

Approved: 2-13-97
Date

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION.

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Michael R. O'Neal at 3:30 p.m. on February 3, 1997 in Room 519-S of the Capitol.

All members were present.

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

Conferees appearing before the committee:

Mark Tallman, Kansas Association of School Boards
Dr. Poggio, Co-Director, Center for Educational Testing and Evaluation, University of Kansas,
Andy Tompkins, Commissioner, State Board of Education
Cindy Duckett, Wichita
Chuck Jedele, Kansas Association of Non-Government Schools

Others attending: See attached list

Mark Tallman, Kansas Association of School Boards, appeared before the committee to request a bill be introduced regarding due process. (Attachment 1)

Representative Shore made the motion to have the bill request introduced as a committee bill. Representative Reardon seconded the motion. The motion carried.

The committee continued discussion on the State Assessment Test.

Dr. Poggio, Co-Director, Center for Educational Testing and Evaluation, University of Kansas, stated that the assessment tests are measuring what they were intended to measure and provide information to teachers about students, and to the administration about the teachers. The test should not be used alone to make decisions on children or buildings. Other information needs to be looked at in conjunction with it.

When the test was first developed it was the intent that it change every three years. If the test is always the same test the teachers would probably teach only the items that are needed to pass it. However, with the enactment of QPA the test haven't change very much so that the state can see if progress is being made.

Andy Tompkins, Commissioner, State Board of Education, explained that the reason the State Board of Education is not a member of the National Assessment of Education Progress Program because there is a huge charge to be a member, it takes a long time to get the results back and there is not a set assessment. However, they are restructuring their program and the Board is planning on looking at a possible membership within the next year.

Cindy Duckett, Wichita, appeared before the committee because she was concerned that the standards are not good enough, and really don't measure what children, schools, or the district are doing. She would prefer that the state use a similar test as Virginia. (Attachment 2)

Chuck Jedele, Kansas Association of Non-Government Schools, appeared before the committee with concerns about the state assessment tests. He disliked the fact that the state has the right to dictate curriculum to private schools, if the schools want to be accredited. (Attachment 3)

Representative Thimesch was concerned that a student had earned 1600 points on the test. Eighty points were tracked to verbal section, 30 points for the math section, and 400 points for showing up. He believes that it is invalid for local schools to use tests as proof of progress because the tests have been changed annually, are not standardized, and have no proven reliability or validity. (Attachment 4)

Representative Tanner made a motion to introduce a bill that concerned charter schools. Representative Aurand seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Representative Morrison made a motion to approve the committee minutes from January 16, 21, 22, & 23. Representative Horst seconded the motion. The motion carried.

The committee meeting adjourned at 5:15 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for February 4, 1997.

HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE GUEST LIST

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NAME	REPRESENTING
Mr & Mrs Dick Jerry	KNEA
Mark Tallman	KASB
Mary Kay Culp	Ks Catholic Conference
Bob Voboil	Diocese of Wichita, Spirit
Randy Dimpking	KSAE
Gerald Henderson	USA of KS
Charles W. Johns	KNEA
Oran G. Burnett	USA
Kris Bahr	Ks. Assn. of Community Colleges
Karen Kowery	KASB
Dorothy Locke Jellen	L of WV KS
Douglas R. Glasmeier	CETE - Univ. of Kansas
Hershel Boor	cit.
Mary Anne Smith	KNEA
Judy Lapp	KNEA
Charles Jell	Kansas Ass. of Non-governmental
Mary Matthew	USD 233
Sue Chase	KNEA
Irish Pfannenstiel	LPA

HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE GUEST LIST

DATE: 2-3-97 contd.

NAME	REPRESENTING
<i>Hanson Freden</i>	<i>K SDE</i>
<i>Cindy Duckitt</i>	<i>Citizen</i>

Concerns about the teacher due process law remain unresolved.

The 1995 Interim Education Committee recommended that changes be made in the system, but the Legislature has not yet been able to agree on the proper way to address this issue.

As a starting point for discussion, I request that the committee introduce a bill to:

1. Eliminate the hearing before an outside hearing officer and allow tenured teachers to have a hearing before the local board of education if they wish to appeal a nonrenewal or dismissal.
2. Allow the teacher to appeal directly to the court of appeals if they believe the local board did not reach a decision in good faith.
3. Lengthen the probationary period for teachers from three to four years.

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Cindy Duckett
3410 S. Kessler
Wichita, KS 67217
316-942-4545
email: yszw26a@prodigy.com



Cindy Duckett writes and speaks on educational issues from her home in Wichita. She was recently published in Kansas Citizen Magazine, The Wichita Eagle, and in Not With My Child You Don't, by Richmond Times-Dispatch Op-ed page editor Robert Holland in Virginia (available through Barnes & Nobles and other major bookstores). She will begin writing a monthly "From the Heartland" column for the national CRISIS Magazine in the near future.

February 3, 1997

Good afternoon. My name is Cindy Duckett. I am from Wichita. I am a parent and a grandparent. My family includes 2 adult children who graduated from public schools, 2 teenagers in a private school and 3 grandchildren--2 in public school and one pre-schooler. I have had a wide variety of personal experience with children and with schools.

This is the first time I have addressed a legislative committee, so if I seem a bit apprehensive, it's because I am. Although I am a novice at this sort of thing, I am not a newcomer to the issues that I want to address here today. I have been reading and writing about education reform issues for more than five years.

Today, I want to talk to you about standards and assessments. I am speaking as an opponent of the Kansas standards and assessments as we know them today, but what I really want to talk to you about is some positive alternatives.

First, though, I will briefly summarize the problems with the current assessments that were revealed in the Legislative Post Audit. Those include:

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- *a loss of local control due to the tests driving the curriculum via the standards (page 4 & 18)*
- *a shift away from emphasizing content (the basics) to emphasizing process (higher order thinking skills) (pages 3 & 4)*
- *federal influence in state matters (page 9)*
- *an unacceptably high margin of error of plus or minus 13% (pages 17 & 19)*
- *scores that cannot be used to measure individual students' performance (pages 16 & 20); that cannot be used to make comparisons with students in other states (page 12); and that cannot be used for comparison between schools or school districts (page 16)*
- *a Legislative mandate that results in test results being used for purposes they were not intended for (page 20)*
- *a high rate of teacher dissatisfaction with the tests (page 21)*
- *problems with reliability and validity due to group projects and subjective components of the test and in the scoring (page 22 & 23)*

The problems noted in the Post Audit are consistent with problems I have found with performance-based assessments in other states and districts across the nation. I brought some articles with me today that illustrate the widespread problems associated with performance-based assessments. I will leave these with the Chairman for those of you who might want to look through them.

I won't go through each article in detail. A quick review of the titles should prove sufficient to substantiate my claim of prevailing problems. These are but a sampling.

Many similar articles exist. The source of all but one of these articles is the well respected publication, Education Week. The titles include:

- *Indiana Senate Panel Kills a Pair of Statewide Assessments*
- *Teachers Found Skeptical About Revamped Tests*
- *Lawmakers Putting the Brakes on Alternative Assessments*
- *New Assessments Have Little Effect on Content, Study Finds*
- *The New Breed of Assessments Getting Scrutiny*
- *Assessment Reform at Crossroads*
- *Arizona Test Halted Over Accuracy Concerns*
- *Model Exam in California Is Target of New Attacks*
- *State Test Questions Focus of Renewed Scrutiny*
- *KERA Tests 'Seriously Flawed,' Report Says*

I can think of no state experiencing more problems with performance-based assessments than Kentucky. In an article this past November in the Louisville Courier Journal, Dr. George Cunningham, a professor at the University of Louisville and a specialist in educational measurement said, "Performance assessment was an interesting idea back in 1989, but outside of classroom applications, there is little evidence of its effectiveness." He added, "Kentucky could be considered a case study attesting to the inappropriateness of alternative assessment in high-states" testing.

In the packets I have prepared for each of you, I have included one of my own articles that gives further details about the Kentucky debacle and about how what is happening there relates to what is coming to light here in Kansas. Because you can review that

information at your leisure, I won't enumerate all of the fine points, but I would suggest that Dr. Cunningham might be someone this committee should hear from if that can be arranged.

