recognition of past and future cost increases.
2. Provide additional funding for districts that do not currently receive low enrollment weighting.
3. Allow the maximum LOB to remain at 25% as the base increases.

4. Modify the local option budget process by allowing districts to keep LOB authority that has been previously approved (no expiration after four years). Remove the protest petition, or at least allow districts to use some portion of the LOB without being subject to protest, and increase the number of signatures required to force an election.

A final comment concerning proposals in areas such as transportation, at risk weighting and other programs: KASB certainly does not oppose looking at those special needs. But we have chosen to place our emphasis on the base budget. An adequately funded base will go a long way toward addressing those issues. But however addressed, those issues require adequate funding.

Thank you for your consideration.

TO: Senate Education Committee

FROM: Jim Yonally, representing Shawnee Mission School District
Helen Stephens, representing Blue Valley School District
Robin Lehman, representing Olathe District Schools

DATE: February 16, 1995

RE: Testimony on SB 189

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on SB 189 and issues regarding school finance.

The Shawnee Mission School District, along with Blue Valley School District and Olathe District Schools, supports SB 189, which contains the Governor's recommendations for additional funding for education. While the \$30 increase in the base state aid per pupil is not as high as we had hoped, it is a good beginning toward helping school districts deal with the inflationary costs of operation. In addition, allowing the local option budget to "float" at 25% of the base will also provide much-needed funding for those districts that are already capped at 25%, such as Shawnee Mission, Blue Valley and Olathe.

We would also ask the committee to consider an amendment allowing the LOB for which districts currently have budget authority to become permanent and make only new LOB budget authority subject to protest petition. Those districts that have adopted an LOB would find themselves in dire straits if voters chose not to renew that budget authority and they had to cut their supplemental budgets.

In order to prevent further erosion of the base budget per pupil, we ask you to consider state reimbursement of transportation costs down to a mile and a half and providing additional funding for at-risk pupils by expanding the definition and increasing the weighting for those students.

Adequate funding of education is critical for enabling our schools to provide Kansas children with the educational skills necessary to become productive citizens. Thank you for your consideration.

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Attachment 3

Olathe District Schools

PRIORITY LEGISLATIVE ISSUES

1995 Session

The Olathe school district currently budgets the maximum per pupil expenditure including full use of the local option budget (\$3,600 plus \$900). With the new school finance law in Kansas effective with the 1992 budget year, Olathe used 19% of the local option budget. In September 1992, the Board of Education adopted a resolution to use the local option budget for 25% for a four-year period. A valid protest petition resulted in an election in April 1993. After extensive efforts by the school district and a community support group, the LOB was approved by a significant margin (68%). In 1993-94, the district used 23% of the local option budget. Currently, the district uses 25% local option budget authority to provide services to the district's 17,200 students. As a measure of continue public support for the schools, a \$58.8 million bond issue was approved by the voters in April 1994.

I. SCHOOL FUNDING

- **Increase in base state aid per pupil:** The district supports an increase in the base budget per pupil equivalent to the increased costs as measured by an economic-based index from the point in time at which the current base was established. The current allocation of \$3,600 has not changed for three years, resulting in an increased use of local funding.
- **"Floating" the cap on the local option budget:** The local option budget cap should be removed or remain flexible to an established percent (currently 25%). Current legislation should be revised to allow the cap to float without a corresponding decrease as related to adjustments in the base budget per pupil.
- **Eliminate protest petition:** Local boards of education should make all determinations for local funding of schools. If a board of education approves the local option budget within the provisions of the law, a protest petition is unnecessary and the requirement should be removed.
- **Special education funding:** The district supports continued increase in funding for special education. As special education funding requires a significant transfer of general fund dollars, an increase in state support of full actual special costs would be of great benefit to the district. The current state level of funding is 83% of excess costs above the cost of a regular student. Excess costs should be at 100% in order to avoid transfers from the general fund, which is earmarked for regular students.