My primary disappointment with the Kansas Post Audit was that it left out what, in my opinion, is the most important part of looking at any test and that is to evaluate what the test measures. If the standards aren't good, the assessments won't be good either.

Fortunately, The American Federation of Teachers took it upon themselves recently to do such an evaluation of standards in all 50 states. Their report is one that I would recommend to all of you. The front page on the left side of the packet that I prepared for you is a brief comparison between the standards in Kansas and the standards in Virginia, taken directly from the AFT's report. Sadly, Kansas standards are rated between "borderline" and "unusable." Virginia is the only state in the nation to receive a rating of "exemplary" in all four common core subject areas. That report notes that the Kansas assessments are based on standards that fail the AFT criteria for excellence. In this, I wholeheartedly agree with the AFT.

Interestingly, Virginia was also the first state to reject Goals 2000, and I can't help wondering if there is a correlation between that rejection and their subsequent development of high standards.

I did not bring a copy of the Virginia Standards of Learning with me today, but I have read every one of them myself and they are wonderful! These standards are easily

available through the Internet and I have included the web site address in your packets for those of you want to review them for yourselves.

It is my suggestion to this committee that, we quickly cut out losses here in Kansas and get on to the business of making real educational improvements for the sake of all Kansas children. This does not have to be a long and painful exercise. Good standards already exist in Virginia. Get copies of those and put them to use. Good assessments also already exist in the form of the Stanford Achievement Tests and the Iowa Test of Basic Skills. Personally, I prefer the Stanford tests because they provide so much more useful information to parents and teachers than the Iowa Tests, but both tests have been proven to be valid and reliable, they both measure specific knowledge, and both can be used for a broad range of comparisons.

Virginia is developing criterion-referenced tests geared to their standards. You might want to consider purchasing those tests and making them available in Kansas, but in my opinion, that should be a local option, not a state mandate. I believe that the best reforms come from those closest to the classroom, and therefore, I oppose most state mandates, but I make an exception to that in the area of state mandated standardized, norm-referenced testing. We simply must know where we are to be able to make good decisions about where we are going.

I want to close with the general comment that what is wrong with education reform in Kansas known as QPA is that it is a top-down, one-size-fits-all approach. If you really want to further the cause of better schools, it is my opinion that the best thing you can

do is to establish good standards, like those in Virginia, provide a reliable form of measurement like the Stanford Achievement tests, and then step back and get out of the way, and get the federal government out of our schools, too, while you are at it.

There are many, many examples of educational excellence that should be tried here. I think of the Calvert-Barclay Partnership in Maryland where principal Gertrude Williams who used what she calls "proven strategies" to boost scores in her inner-city school by as much as 20% in three years. I think of E. D. Hirsch's Core Knowledge schools---now more than 300 of them in more than 40 states----many with waiting lists larger than their student bodies. I think of Marva Collins' Westside Prep School finding so much success with students from Chicago's inner-city. I think of Jamie Escalante in California taking his mostly minority students to unequalled success using Saxon Math. I think of principal Thaddeus Lott's school, in one of Houston's poorest neighborhoods. His school is surrounded by barbed-wire fencing to discourage vandals. His student body is 96% black with 3/4 on government lunch. In 1987, his students ranked in the top 10% of Houston's schools, and by 1995, 98% of his third graders passed the reading portion of the Texas Academic Assessment System---a test of basic skills. I think of the principal in my own district who recently told the superintendent "No," when told to send a sizable portion of her teachers in for assessment training. Her reasoning: the teachers do far more good in the classroom than in another in-service training session. All of these visionaries have had to battle bureaucracy, and it's time for that to stop.

I don't want to try one of these schools in Kansas. I want to try them all! What works for one child might not work nearly as well for another child. QPA-style schools are fine,

too, just don't mandate them for everyone. Set the standards, establish accountability through a good test, and let the true reformers take it from there. Should you decide to take that course, I offer my assistance in any form that might prove helpful.

Finally, I am leaving copies of two reports with the Chairman that I want to encourage each of you to read. One is on the legal implications of high-stakes assessments and the other, written by my Ohio State Board of Education Member friend, Diana Fessler, is about the work toward National Standards and Assessments. This last report is making waves all across the state of Ohio and in other parts of the country as well. It is a "must read" for anyone who truly wants to understand the implications of the federal education reforms for the states.

Thank you for your time and consideration. If you have any questions, I am prepared to try to answer as many of them as I can.

Comparison of State Standards in Kansas and Virginia

Source:
Making Standards Matter 1996: An Annual Fifty-State Report on Efforts to Raise Academic Standards
American Federation of Teachers

Virginia: This is the only state of all 50 where standards in all four “Common Core” areas (English, math, science and social studies) are ranked as “Exemplary” by the AFT.

“Virginia’s standards are extraordinarily clear and well grounded in content. Their grade-by-grade and course-by-course structure ensures that they will be useful to teachers and other school staff regardless of the grade or subject they are involved in. And unlike some other standards that provide a lot of detail, Virginia’s standards are not too voluminous or overwhelming. They reflect some tough choices about what is most important for students to learn, rather than trying to cover everything. It is because of this combination of clarity, detail, content, and precision that we consider Virginia’s standards “exemplary” and worthy of a close look by other states. (page 90)

Kansas: AFT ranked Kansas Standards in all four “Common Core” areas as falling between “borderline” and “unusable.”

“The Kansas Standards are all organized by grade clusters (the breakdown is different in each subject), but none are clear and specific enough about the academic content students should learn to meet our “common core” criterion.

In some cases, elaboration is provided through instructional “examples,” but it is clear in these documents that these are not part of the standards. This becomes a real problem in a subject like social studies, where the only substantive reference to particular events or periods of history appears in the “examples.” It significantly weakens the standards and reduces the chance that students across the state will learn a common core curriculum and be held to common expectations. (page 55)

State Academic Standards (page 14-15)	Standards in all core subject areas are <u>clear and specific enough</u> to lead to a common core curriculum	Subject-by-Subject Standards Analysis (page 20-21)					
		Number of Subjects Meeting AFT Criterion	English clear enough to meet the AFT criterion ?	Math clear enough to meet the AFT criterion ?	Science clear enough to meet the AFT criterion ?	Social Studies clear enough to meet the AFT criterion ?	
		KANSAS	0	NO	NO	NO	NO
VIRGINIA	4	YES	YES	YES	YES		

State Assessments (page 24-25)	State has or will have an assessment system linked to the standards in:	The state assessment is or will be based on standards that:
KANSAS	All Subjects	Fail AFT Criteria
VIRGINIA	All Subjects	Meet AT Criteria

Critics say test probe of parents is too nosy

Survey counts cars, money, appliances

By Carol Innerst
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

The U.S. Department of Education wants to know if the parents of children participating in a federally mandated testing program own a vacuum cleaner and a car "that runs."

The department also wants to know if the children go home to such household conveniences as a dishwasher and a microwave oven, and if the family income is from welfare or interest on stocks and bonds.

Such curiosity from a federal agency has set off alarms, both public and private.

"This particular survey ... was almost like an inventory of belongings," said Christine Johnson, a member of the National Assessment Governing Board (NAGB) that oversees the testing program.

"It was not reasonable. Why do we need to know that?" said Mrs. Johnson, a former high school principal who is now director of urban initiatives for the Education Commission of the States in Denver.

The questions are included in a new parents' survey the Education Department wants to add to its National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). The program regularly samples schoolchildren's progress in reading, writing, math and other selected subjects.

NAGB, the independent board that sets policy for NAEP, unanimously rejected the draft survey of parents' socio-economic status at its August meeting in Denver.

"All of us recognize there are factors outside of schools that affect teaching and learning," Mrs. Johnson said, but "there is a perception by many that the government is collecting information

PROPOSED PARENT SURVEY

The U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics has proposed to survey parents of children who take the congressionally mandated National Assessment of Educational Progress. Among the things the agency would like to know:

■ How many of the following items are in the home: color television, telephone, car that runs, refrigerator, bicycle, vacuum cleaner, microwave oven, telephone answering machine, dishwasher, videocassette recorder, stereo system, cassette recorder.

■ Whether the family received income from stocks, mutual funds, rental property, royalty, estates, trusts, Social Security, welfare, food stamps or alimony.

■ The family's total combined income.

■ The spouse or household partner's job and occupation.

■ How the spouse or household partner is related to the child named on the cover of the survey.

■ What language is usually spoken at home.

■ How well the parent or parents understand, speak, read and write English.

■ Whether there are certain kinds of television programs the child is not allowed to watch.

■ How many books there are in the home.

■ How often the child sings, dances, plays music or puts on a show for adults in the family.

■ How often the child sees adults in the family writing, using mathematics or reading.

Source: National Assessment Governing Board.

The Washington Times

on citizens beyond what's necessary."

The impetus for gathering more data on the socio-economic status of students and schools came from the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), which administers NAEP, and Educational Testing Service, which has a contract with the federal government to prepare test questions.

NCES Commissioner Emerson Elliott defended the proposed parents' survey.

"Socio-economic status is so strongly related to student performance that if we're not able to factor that out, it's impossible to get a clear reading on instructional practices at schools," he said.

NAEP, which issues the "Nation's Report Card," routinely has asked teachers and principals about student socio-economic status, but that information is often suspect because it is based on perception.

NAEP currently asks students about their reading, television watching and homework habits, whether they get a free or reduced-price lunch, and whether their family gets a newspaper or magazines — questions some parents feel are intrusive.

ETS representative Ina Mullis said opposition to NAEP testing had been encountered in a number of states.

"I think it's invading privacy," said

Lorraine Simpson, a concerned parent in Prince William County. "What they are doing is trying to calculate what each family has, so they can rank them into poverty groups."

"It's very invasive," said Beverly K. Eakman, author of the recently published book "Microchipped: How the Education Establishment Took Us Beyond Big Brother."

"Parents who get one of these should trudge up to school, demand to know whose idea it was and refuse to participate," said Mrs. Eakman, who also is executive director of the National Education Consortium, a year-old Maryland-based legal and advocacy organization for parents examining ways that computer technology and psychological fraud affect education.

"But they probably won't, because society is getting to the point where people really don't know what's private and what isn't," she said. "Sex life, income ... nothing is private anymore."

NAGB members who reviewed the proposed parent survey also had concerns about its cost — \$600,000 for a field trial of some 6,000 students, but possibly \$5 million to survey the parents of 90,000 children involved in full testing.

Mr. Elliott said NCES is only considering a field test and will try to reach some compromise by November, when the proposal will come up again.

A PUBLIC SCHOOL WITH A WHOLE "LOTT" OF LEARNING GOING ON,

by Robert Holland, Op-Ed Page Editor

The Richmond Times-Dispatch, November 22, 1995

HOUSTON, Texas--Thanksgiving came early for me this year. I was privileged to spend several hours November 13 and 14 visiting Wesley Elementary School here and chatting with Thaddeus Lott, Sr., a legendary educator.

When school ended, and reluctantly, I had to leave, I felt like kneeling and kissing the gleamingly spotless floor of this old one-story brick school. For believers in basic education, this is holy ground, and Lott is Saint Thaddeus.

To reach Wesley, it is necessary to journey through one of Houston's poorest neighborhoods. Later, I learned that Acres Homes is a black community with a proud history and one that has made strides against drugs, crime, and decay. But the public school is encircled by barbed-wire fencing to discourage vandals.

Inside, the ambiance was totally transformed--not only immaculate but well-ordered, friendly, and purposeful. Children changing classes lined up in neat rows down the right side of the halls--with no uproar, no unruliness. Staff greeted visitors with smiles. And from classrooms throughout the school came the enthusiastic cadences of beginning readers sounding out their letters in unison.

To those who believe in a systematic phonetic approach to initial reading instruction, those sounds are music to the ears.

And it is the sweet tune of success for a school that is 96 percent black, with three-fourths on government lunch. Blackness is supposed to equate with educational bleakness, if you believe the defeatists or the racists. But Lott explodes the myths. His children's achievement averages put those of many suburban schools to shame.

Three years after Lott returned to his native Acres Homes to become Wesley's principal in 1975, the school's third-grade reading scores on the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills had risen from 2.7 to 3.8. That meant the average third grader was reading about 8 months above third grade level. By 1987, Wesley ranked in the top 10 percent of Houston's schools on the Three R's (23rd out of 232 schools). And those above it served much more affluent neighborhoods.

The tradition of excellence continues: This year 98 percent of Wesley's third graders passed the reading portion of the Texas Academic Assessment System, a test of basic skills. That was up from a 95 percent passing rate for 1994.

Lott devoutly believes in phonics (and in Saxon math, which stresses a lot of drill and practice to reach correct answers). "If a child learns to decode words," he says, "he will then move on to comprehension and building vocabulary." Similarly for the vaunted higher

order thinking skills: "We have to do both (higher order and basic skills)," says Lott--adding, rhetorically, "The only thing is, which comes first?"

His approach is to lay a basic foundation first, which supplies the common sense that is, sadly all too uncommon in the education world of the '90s. A visit to fourth and fifth grades showed that Lott's kids put their skills to practice--for example, in writing papers or in tracing major themes in history.

More generally, Lott is one of the nation's leading proponents of Direct Instruction--that is, teacher-directed learning. He expects much of his teachers: "We hire smart young people who will work hard. We talk to them to find out their level of commitment." And they are taught in-house to teach phonics, since few schools of education any longer do so.

Imagine that: A principal who believes in teachers as teachers, not teachers as facilitators. If you want to draw a chuckle from Lott (which is not hard to do), get him started on facilitators and child-directed education. "Can you picture going into a class of 'kinders' (kindergartners), and asking, "Well, children, what are we going to study today?," he guffawed.

"We challenge the new teacher to become an excellent teacher," he said. "We don't put the blame on the children' we put the responsibility on teachers."

Such beliefs have made Thaddeus Lott a maverick within the effete realm of progressive education--much as Doug Wilder is a maverick within a liberal Democratic Party. Apart from being black men of the same generation (Lott is 61), who had to fight the indignities and indecency of state-imposed segregation, both are unwilling to suffer fools gladly.

Lott is a disciplinarian in the sense that pupils know what is expected of them and take pride in doing it. But from the smiles of little faces that greet the principal as he strolls the halls, it is evident that his is a regime based on respect, not fear.

At times, Lott has had to fight foolishness within his own school district. In 1986, a zealous proponent of whole language--which presumes children will learn to read, as though by osmosis, if surrounded by good books--took over the district and ordered phonics banished.

Lott flat-dab refused--the only principal to hang tough. He knew what worked for his pupils.

After a war of attrition, in which Wesley's supplies were cut, a central administrator staged a raid intended to show that a Wesley teacher had cheated to pump up scores--the insinuation being that only through such subterfuge could an overwhelmingly black school outscore "white" schools. When the probe was proven to be bogus, and was exposed on national television four Thanksgivings ago, the superintendent apologized.

Today, under new Superintendent Rod Paige, the bureaucratic situation has improved. Lott recently has been promoted to manager of a cluster of four charter schools, and his

long-time instructional assistant, Suzie Rimes, has taken over as Wesley's principal. Ideally, this will enable Lott to spread the benefits of direct instruction more widely.

If Thaddeus Lott schools were available as an option in every school district in the land, that would be a great blessing for the children of America.

Testimony to the Kansas House of Representatives' Education Committee

February 3, 1997

I'm Charles Jedele, Chairman of the Kansas Association of Non-government Schools of Kansas. I speak for 180 schools and the 37,000 students who attend those schools. Our membership includes the schools of the four Catholic Dioceses of Kansas, The Lutheran Church Mo. Synod, the Seventh Day Adventist, the Christian Schools International, plus a number of independent Christian and private schools.

We have serious concerns about the state assessment tests and would not participate if it were not required for QPA. Our concerns are increasing with each test and each year of the program. We are coming to a point where we may have forego state accreditation because of the tests. We don't desire this but may be forced to take this position.