- **Increased vocational education weighting:** The current funding level of .5 for vocational education students does not provide adequate levels of financial support for existing programs or program enhancements. Current funding levels are particularly inadequate for programs offered in area schools or cooperatives at vocational technical school centers. Funding for vocational students should increase from .5 to 1.0 FTE over a five-year period (increasing the weighting .10 per year).
- **Funding for pre-school handicapped children and full-day Kindergarten students:** Pre-school children enrolled as "typical" students in pre-school handicapped programs should be counted toward state funding. Full-day Kindergarten students should be counted as 1.0 FTE for state funding.

II. TRANSPORTATION

- **Lowering the state reimbursement for transportation:** The district supports lowering the state reimbursement for transportation to one mile.

III. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

- **Reduction in paperwork and assessments for school improvement:** The district supports a school improvement process that focuses on continuous improvement rather than a ranking format. The district supports a reduction in paperwork and assessments that are not directly related to the school improvement process, as well as processes that reduce bureaucracy and time away from direct instruction by teachers.

IV. SCHOOL GOVERNANCE

- **Home Rule for school boards:** The district supports Home Rule for school boards, permitting action where statutory authority does not appropriately address local needs.

Olathe District Schools

P.O. Box 2000
Olathe, Kansas 66051
(913) 780-7000

Board of Education

Dr. Robert Drummond, President
Steve Hougland, Vice-President
Kevin Hammeke
Ron Hinkle
Rick Marriott
Janet Simpson
Frank Taylor

Superintendent of Schools

Dr. Ron Wimmer

Legislative Liaison

Frank Taylor

Governmental Relations

Lehman, Brandeberry & Associates

SHAWNEE MISSION SCHOOL DISTRICT
Legislative Program - 1995

I. SCHOOL FINANCE

- Position:
1. Increase the base (\$3,600) state aid without a corresponding decrease in the local option budget.
 2. Allow the local option budget to increase in an amount up to 25% of the new general fund budget.
 3. Allow use of the Local Option Budget to be decided solely by the elected members of the BOE.
 4. Adjust basic state aid in accordance with the cost of living for each county.
 5. Allow expenditures for utilities, liability insurance, social security, and compliance with state and federal mandates, such as ADA, to be funded outside the budget limit, as they are imposed by outside agencies and market forces beyond the control of local boards.
 6. Maintain funding for low enrollment as it currently exists.

Rationale: With the passage of a new finance law in 1992, the Kansas Legislature established a base budget of \$3,600 per pupil. Although this amount is supplemented through the local option budget, there is no provision for an increase in the state support level while the funds raised through the local option budget are limited. The result is that in 1995-96, unless the law is changed, Shawnee Mission will continue to receive the same state support level per pupil as in 1992-93. Furthermore, since the limits of the local option budget have been reached, the district will be unable to keep pace with increased costs due to inflation and other expenses such as insurance, utilities, state mandates and federal requirements. We are not in support of reducing low enrollment funding to achieve increased funding in other categories.

II. DECLINING ENROLLMENT

- Position: Allow a school district that loses enrollment to base its budget on the full previous year's student count.

Rationale: Current law provides partial relief for declining enrollment, but this change would allow a full year of planning to reduce resources.

III. TUITION PAYMENTS

Position: Allow that portion of any tuition payment that is reflected in the local option budget to be placed in the local option budget.

Rationale: Under current law, tuition payments received by the school district are sent to Topeka to reduce state aid needed for all school districts. Districts such as Shawnee Mission where the General Fund is supplemented by the Local Option Budget, should be allowed to charge and keep tuition equal to the amount per pupil raised by the local option budget.

IV. SPECIAL EDUCATION

Position: Fund special education at 100% of the excess cost.

Rationale: Currently, the state funds approximately 85% of the state-wide average excess costs for special education programs. In Shawnee Mission, approximately 65% of the excess costs for special education are covered. Since special education is one of the state mandated programs, the school district is left with no choice but to fund this cost from General or Supplemental funds.

Consideration must be given, also, to the potential of increased district costs due to recent federal court decisions applicable to claims for special education in private schools.

V. NEW SCHOOLS

Position: Increase the additional weighting factor for students in new facilities to .5 per year for two years.