Our concerns are not unique to non-government schools but in some cases are larger than the public schools who receive public funds and have expected that the state has a right to dictate curriculum.

I wish to list our problems with the tests:

1. The tests seek to control the curriculum. If you don't teach to the tests your score will not improve. If your test scores do not improve, eventually you will not be accredited. We see our teachers forced to teach some subject matter and use particular methods that are not acceptable to the parents. The social studies test is particularly offensive this year. It prescribes that teachers teach one of three ideas between Dec. and March when the test is to be taken. To follow the guidelines, a teacher will give up the school's curriculum for three months in grades five and eight so that their students may do well on the state assessments.
2. The tests may be valid if the school's community is willing to accept that a handful of educators in the state have the expertise and right to dictate the curriculum for the schools of the state and the schools accept this curriculum and teach to that curriculum. However, if the curriculum is not accepted, all they will show is that fact and not how well students are achieving.
3. There is no reliability in the results of the tests for the following reasons. (a) They are teacher scored. If my teaching and my school is evaluated on the basis of the tests, do you think that I will be objective in scoring the subjective part of the test. (b) Our teachers are not trained to score the tests. Now the Dept. of Education has offered to train our teachers, but they haven't offered to pay for the travel, meals, substitutes, and teacher compensation for the training. Therefore very few of our teachers are trained to do the scoring. © Tests have been changed so often that after five years of the program we have two tests out of five with two years of comparable results. How do we say that there is any reliability in what has been seen thus far?
4. The time needed to give the tests varies from a minimum of two class periods to ten class periods. That is too much student education time in our opinion to spend on an evaluation which was never intended to evaluate a student.

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5. The teacher time needed to score the tests is a hardship on our schools particularly. This year's social studies test asks that a four member teacher team meet to score the test. I believe that will take the better part of a day. Who will pay our teachers for two days of work to score state mandated tests? Will the Kansas Legislature pass an appropriation bill so that it can happen? We know that in public schools substitutes are hired with tax dollars so that the scoring will be done. We can't.

6. We don't believe that there is any value in the results for our schools since the same students are never tested. How can we believe that we have gotten better or worse over time? We may have only changed the population of the students tested from third to seventh grade. This is certainly true for public schools also. However, some schools may have a large enough population so that changes in students does not change the results as much as is true in our smaller schools.

7. Finally, the cost in dollars to us for useless results is objectionable. We usually force our teachers and administrators to give the additional time for this program, but we do pay secretaries extra hours and we have paid, in some cases, for outside scoring so that our staffs could be spared the burden.

I've read the performance audit report. I think that it missed an important item. It doesn't tell you how much it costs in known state appropriation dollars and it doesn't estimate what the cost is at the local district level. The Conclusions and Recommendations only contain these statements, "After they have been in use an appropriate amount of time, the Department may want to consider whether their use is the most cost-effective way to obtain the desired information." How long will you continue to spend money on a program that does little to assess education in Kansas and is so misused by so many people to prove what they want to prove? It is time to consider the cost effectiveness of the program.

Thank you for your time and listening. I'm sure that you can and will do what is best for the children of Kansas. Please call if you wish to discuss these concerns further.

Charles Jedele, Chairman KANS
701 SW Roosevelt
Topeka, KS 66606

913-357-0382

Rep. T. H. ...

TITLE: Perfect grades in an imperfect world
EST. PAGES: 1
DATE: 05/25/95
DOCID: WATI172473
SOURCE: The Washington Times; WATI
EDITION: 2; SECTION: A; COMMENTARY; EDITORIALS; PAGE: A26
(Copyright 1995)

You would think that getting just three answers wrong out of the hundreds of questions on your SATs would be enough to make a student delirious and make everybody else stand up and cheer in admiration. Skylar Byrd of Banneker High, who did just that, absolutely deserves a round of applause.

Unfortunately, Skylar's achievement got caught up in the debate over the inflation-ridden U.S. grading system: The Educational Testing Service, which administers the SAT, insists on rating Skylar's performance a "perfect" 1600. The fact is that Skylar's performance was extraordinary, spectacular and very, very rare. But "perfect" it was not. Trying to pretend that it is only detracts from its true meaning.

The whole case, in fact, shows up only too well what has happened to the SATs since the College Board's decision to give SAT scores a silicone implant. Eighty points have been tacked on to individual scores on the verbal section, and scores on the math section have had 30 points tacked on. Students now earn 400 points simply by showing up to take the test and signing their name.

They call it "recentering"; but the rest of us can only call it arbitrarily raising the score. And no one makes any bones about the fact that the purpose is to neutralize a 100 point drop in the national median SAT score over the past 50 years. Indeed according to the associate director of the Board's SAT program, no other effect was intended or expected. Bradley J. Quin recently told The Washington Times' Carol Innerst that the new scoring will not affect the difficulty of the test, students' performance, the ability of schools, colleges and others to track score trends or standards used in college admissions and scholarship decisions. "If a standard is at stake, it does not reside in the numbers chosen to express scores," he said, "but rather in the standards set by colleges and universities in admissions requirements."

And, in fact, college admissions officers have already announced they will simply be revising their standard of comparison upwards. And the National Collegiate Athletic Association, which uses SATs to determine who is eligible to compete at Division I or II schools, has already raised the minimum required score for freshman athletes.

In other words, the Orwellian approach to dealing with declining test scores is fooling nobody, nowhere. "Recentering" is

House Education
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Attachment 4

not the first such attempt at newspeak, by the way: The SAT, formerly called the Scholastic Aptitude Test, and the SAT II: Subject Tests, formerly known as achievement tests, have been jointly renamed the Scholastic Assessment Tests, so as to provide yet another boost to the self-esteem of our high-school students.

As it happens, self-esteem is the last thing that needs boosting here. American students have a higher opinion of themselves than the students all over the world who consistently put them to academic shame. What our students are sorely in need of are honest assessments, serious standards and substantive demands - not unearned pats on the back on the basis of inflated test scores.

**LEGISLATIVE DIVISION OF POST AUDIT
SUMMARY OF PERFORMANCE AUDIT REPORTS
Calendar Years 1993-1996**

<u>RPT.#</u>		<u>DATE</u>
<u>Agriculture</u>		
94PA45	K-GOAL Audit of the Kansas Water Office, the Kansas Water Authority, and the Division of Water Resources	September 1994
93PA38	Reviewing the Division of Water Resources Process For Approving Water Permits	March 1993
93PA45	Examining Selected Activities of the Board of Agriculture's Marketing Division	January 1993
<u>Computers/DP</u>		
95PA51	Reviewing SRS Efforts To Computerize Alcohol and Drug Abuse Treatment Information	May 1995
95PA47	Reviewing the Progress of the Statewide Human Resource and Payroll System Project (SHARP)	March 1995
94PA37	Reviewing the Contract for the Medicaid Management Information System	February 1994
<u>Corrections</u>		
95PA38	Reviewing the Operations of the Kansas Parole Board	December 1994
<u>Courts</u>		
95PA40	Reviewing the Implementation of the Kansas Sentencing Guidelines Act	January 1995
94PA42	Reviewing the Operations of the Board of Indigents' Defense Services	September 1994
94PA43	Reviewing District Courts' Handling of Appearance Bonds for Persons Charged with Crimes	June 1994
<u>Eco Devo/Commerce/Housing</u>		
95PA53	Examining the Use of Economic Development Initiatives Fund Moneys	July 1995
95PA39	Reviewing International Trade Activities Within The Department of Commerce and Housing	October 1994
94PA32	Reviewing Economic Development Activities: K-GOAL Audit of the KS Department of Commerce and Housing	February 1994
<u>Education</u>		
93PA41	Reviewing the Efficiency of Central Services In the Wichita School District	August 1993
<u>Energy/Natural Resources</u>		
95PA37	Financial Management, Efficiency, and Effectiveness of the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks	February 1995
94PA44	Assessing Department of Wildlife and Parks' Compliance With Federal Fish and Wildlife Requirements	October 1994
<u>Financial Management</u>		
95PA59	Reviewing Certain Investment Transactions of the Municipal Investment Pool	June 1995
95PA46	Reviewing Certain Financial Management Practices at the University of Kansas Medical Center	March 1995
95PA44	Examining the Investment Practices of the Municipal Investment Pool	January 1995
94PA41	Examining the Corporation Commission's Management and Use of Its Conservation Fee Fund	April 1994
<u>General Government</u>		
95PA48	Reviewing the Provision of Statute Books to Legislators	March 1995
95PA42	Reviewing Human Rights Commission Contracts for Case Investigation	January 1995
93PA43	Reviewing the Fire Fighter Recognition Program Operated by the State Fire Marshal's Office	April 1993
93PA33	Reviewing the Effectiveness of the Capitol Area Security Patrol	January 1993
93PA34	Reviewing Counties' Procedures for Handling Absentee Ballots and for Updating Voter Registration Lists	January 1993
<u>Health/Welfare</u>		
95PA34	Verifying SRS Compliance with the Terms of the Foster Care Lawsuit Settlement Agreement--Report #2	September 1995
95PA56	Examining Problems with the University of Kansas Medical Center's Heart Transplant Program	September 1995
95PA52	Examining Contract Oversight by the Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services	July 1995
95PA49	K-GOAL Audit: Reviewing KDHE's System for Assessing the Impact of Federal Rules and Regulations	June 1995
94PA34.1	Verifying SRS Compliance with the Terms of the Foster Care Lawsuit Settlement Agreement--Report #1	October 1994

**LEGISLATIVE DIVISION OF POST AUDIT
SUMMARY OF PERFORMANCE AUDIT REPORTS
Calendar Years 1993-1996**

RPT.#		DATE
94PA40	Reviewing SRS Procedures for Handling Complaints Against Foster Homes	June 1994
94PA36	Reviewing the Transfer of Mentally Retarded Patients from State Institutions to Community Living Facilities	April 1994
93PA47	Examining Potential Duplication and Overlap in Programs for Kansas' Aging Population	October 1993
93PA46	Reviewing the Regulatory Activities of the Emergency Medical Services Board	August 1993
<u>Highways/Motor Vehicles</u>		
95PA58	Reviewing Highway Construction in Kansas: A K-GOAL Audit of the Kansas Department of Transportation	November 1995
95PA50	Reviewing the Implementation of Kansas' Waste Tire Disposal Program: A K-GOAL Audit of KDHE	June 1995
94PA30	Reviewing the Operations of the Kansas Turnpike Authority	January 1994
<u>Job Training</u>		
93PA44	Reviewing the Accuracy of Job Placement Information About the Kan Work Program	April 1993
<u>Local Government</u>		
93PA48	Reviewing the Process for Issuing Bonds in Wyandotte County and Kansas City, Kansas	November 1993
<u>Personnel/State Employees</u>		
94PA33	Personnel Services for Kansas' State Employees: A K-GOAL Audit of the Department of Administration	January 1994
93PA40	Reviewing the Process for Providing Health Insurance Benefits for State Employees	June 1993
<u>Public Safety</u>		
95PA36	Reviewing Security and Management Issues at the Youth Center at Topeka	December 1994
93PA37	Reimbursement for Services Provided by the Kansas Bureau of Investigation	April 1993
92PA49	Reviewing Fee-Funded Regulatory Agencies' Programs for Impaired Licensees	January 1993
<u>Racing</u>		
95PA42	Reviewing the Operations of the Camptown Greyhound Park	January 1996
95PA43	Reviewing the Operations of the Wichita Greyhound Park	January 1996
95PA57	Reviewing the Operations of the Woodlands Race Track	September 1995
95PA54	Reviewing Racing Commission Records Regarding Race Track Operations	April 1995
95PA35	Reviewing the Racing Commission's Use of its Subpoena Powers	August 1994
93PA42	Reviewing Racing Commission Records Regarding Race Track Operations	April 1993
<u>Retirement</u>		
96PA36	Reviewing the Compensation of Investment Managers by the Kansas Public Employees Retirement System	December 1995
95PA55	Reviewing Early Retirement Incentive Programs in Kansas Schools	September 1995
95PA41	Reviewing Investments and Investment Practices of the Kansas Public Employees Retirement System	January 1995
94PA31	Reviewing Investments and Investment Practices of the Kansas Public Employees Retirement System	January 1994
93PA49	KPERS: Reviewing Investment Practices and Performance for Fiscal Year 1992	May 1993
<u>Taxation/Revenue</u>		
95PA45	Use of Alcoholic Liquor Fund Moneys By Local Units of Government	February 1995
94PA39	Reviewing the Department of Revenue's Enforcement of Kansas Motor Fuels Tax	May 1994
94PA35	Reviewing the Computer-Assisted Mass Appraisal System	March 1994
93PA39	Reviewing Selected Issues Regarding Uniform and Equal Appraisal of Property in Kansas	June 1993
<u>Workers Compensation</u>		
94PA38	Reviewing the Workers' Compensation Claim By Former Insurance Commissioner Fletcher Bell	August 1994
93PA35	Reviewing Selected Issues Related to Workers' Compensation	February 1993

Rep Thimmesch

MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable Daniel Thimmesch
Representative, District 93

FROM: Bob Voboril

RE: Concerns about State Assessment program

DATE: December 21, 1995

1. It is invalid for local schools to use tests as proof of progress because a) the tests have been changing annually; b) the same students are not being tested each year; c) the Social Studies and Science tests are still experimental; d) local scoring is highly subjective (It may be accurate for the state as a whole to make judgments because of the large numbers, but for most school districts, reliability of results from one year to the next would be a concern).
2. It is difficult to understand the results because the only standard is the Kansas "world-class" standard, and that doesn't relate to any other normative or criteria data we know and use. It doesn't really provide data for us to compare to other states or countries because no other state or country uses these tests. Why do Kansas students do so poorly on these tests and so well on standardized tests or the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP)?
3. How reliable can results be when so much grading is done by local personnel who have a vested interest in having their students be successful?
4. State assessment requires schools to adhere to state standards. This diminishes the authority of the local school to determine its own standards. Why should private schools, which do not receive state funds, be required to have their curricula determined by the state? Note: This has not been a major concern for us yet, but other private schools have serious concerns.
5. State assessment tests are a nightmare to disseminate, administer, and score. With a central office of two professionals, we are required to disseminate three levels of three tests to 37 schools scattered over 20,000 square miles. Social Studies and Science projects take two weeks to conduct.

6. After four years of experimentation, several of the tests are still not in final format. Social studies and science projects, while not bad in themselves, can hardly be evaluated in an objective manner for comparative purposes.
7. Parents continue to raise concerns about state intrusion into family matters and collection of data regarding their children. Before we dismiss this as reactionary paranoia, consider the content of the math "attitude" questions and the release of private school test data to the media without prior permission or communication.
8. How do we prevent "teaching to the test" when state money rides on the outcome?

Proposed Change

1. Abolish the State Assessment tests.
2. Require each accredited school to have in place measures for mastery of district curriculum standards and to report these results to their constituents annually. This could be one requirement for accreditation.
3. The state could use the NAEP to assess whether the Kansas students are meeting "world-class" standards in education. Cost would be far less.



Diocese of Salina

Office of Education

103 N. Ninth
P. O. Box 825
Salina, KS 67402-0825
Phone (913) 827-8746

DATE: January 3, 1996

FROM: Members of the Kansas Association of Non-government Schools (KANS)

TO: Kansas State Board of Education

RE: KANSAS ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

As official representatives of the non-government schools in the State of Kansas, we can understand the interest the State Board of Education has in ensuring that all students within the state receive a thorough education. Because we recognize that our young people are the future of our country, we, too, are equally concerned about excellence in education. In fact, that is one of the basic reasons why our schools exist, and research indicates that the students in our schools over the years have been successful in maintaining a high level of academic achievement. The emphasis that our schools place upon parental involvement and student discipline within a values-centered educational environment, can be considered key ingredients to this success record.