Rationale: Current law allows additional weighting for students in new facilities at the rate of .25 per year for two years. The increase requested would more clearly reflect the actual costs of opening a new facility.

VI. ALTERNATIVE SCHOOLS

Position: Provide additional weighting funds for students in alternative schools at 2.0.

Rationale: Students in alternative schools require smaller classes, specialized curriculum, and additional support services. Currently, there is no provision for additional funding for these students.

VII. TRANSPORTATION

Position: Provide transportation funds for students who live at least 1.5 miles from the school in their attendance area.

Rationale: Current law provides state funds only for those students who reside at least 2.5 miles from their neighborhood school. Lowering the distance requirement would enable more students to travel safely to school.

VIII. BUS DRIVER EMPLOYMENT REQUIREMENTS

Position: Provide legislation requiring the employers of school bus drivers to fingerprint all applicants and to perform background checks.

Rationale: Current laws establish physical standards and require drug testing for bus drivers, but do not address mandatory background checks.

IX. TUITION TAX CREDITS, VOUCHERS

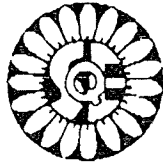
Position: We vigorously oppose legislation that would provide tuition tax credits or vouchers to be used for private elementary or secondary schools.

Rationale: Although proponents of the voucher system believe that it will strengthen the public schools through competition, we believe that such a system will reduce needed resources and leave the public schools with those students who are refused from private schools. We also believe that rather than costing less money, a fully implemented voucher system would cost the state more money. Finally, we believe that the public schools are the foundation of democracy and the best way to promote equality in our nation.

X. STATE MANDATES

Position: We oppose programs mandated by the state without appropriate funding, including an increase in the number of days required in the school calendar.

Rationale: The school district budget is fully allocated for existing programs and cannot support additions without increased funding.



Schools for Quality Education

Bluemont Hall Manhattan, KS 66506 (913) 532-5886

Date: February 16, 1995

To: Senate Education Committee

Subject: SB 189 -- School finance, increase base state aid
 per pupil, definition of state prescribed
 percentage for purpose of local option budget

From: Schools For Quality Education

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

I am Jacque Oakes representing Schools For Quality Education, an organization of 113 small school districts.

We are appearing before you on SB 189 which raises the base state aid per pupil from \$3600 to \$3630 and which allows the 25% local option budget to float.

Our organization was extremely pleased to see the Governor's recommendation to increase the base state aid. It has long been one of our priorities. We will be starting the fourth year of school improvement without any increase, and this is a positive move in the right direction. However, we are concerned that this is not enough of an increase to meet even the annual cost of living. We believe that an increase of \$100, from \$3600 to \$3700 would be more in line with the needs of schools to reinforce and encourage continued educational improvement.

We do favor allowing the 25% local option budget to remain the same while the base state aid increases.

There are two weights that need to be increased, at-risk and bilingual.

The at-risk weight of .05 is one of the lowest compared to other states. We encourage this weight be increased to .10.

"Rural is Quality"

Senate Education
2-16-95
Attachment 4

February 16, 1995
Senate Education Committee

The bilingual population is growing throughout the United States as well as in Kansas. This is a weight that is measured by the hours that the pupil is served. There are 615 weighted students served by forty school districts in Kansas. There are districts in southwest Kansas that have a 50%--45%--30% bilingual student population. They are extremely short of trained teachers, and many are in the process of training their own bilingual teachers. This is not a small school problem as it is also prevalent in Wichita and Kansas City. We believe that the .2 weight should be increased to .5.

Thank you for your time and consideration.



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

Craig Grant Testimony Before
Senate Education Committee
Thursday, February 16, 1995

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I am Craig Grant and I represent Kansas NEA. I appreciate this chance to visit with the committee about SB 189, the Governor's recommendation on school finance.

Kansas NEA appreciates the Governor recommending some increase in the base budget per pupil--it is the first positive recommendation since the law was put in place in 1991. However, we agree with the Senate Education Chair when he noted the uneven treatment which this area received when compared to other areas of the budget.