Whereas we agree in theory to the importance of and benefits derived from the State's Quality Performance Accreditation process, we do object to the Kansas Assessment Program being made mandatory for all students in any school seeking state accreditation, including non-government schools. We believe that these tests designed to gauge students' skills in reading, writing, math, social studies and science should be at least optional for the students in our schools. Ours is a Christian values-based educational program which dictates significant differences in our curriculum from that of the public schools. Because of these differences, we find the assessment tests do not coincide with the non-government schools' curriculum requirements, and, as such, are in ~~violation of~~ ~~our~~ ~~curriculum~~ ~~revisions~~ ~~upon~~ ~~our~~ ~~schools~~. This places upon our schools an unfair burden and denies them the defining freedom which is rightfully theirs. Forcing us in this manner into a state-modeled curriculum removes from us our distinctive quality which is included in the very reason why we exist.

Along with a solid academic preparation, our non-government schools impart an attitude toward life that is values-centered and aims at teaching good citizenship; promoting cultural development; and guiding students to leading successful lives that contribute to an atmosphere of social justice.

With all due respect to the good intent of our Kansas Legislature and the Kansas State Board of Education, we do not find the Kansas State Assessment program ~~sufficiently beneficial to our schools to warrant the loss of our significant identity and the inability to fulfill our mission.~~

We realize of what tremendous importance it is to know where we are in order to know which way we are to proceed to accomplish our goals. We must continually appraise and reappraise our position. It is true that evaluation can be used to ascertain a student's status and the worth of his/her academic effort, but we see this as secondary to the primary purpose of evaluation as a determination of one's position in relationship to established curricular goals and objectives. Since understandings, abilities, changes in attitudes or behavior are all essential goals of education, various devices and techniques, including that of testing, are used to measure these learnings.

The use of testing, to be effective, must be for the right reasons, which include: 1) to determine whether the students understand the concepts and processes being studied; 2) to get an indication of student progress and achievement, possibly for grading purposes; 3) to give vital assistance to the instructor in planning; and most importantly, 4) to provide a means of evaluating the teaching quality and the procedures.

In determining the worth of any measuring device, including tests, four qualities are to be considered: 1) ~~validity;~~ 2) ~~reliability;~~ 3) ~~objectivity;~~ and 4) ~~usability.~~

A test is valid to the extent that it measures what is to be taught in the course. Crucial to establishing the validity of any test is the extent to which a test measures what is required in the curriculum, referred to as curricular validity. Without this, no achievement or performance test can be considered valid. If the test items are concerned with learning that was not part of the course, curricular validity will be lacking and incorrect results will be obtained. Therefore, unless our schools modify their curricula to meet that of the public schools, the state assessment tests lose their validity for our students. This is a basic reason why we feel that we are being coerced into making unwarranted curriculum revisions.

A test is reliable to the extent that it will give the same results when repeated or given in a different form. Some types of tests, by their very nature, are more reliable than others. If the test is truly reliable, the teacher can be quite certain that he/she has a good estimate of what is being measured.

A test is objective to the extent that it can be scored without the personality of the scorer affecting the results. A truly objective test will be scored the same way by every scorer. We question the objectivity of those portions of the Kansas Assessments which are being scored by the teachers on location. Even though teachers might strive to make an honest attempt to be as objective as possible, lack of a clear understanding of the scoring rubrics being applied,

or lack of any or insufficient training, can contribute to a lack of objectivity resulting in scores that are unfair and unreliable.

A test is usable to the extent that it is practical, fitting the time limit and student capabilities, as well as not being overly time-consuming, hard to administer, difficult to score and not being expensive in terms of monetary output and the utilization of teacher time and effort. Because the Kansas Assessments do not fit into our unique curricula our teachers find them overly time-consuming because of the excessive amount of teaching-learning time consumed in student preparation, assessment administration, and assessment scoring. If the purpose of the assessments is the improvement of teaching, we question this significant curtailment of time for instructional planning, preparation and presentation.

We believe that concern for the students must be at the basis of everything that is done in the educational process, and that this concern must be reflected even in the way tests are constructed, administered, rated and used. In view of the differences between public and non-public schools, we request an exemption from the administration of the Kansas Assessments to our students. The results of our own testing programs should be adequate indication of the accomplishment of our goals and/or the need to make vital changes in the teaching-learning methods and procedures for the improvement of the educational program.

*Mailed to the
Senate Education Committee
Members.*

January 24, 1995

RE: QPA and Kansas Assessment Testing

As Chairman of KANS, I write on behalf of our member schools who have been accredited schools in the State of Kansas for many years. These schools, Catholic and Lutheran, presently desire to still be accredited but are having serious problems in doing this.

We do believe that schools evaluate themselves and set improvement plans to be better schools. We do believe that local site councils are best able to do this. We do believe there is an accountability to the state that we are providing our students quality education that prepares them to be productive citizens in our society.

Our problems with QPA are:

1. North Central and National Lutheran School Accreditation are not acceptable until we modify and add to the evaluation materials. This causes us considerable extra time money and paper work.
2. Site Council improvement plans (local desire for school improvement emphasis) has been overruled by state mandates to improve in areas with which the local authority is satisfied.

Our problems with the State Assessment Tests are:

1. The tests are not standardized and have no proven reliability or validity.
2. These tests consume too much valuable teaching time.
3. Teachers could use their time more profitably preparing to teach than giving and scoring these tests.
4. The costs of money, time, and effort for worthless results for the improvement of instruction at the school level.

4. ~~The costs of money, time, and effort for worthless results for the improvement of instruction at the school level.~~
5. The school can make no judgment from these tests concerning its instruction because the same group of students are not tested more than once. It is impossible to measure growth in a particular student.

Our suggestion is that the legislature allow for accreditation of schools by regional and national accrediting agencies that have improvement of education as the goal. That the state ask these questions of schools: "Are you accredited? By whom? Until?" This would place the entire financial responsibility on the school and give local control. The state could limit funds to accredited schools only.

It is also our opinion that the fastest way to improve education in Kansas is to put education in a free market environment. Pass legislation that makes "choice" in education possible for all parents, not just the wealthy. The best schools will have students. The poor schools will close. Good teachers will have employment. Poor teachers will have to leave the profession. I have been an educator in private education for 35 years. My students are in classes as big as the state average and yet achieve 20% better than the state average. My parents are in control of their child's education.

I would be happy to personally visit with you. I would also be available to meet with the Senate Education Committee.

Sincerely,

Charles Jedele
Chairman, KANS



February 16, 1995

Lee Droegemueller, Commissioner
Kansas State Board of Education
120 SE Tenth Avenue
Topeka, KS 66612-1182

Commissioner Droegemueller:

The Kansas Association of Non-Government Schools (KANS) is concerned that the State Board of Education no longer values the participation of non-government schools in state accreditation. We, therefore, request that the State Board of Education address the following concerns regarding state accreditation and the requirements that QPA entails:

1. We request that the State Board of Education recognize other national or regional accrediting agencies which have the goal of school improvement. Verification of alternative accreditation would bring automatic state accreditation of non-public schools without any additional state supervision or reporting requirements. Such accrediting agencies could include North Central, Independent Schools of the Southwest, National Lutheran Schools Accreditation, National Federation of Non-Public Schools, Seventh Day Adventist Accrediting, and CAPE (Council of American Private Education).
2. We have particular concerns about the state assessment testing program.
 - A. Our parents increasingly fear that assessment testing is a form of state control of our curriculum, for example, the content of the social studies and science activities and the "attitude" questions of certain assessments. We request the option to limit participation in selected tests.
 - B. ~~We find that the validity and reliability of results is limited by the frequent changes~~ in the tests; the lack of clearly understood standards of measurement; and the lack of comparability of pupil groups.
3. We are particularly distressed by the lack of state assistance in providing services private school children are entitled to by law; especially when the 30,000 children attending non-public schools save the State of Kansas \$150 million each year. For instance:
 - A. Special education services are difficult, if not impossible, to access.
 - B. Eisenhower Staff Development Funds are channeled to regional service agencies which non-public schools must join to access these funds. The cost of membership

February 16, 1995
Page Two

exceeds the value of the funds.