The .8% increase in the base budget is certainly uneven when compared to Regents', state employees', and other increases in the proposed budget. When compounded with the fact that no increases have been given in three years, one can certainly understand why increasing the base budget is our number one priority for the 1995 Legislative Session.

If one assumes that the \$3600 base set in 1991 was adequate (and we would argue that it was not), simple cost of living increases for school districts would dictate a need for base budget increases. We believe those increases should come in base budgets, not in local option budgets.

The Kansas NEA Task Force on School Finance recommended other changes involving an LOB modified float, at-risk changes, transportation changes, and low enrollment modifications which are important and which you have seen in the pamphlet distributed previously. We are happy to discuss those and other factors; however, our emphasis continues to be on the base budget.

In a recent publication sent to our 24,000 members, I made the statement that "it is hoped that other Senators will recognize what Senator Kerr has verbalized" and that schools should get "their proper share of the pie." We hope this committee will heed that call and increase the base funding for our schools.

Thank you for listening to our concerns.

Kansas State Board of Education

120 S.E. 10th Avenue, Topeka, Kansas 66612-1182

February 16, 1995

TO: Senate Education Committee

FROM: State Board of Education

SUBJECT: 1995 Senate Bill 189

My name is Connie Hubbell, Legislative Coordinator 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 has spent a great deal of time during the summer months listening to school officials discuss their educational needs. Many teachers are working long hours to help students reach their educational goals. Based upon a statewide survey, approximately 24 percent of all public school students are at risk.

It is essential that we provide local boards of education with the resources necessary to continue improvement of student achievement.

The State Board believes the following recommendations are justifiable but also realize that resources are limited.

1. Increase base state aid per pupil 3.5 percent per year beginning with the 1993-94 school year.
2. Leave the local option budget limitation at 25 percent.
3. Grant locally elected boards of education authority to budget up to 10 percent in their local option budget.
4. Allow school districts permission to count four-year-old at risk preschool students in the enrollment with a 2,500 student limit. The selection would be determined by the State Board of Education using Headstart guidelines.
5. Increase the school year up to 3.5 days with a goal to reach 200 days by the year 2000.

The State Board of Education would be pleased to cooperate with the Legislature in trying to reach decisions that would benefit Kansas school children and the economic well being of the state.

Dale M. Dennis
Deputy/Assistant Commissioner
Division of Fiscal Services and Quality Control
(913) 296-3871
Fax No. (913) 296-7933

Senate Education
2-16-95
Attachment 6



UNITED SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS OF KANSAS LEGISLATIVE POSITIONS - 1995

SCHOOL FINANCE

USA continues to endorse the concept of providing **equitable** and **adequate** funding for Kansas schools. The positions listed here presume the infusion of new state monies into the school finance system. USA would oppose any effort to increase funding for some school districts at the expense of any other school districts. Specifically, USA would oppose any reduction to the present low enrollment funding system.

In order to improve both the **equity** and **adequacy** of the existing school finance program, USA will focus on legislation which would:

1. Provide an increase in the Base State Aid Per Pupil (BSAPP) to \$3700
AND
Assign an equity weighting factor of .036121 (the current weighting factor for 1800) to all districts whose enrollment is 1800 FTE students or above,
AND
allow the cap on Local Option Budget (LOB) to remain at 25% above the Legal Maximum Operating Budget.
2. Provide that for the purpose of computing state aid, a district be allowed to use the previous year's FTE enrollment or the current year's FTE enrollment which ever is the greater.
3. Provide that a local Board of Education may establish or increase the Local Option Budget by up to 3% per year up to a maximum of 10%. *Any portion of LOB above 10% would be subject to a protest petition.*
4. Provide funding for 100% of the excess costs of Special Education.

In addition to these major issues, USA would support legislation which would:

1. Increase the weighting factor for at-risk students to at least .10.
2. Lower the reimbursement for transportation from 2.5 miles to one mile.
3. Increase the weighting factor for Bilingual students to at least .50.
4. Provide for an increase in the general fund cash reserve. USA would support language which would allow increased flexibility in accessing the cash reserve fund.

USA would oppose any constitutional limitations on growth in the state general fund.