- C. Public school districts are often not cooperative in providing access to drug and alcohol funds, Chapter I, and ESL programs.

The KANS members are increasingly receiving recommendations from many parents to withdraw from state accreditation. We would prefer to continue our long record of fine cooperation with the State Board of Education. Your response to these concerns will assist us in determining our future course.

Sincerely,

Charles Jedele, Chairperson *JK*
Kansas Association of Non-Government Schools *JK*



Archdiocese of Kansas City In Kansas

Department Of Education

12615 Parallel Parkway • Kansas City, Kansas 66109-3748
(913) 721-1570

Office of the Superintendent

May 31, 1994

Ms. Cheryl Mercer
C/O Kansas Dept. of Education
120 SE 10th Street
Topeka, KS 66612-1182

RE: Meeting held at Bailey Hall, Friday, May 27, 1994

Dear Ms. Mercer:

Thank you for meeting with me last Friday regarding my requests and concerns for the administration of the Kansas Assessments for the Archdiocese of Kansas City in Kansas. I also appreciate the State's Assessment Facilitator, Mark Pomplun, being present. Below is a summation of the problems of our "district" and my requests to better facilitate the administration of assessments.

The Archdiocese of Kansas City in Kansas covers 12,500 square miles in the northeast part of the state. There are 39 elementary schools and 7 high schools, which serve over 14,000 Pre-12 students. The problems with the assessments are:

1. The time allowed for me, as Test Coordinator, to receive information regarding the assessments, condense and communicate it to all my principals, is too short.

2. With the exception of science this past year, there have been no provisions made for the inservicing of teachers who administer the assessments or the use of the scoring rubrics. The science workshop coordinated by the Department of Education this year was done only a month before the test. It should have been scheduled for late Fall in order that local inservices could be scheduled for other teachers.

3. All test materials for our district are shipped to me. My office has no place to store or assemble the unwieldy number of documents required for these assessments.

4. The final shipment of this year's assessments was received

Friday, March 11, and was supposed to be in the hands of the building principals and teachers by March 14. This, of course, was physically impossible. Assembly of the school boxes could not begin until March 14 and took our office three days to prepare. Since our office works on a very stringent mail allowance, I had to personally see that these test materials were distributed to all of our schools. This took additional time and coordination.

5. We came up short on several test-required items and I personally made three trips to Lawrence to pick up additional materials and deliver them to principals. We, several building principals and myself, made additional requests for materials per phone through Bailey Hall. Our requests were always met with prompt attention, but again, this caused further delay.

6. Our schools all operate on independent budgets with no assistance from the State. It is not financially possible for us to hire substitutes for inservice of the scoring rubrics or the actual scoring of the assessments. We have had to dismiss school in order to accomplish these tasks.

As a result of the above information, the following requests are made:

1. All test materials be sent directly to each of the schools in our Archdiocese. I would still be most happy to collect all test results and deliver them on the appropriate due date.

2. Information regarding the particulars of the tests be sent well in advance of the testing time.

3. Inservice for new assessments be scheduled by the Department of Education well in advance of the scheduled testing dates.

4. That funding be provided to: a) facilitate the proper inservicing of our teachers, and b) hire substitutes to score the open-ended parts of the assessments.

Thank you again for listening to my concerns and I await your response.

Sincerely,



Vincent L. Weiss,
Associate Superintendent of Schools

cc/Sharon Freden
Mark Pomplun

February 20, 1995

Senator Kerr
Education Committee of the
Kansas Senate
State Capitol
Topeka, KS

Dear Senators:

On behalf of the 32,000+ students enrolled in the Kansas Association of Non-government Schools, I wish to submit the following testimony in support of Senate Bill No. 182, "Kansas G.I. Bill for Kids".

The State of Kansas has a responsibility to provide for the children of the state the best possible education available. The history of Kansas Non-government Schools demonstrates that these schools have provided an education superior to that of the public schools at substantially less cost.

In the marketplace of Kansas, people have always desired better quality at less cost when given a choice. This bill would give choice in education to the poor and middle class of Kansas when fully implemented.

Every year parents of students in Non-government Schools must sacrifice more to educate their children because the school's tuition increases. Remember at this time parents and those who support non-government schools pay double. As the state takes a larger percentage of income in taxes it is more difficult to pay the non-government schools support.

This bill is not only about money. It is also about the quality of education provided our children by all schools in Kansas. Whenever consumers are given a choice, they choose quality at less cost. Those businesses that can't meet the above criteria go out of business. Schools in the private sector face the same criteria. Shouldn't public schools?

Give the children of Kansas a choice in education and the quality of education that schools provide will increase.

Sincerely,

Charles Jedele, Chairman KANS

4-16

*Given to the
State Board of Education*

August 8, 1995

I speak for the non-government, state accredited schools of Kansas:

1. The schools in the four Catholic Dioceses of Kansas City, Wichita, Salina and Dodge City.
2. The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod schools.
3. The Seventh Day Adventists schools.

These schools enroll 25,000 students saving \$90,000,000 in just state support plus all the local taxes. We acknowledge the state has a responsibility to educate its future citizens. We believe as you do that education of children can always be improved by assessing how we are doing and then making and carrying out plans for improvement. We value state accreditation for the sake of our students and our teachers. (transfers without question, teachers that can return to public school positions.)

You have heard in the past from public school boards and administrators much of what I have to say. However, there is a big difference - they operate with public funds. They can gain additional funds through the Legislature and/or through local levies. The public schools of the state already operate on funding which is twice our operational costs. Therefore, as I speak, keep in mind that the non-government schools would not be as vehement in our comments if financial considerations were non-existent.

We have the concerns about the state assessment program and would not participate if it were not required for accreditation. Our concerns are:

A. Control of our curriculums by the tests. Teachers teach to the tests to get the improvement asked for by the State Board of Education. Such improvement is meaningless and fictitious. We see our teachers forced to teach some subject matter and use particular methods that are not acceptable to the parents.

B. We find that the validity and reliability of results is limited by the frequent changes in the tests; the lack of clearly understood standards of measurement; the lack of comparability of pupil groups and teacher scoring of tests without adequate training. You have provided training sessions but how do we pay for travel, meals, substitutes, and teacher compensation for training? When it comes to scoring the tests public schools can hire subs so that the trained teacher can score the tests. How do we pay our subs - we cannot add a mill to the levy.

We request that the State Board of Education recognize other national or regional accrediting agencies which have the goal of school improvement as an alternative to QPA and assessment testing. Verification of alternative accreditation to the State Board of Education would bring automatic state accreditation of non-public schools without any additional state supervision or reporting requirements. Such accrediting agencies could include North Central, Independent Schools of the Southwest, National Lutheran Schools Accreditation, National Federation of Non-public Schools, Seventh Day Adventist Accrediting and CAPE (Council of American Private Education). National Lutheran Schools Accreditation already has this status in the neighboring state of Colorado, in Connecticut and Texas and some form of cooperative agreements in other regions of our country.

Certification/licensure changes are also a big concern. We use a large number of teachers trained in the colleges of our churches in states other than Kansas. We have not seen provisions made to accommodate these teachers who we desire to move into the state. It is difficult enough now to get these people certified - the future looks bleak or impossible.

Vince Weiss, our representative to the group, has felt that our concerns will not be addressed and that his voice is never heard.

We need relief if we are to continue to be schools working cooperatively with the State of Kansas for betterment of education for its future citizens. Since the legislature does not seem inclined to give financial assistance to us in the near future, we ask the Kansas Board of Education to give us relief in the form requested - alternative accreditation with no assessment testing and paper work for QPA.

Charles Jedele

Catholic School Concerns: Kansas State Board of Education

**Bob Voboril, Superintendent of Schools
Catholic Diocese of Wichita**

August 8, 1995

MEMBERS OF THE KANSAS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION AND ACTING
COMMISSIONER DENNIS:

Thank you for the opportunity to begin today a discussion about the relationship between the Kansas State Board of Education and the accredited private schools.

I am Superintendent of Schools for the Catholic Diocese of Wichita. I am responsible for 37 schools with 9,485 students enrolled.

- * All 37 schools are accredited by the State of Kansas.
- * We are the second largest private system and the ninth largest school system in Kansas.
- * Our 37 schools are located in 20 unified school districts in 11 counties of South central and Southeast Kansas. Our diocese comprises 20,021 square miles.
- * 15-20% of our students qualify as low income by federal hot lunch guidelines.
- * More than 1,200 (13%) of our students are African-American, Hispanic, or Asian-American.
- * Nearly 100% of our 1995 graduates are going on to college.
- * Our average cost per pupil is \$2,200.
- * Our achievement test scores consistently rank our schools among the best in the country.
- * Catholic schools have existed within our diocesan boundaries for 148 years - before there was a state or a state public school system. (In 1847 Jesuit priests and Loretto Sisters established schools in Osage Mission (St. Paul today).

In short, our Catholic schools have a long and honorable history. We have served the children of this state well.

Catholic schools in the Diocese of Wichita also have a history of fine cooperation with the State Board of Education. However, in recent years, Catholic school leaders (and our member families) have become increasingly concerned that the State Board of Education no longer values the participation of non-government schools in the state accreditation program. A lengthy memo on this topic from the Kansas Association of

Non-Government Schools (KANS) was addressed to Commissioner Droegemuller on February 16, 1995 and hand-delivered. We never received a reply.

There are other indications that the relationship between the State Board of Education and non-government schools is deteriorating. There seems to be little recognition given to the unique contributions that accredited private schools make to the State of Kansas. Even though the Catholic diocese of Wichita helped pioneer the QPA process, there has been no recognition of this. In fact, in the resume of the July 11-12 KSBE meeting, Catholic schools are listed last of all schools being QPA accredited. News releases never mention us at all. Copies of the proposed QPA regulations were sent to the KNEA, KASB, and USD administrators, but not to administrators of accredited schools.

Our schools particularly resent the state assessment program. There are six reasons:

1. Our parents fear that assessment testing is a form of state control of curriculum. They give as examples the content of the social studies and science activities and the "attitude" questions of certain assessments.
2. The value of results is limited by the frequent changes in the tests; the lack of clearly understood standards of measurement; the lack of comparability of pupil groups; and the lack of timeliness of scoring.
3. In a district of 37 schools that cover 20,000 square miles, the delivery and collection of assessment tests at a central site imposes a major burden on a central office that consists of four people. Commissioner Droegemuller promised to establish a more sensible procedure. Nothing was done.
4. The time taken to administer the science and social studies projects and to score selected tests is exorbitant. The cost to our schools (which receive no tax support) to administer and score the assessments is burdensome.
5. The Diocese of Wichita is developing its own criterion-referenced and performance assessments in addition to the norm-referenced MAT-7 which we administer. We would be willing to submit these for your review if requested. We would prefer to administer these instead of the state assessments because they are more directly tied to our curriculum.
6. State assessments (and accreditation procedures in general) do not take into account the small size of several of our schools. When a school of three, four, or five teachers must comply with all current QPA procedures, the process creates tremendous difficulties.

Beyond this immediate concern, we are distressed by the lack of assistance from the State Board of Education in obtaining services private school children are entitled to by law, particularly in view of the more than \$150 million Kansas taxpayers are saved by the 30,000 children who attend accredited non-government schools. For example:

1. Chapter I and special education services are difficult, if not impossible, to access in some districts, particularly when students attend a private school in a school district other than where they reside.
2. Private school teachers are frequently denied access to inservice funded by Eisenhower monies or are told their only options are those offered by the Unified School District.
3. Private schools are regularly not informed or consulted about funds and programs available to them. Examples include drug and alcohol funds, English as a Second Language, Chapter I, etc.
4. Private schools were denied the opportunity to apply for Educational Excellence grants.
5. In one case where hot lunches are satellited to private and public schools alike, the private school children are charged a higher cost.
6. In another instance, a school district has threatened to cut off bus service to private school children because a bond issue failed.
7. Most federally funded programs require consultation with the private schools. I do not recall the last time I was consulted by any of the 20 school districts outside of U.S.D. 259. Nor have I delegated that authority to any local administrator.

While there are many other examples that could be recorded here, I also want to note that many districts go out of their way to work closely with the local private schools.

Where do we go from here?

We in the Catholic school system share much in common with the State Board of Education, public schools, or QPA. We have not aired our concerns with the media. We would prefer to continue our history of cooperation with the State Board.

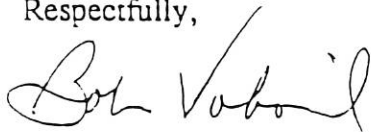
Nevertheless, the current pattern of the relationship cannot continue.

I propose that the State Board establish a select committee consisting of State Department officials, State Board members, and KANS representatives to explore these concerns and determine possible avenues for addressing them. A deadline of December 10 would be a reasonable one.

Such a committee might also wish to consider the experience of other states which have established alternative accrediting procedures. We would be willing to research these and other matters.

We seem to be at a crossroad. Your response to our concerns will shape the future relationship between the State Board of Education and non-government schools. May God be with us and bless our efforts.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Bob Voboril". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Bob Voboril, Superintendent of Schools
Diocese of Wichita



Archdiocese of Kansas City In Kansas

Department Of Education

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Office of the Superintendent

December 22, 1995

State Representative Dan Thimesch
% State Capitol 278 W
Topeka, Kansas 66612-1504

Dear Representative Thimesch:

I am writing you this letter to express the concerns of the Archdiocese of Kansas City in Kansas regarding state mandated assessments. The following are our issues of concern:

Assessment Validity - Archdiocesan principals and teachers have strong concerns about the validity of the assessments for the following reasons:

1. They are given at the same grade levels each year and therefore tracking similar population scores is impossible.
2. Parts of the assessments are locally graded. Each district and/or local school uses a wide judgement parameter in setting their own standards of grading. Districts with high standards will grade lower. Districts with average or lower standards will grade higher.
3. Some superintendents and/or principals put a great deal of pressure on teachers to make sure their student populations will score high. Principals and teachers, therefore, are coerced into making ethical decisions on the administration of the assessments.
4. Assessment results are published by school in many of the local newspapers. This causes additional pressures on local administrators to drastically improve scores. Again, this can and does cause some local buildings to teacher only to the test and ignore other relevant instructional standards.

Assessment Funding - Kansas Assessments are an unfunded mandate. Archdiocesan school budgets are all pretty much "bare bone". We do not have the luxury of being able to switch money categories to cover assessment expenses. Some public school districts of comparable size to ours tell me that the assessment costs are anywhere from \$50,000-

\$100,000 for administration. Our budgets do not allow us to hire substitutes when our teachers need training for assessment administration or for the assessment grading component. Therefore, our teachers grade many of the assessments on their own time and we are forced to dismiss school so our teachers can be trained. Even if the assessments were to be funded for public schools, where does that leave the private schools?

Distribution Geographics - Public school districts have small geographic areas and some methods of inter-district delivery. Our Archdiocese is spread out over 12,500 square miles and no means of distribution except by mail or personal delivery. Because our Archdiocesan office budget is so limited, I, as Test Coordinator, must deliver these throughout our system.

It is also an added burden to our office (currently myself and one secretary) to have to package these assessments for our 47 schools.

The further disadvantage is that by the time we have received, packaged and delivered the assessments our schools are one to two weeks behind the time frame in which the tests are to be given.

Administration of Assessments

It takes two to three weeks to administer these assessments. This takes away from much prime time classroom instruction. It also interrupts the sequence of teaching instruction.

In addition to Kansas Assessments, it is also necessary, and mandated by QPA, that Norm Reference Tests be given. This is an additional two weeks of prime instructional time.

Many schools do not follow the same time frame when it comes to test content. Some schools, when they know what content is to be tested, give intense instruction to their students.

We do not disagree with the need for performance assessments, but the current structure of formulation, distribution, administration, scoring and comparison make these tests a cumbersome burden on our already overtaxed administrators, teachers and central office.

Respectfully,



Vince Weiss
Interim Superintendent

VW:ck