Senate Education
2-16-95
Attachment 7

RATIONALE:

Base State Aid Per Pupil

Three straight years of static budget authority coupled with ever increasing fixed costs of doing business, plus the need to adequately compensate district employees have created a near crisis situation for Kansas school districts. A \$100 increase in BSAPP would equate to a 2.7% increase over a four year period.

Equity Weighting

The 1992 School Finance Act provided much needed relief for most Kansas school districts. However, it became quickly evident that there were still some districts, roughly those in the old fourth enrollment category, which were having difficulty providing an adequate education for children at the \$3600 Base Budget Per Pupil. While the low enrollment weighting system provided adequate funding for schools under 1900 FTE students, districts over that number have found it extremely difficult to operate. Those districts still have not been able to "catch up". Equity Weighting is an attempt to solve this on-going situation.

An examination of spending levels in schools over 1900 indicates that approximately \$3900 rather than \$3600 is needed to adequately educate a child. Under the low enrollment weighting system, approximately \$3900 is available to districts with 1600 FTE students. The lowering of the equity weighting index to 1800 FTE students is an attempt to get to that adequate (\$3900) figure. It is the USA long term position to continue to work toward lowering the index coupled with increases in BSAPP until something approaching adequacy for all Kansas school districts is achieved. Under the current USA position the equity factor of .036121 would apply to districts of 1800 FTE students and greater. The low enrollment weighting factors for districts of 1799 FTE students and fewer would remain unchanged.

25% Cap on Local Option Budget

Districts currently at 25% LOB will not profit by any changes in BSAPP unless allowed to maintain LOB at 25% above Base Budget Per Pupil.

Provision for Declining Enrollment

Districts experiencing an unanticipated decline in FTE enrollment need one year to plan for that decline.

Local Option Budget

Local Boards of Education should be able to determine the needs of the district and fund budgets accordingly. Allowing up to 10% LOB at a maximum rate of 3% per year subject to a vote of the local board would allow this flexibility.

Special Education Funding

Failure to fund Special Education at 100% of excess costs forces districts to transfer funds from resources needed for all children.

About Our Service Center

The South Central Kansas Education Service Center is the second largest service center out of 11 education service agencies in the State of Kansas. SCKESC is the most urban of these agencies and yet still has a heavy population of suburban and rural districts. There are 35 educational entities who are affiliated with SCKESC.

South Central Kansas Education Service Center maintains an active Legislative Committee. With over 100 United School Administrators members in our service area and more than 200 local Board of Education and KASB members. We represent a large constituency of educators and education policy makers for all of our legislators. We annually draft a set of legislative platforms that directly affect the operation of schools in our area and which we share with our legislators. This brochure was designed to provide you with an informative and easy to read description of each of the Legislative positions that our membership has unanimously agreed to support.

Member Districts

Andover USD #385	Dexter USD #471
Argonia USD #359	Douglass USD #396
Arkansas City USD #470	El Dorado USD #490
Augusta USD #402	Goddard USD #265
Belle Plaine USD #357	Haysville USD #261
Bluestem USD #205	Mulvane USD #263
Butler Co. Sp. Ed. Coop. USD #490	Oxford USD #358
Burrton USD #369	Remington Whitewater USD #206
Caldwell USD #360	Rose Hill USD #394
Central USD #462	Sedg. Co. Area Sp. Ed. USD #618
Cheney USD #268	South Haven USD #509
Circle USD #375	Sumner Co. Ed. USD #619
Clearwater USD #264	Udall USD #463
Conway Springs USD #356	Valley Center USD #262
Cowley Co. Sp. Serv. USD #465	Wellington USD #353
Derby USD #260	Winfield USD #465

Colleges

Cowley County Community College

Special Education Cooperatives

Butler County Coop. USD #490
Cowley County Coop. USD #465

Rehabilitation Facility

Futures Unlimited, Inc.

The Mission of the South Central Kansas Education Service Center is to serve its member districts by working as a partner to provide visionary leadership and quality programs in response to identified and anticipated needs

For more information regarding this brochure or any of the South Central Kansas Education Service Center's services, please contact

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South
Central
Kansas
Education
Service
Center



LEGISLATIVE
POSITIONS

Senate Education
2-16-95
Attachment 8

Improve the Equity and Adequacy of the Existing School Finance Program.

We endorse the concept of providing equitable and adequate funding for Kansas schools. The positions listed here presume the infusion of new state monies into the school finance system. We oppose any effort to increase funding for some school districts at the expense of any other school districts. Specifically, we support the present low enrollment funding system.

In order to improve both the equity and adequacy of the existing school finance program, we will focus on legislation which would:

1. Provide an increase in the Base State Aid Per Pupil (BSAPP) to \$3700

AND

lower the enrollment weighting index from 1900 to 1800 FTE students, thereby applying an equity weighting factor of .036121 to all districts over 1800 FTE students.

AND

allow the cap on Local Option Budget (LOB) to remain at 25% above the Base Budget Per Pupil.

2. Provide that for the purpose of computing state aid, a district be allowed to use the previous year's FTE enrollment or the current year's FTE enrollment whichever is the greater.

3. Provide that a local Board of Education may establish or increase the Local Option Budget by up to 3% per year up to a maximum of 10%. **Any LOB above 10% would be subject to a protest petition.**

Rationale

1. An increase to \$3700 would amount to a 2.8% increase.
2. Each percentage increase requires approximately \$20 million of new funds, thus a 2.8% increase (\$3700) will require \$55.5 million in new funds.
3. While inflation is a factor to be considered in discussing funding increases, the cost of implementing QPA and other school improvement issues must be a consideration as well.

4. Failure to provide regular increases in district budget authority will force all school districts into the Local Option Budget arena, which will likely create the inequitable funding among school districts which precipitated the lawsuits.
5. For three years, the state aid has remained unchanged, even though the costs of education, additional days, and inflation have increased.

Fund the Excess Cost of Providing Special Education

Rationale

1. Our current position, as well as the current positions of USA, KNEA and KASB supports 100% of excess costs of educating special education students above the cost of a regular education student based on actual costs in prior years.
2. The current level of funding is at approximately 84% of excess costs for special education. To raise special education funding to the 100% level would require \$36 million in additional funds. To reach the 90% level would require \$13.5 million in additional funds, or just under \$2.25 million for each percentage of increase. Efforts to change special education funding from the current categorical aid formula to a system of weighting should be watched carefully to ensure that emphasis is not placed on identifying more students with exceptionalities. Any effort to change the method of funding special education should be preceded by considerable study.
3. Demands for services by parents of students with exceptionalities have increased dramatically. Services provided 10-15 years ago are no longer sufficient. The development of special assistance technology for disabled students has led to increased demand for assistance, and equipment is very expensive.
4. Paperwork on Special Education is overwhelming. Mandates generated at the federal level are receiving a "best practices" interpretation in Kansas, resulting in what many describe as a

"run away train" of services and identification of students. It is suggested that a post audit should examine the alignment between the federal requirements and the way those mandates are being interpreted in Kansas. We are not suggesting that we do not provide services for gifted students, but rather that these services be handled by the local districts and not be a part of the special education requirements and not be a part of the categorical funding formula.

5. Legislators are invited to visit special education programs and classrooms. Seeing the job that school districts and teachers are doing for children with disabilities will say far more than our words can convey.

Increase KPERs Funding for Prior Service to 1.75%

Rationale

1. Presently, prior service is funded for some potential retirees at .75% and for others at 1%. This creates an inequity for our older teachers who have given many years of service to the field of education and who are subsequently rewarded with fewer retirement benefits than those teachers with fewer years of service.
2. Many teachers are unable to take advantage of early retirement because they are in a lower retirement benefit range and would be unable to live on the current retirement benefits.
3. An increase in the KPERs benefits for prior service would allow these teachers to retire with a more suitable standard of living.

Establish a procedure that will provide full funding for all mandates

Rationale

1. School districts are expected to comply with mandates relative to school improvement (QPA, extended school calendar); environmental issues (radon, lead, asbestos, fuel tanks, etc.) and personnel (CDL Drug Testing) that cost districts significant sums, yet no funding accompanies the mandates.