

Approved: 4-4-97
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 19, 1997 in Room 519-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except:

Representative Cindy Empson - Excused

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

Conferees appearing before the committee:

Representative Cliff Franklin
Representative Daniel Thimesch
Mark Tallman, Kansas School Board Association
Sue Chase, Kansas National Education Association
Diane Gjerstad, Wichita Public Schools
Representative Bill Mason
Delbert Shaffer, Benton Kansas
John Koepke, Kansas School Board Association
Bernie White, Superintendent of Ell Saline
Bill Grimes, Superintendent at Moundridge
Sharon Treaster, Superintendent at Waconda
Connie Brend, PTO President
Jane Stephenson, PTO Special Ed Parent
Roy Richter, School Board Member
Eric Strader & Amber Engstrom, Goddard High School

Others attending: See attached list

Hearings were continued on **HB 2285 - School districts, curriculum, accreditation, pupil assessment, school site councils, American history documents**

Representative Cliff Franklin appeared before the committee as a sponsor of the bill. He explained the bill and suggested amendments. (Attachment 1)

Representative Daniel Thimesch appeared before the committee as a sponsor of the bill. He was concerned about the reliability, value and usability of the State Assessment Tests. He believes that the state needs to mandate a norm test to get a true evaluation of students and school improvements. (Attachment 2)

Mark Tallman, Kansas School Board Association, appeared before the committee as an opponent of the bill. He stated that most districts use a nationally normed test in addition to the state assessments. He was concerned that this proposed bill would require districts to either spend time administering another assessment or would replace their current test with the state board's choice. (Attachment 3)

Sue Chase, Kansas National Education Association, appeared before the committee as an opponent of the bill. She was concerned that the test measure accurately student performances. She was also concerned with the historical documents section because KNEA is not aware of any problems where schools have banned or censored a historical document. (Attachment 4)

Diane Gjerstad, Wichita Public Schools, appeared before the committee as an opponent of the bill because it would be expensive. (Attachment 5)

Hearings on **HB 2285** were closed.

Hearings on **HCR 5007 - directing the State Board of Education to study school district organization**, were opened.

Representative Bill Mason appeared before the committee as the sponsor of the resolution. He stated that it had been 34 years since this issue has been addressed. While the idea is not popular he believes that the state

CONTINUATION SHEET

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, Room 519-S Statehouse, at 3:30 p.m. on February 19., 1997.

should examine the boundaries to see if there are any areas of significant savings in expenditures and in the improvement of the quality of education. (Attachment 6)

Delbert Shaffer, Benton, Kansas, appeared before the committee as a proponent. He told the committee that school boundaries are like a jigsaw puzzle and that the goals of reducing costs and improving education should be top concerns. (Attachment 7)

John Koepke, Kansas School Board Association, appeared before the committee as an opponent. He commented that school boundaries were not decided by the legislature and therefore they should not do that now. He suggested that the committee look at a 1992 Legislative Post Audit Report on School Consolidation which suggested that consolidation of school districts does not achieve significant cost savings. (Attachment 8)

Bernie White, Superintendent of Ell Saline, appeared before the committee as an opponent of the resolution. He suggested that while the resolution requests that school districts be analyzed for efficiency and effectiveness it does not spell out any effectiveness measures. (Attachment 9)

Bill Grimes, Superintendent at Moundridge, appeared before the committee as an opponent. He told the committee that the most important consideration should be the needs of the children not school district boundaries. (Attachment 10)

Sharon Treaster, Superintendent at Waconda, appeared before the committee as an opponent of the resolution. She told the committee about a dissertation for her doctoral degree that she did on "A Study of the Relationship Between Enrollment Size and Math Achievement in Kansas School Districts". (Attachment 11)

Connie Brend, Goddard PTO President; Jane Stephenson, Goddard PTO Special Ed Parent; Roy Richter, School Board Member, appeared before the committee as opponents. They told the committee this issue was not only an emotional issue but also one of economics. (Attachment 12)

Eric Strader & Amber Engstrom, Goddard High School, appeared before the committee as opponents of the resolution. They commented that a boundary study would not consider community issues & school improvements and would send a message that Kansas belongs to anti-tax reactionaries. (Attachment 13)

Hearings on HCR 5007 were closed.

The committee meeting adjourned at 5:45 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for February 20, 1997.

CLIFF FRANKLIN
 REPRESENTATIVE, TWENTY-THIRD DISTRICT
 JOHNSON COUNTY
HOME ADDRESS: 10215 W. 51ST STREET
 MERRIAM, KANSAS 66203
 (913) 677-6672
OFFICE: ROOM 181-W STATEHOUSE
 TOPEKA, KANSAS 66612-1504
 (913) 296-7639
 cfranklin@wwi.net email
 http://www.wwi.net/cfranklin webpage



TOPEKA

HOUSE OF
 REPRESENTATIVES

House Bill 2285
The Community in Education Act
February 18, 1997

Mr. Chairman and fellow colleagues of the education committee, it is with enthusiasm that I bring forward the "Community in Education Act" for your consideration. In my first 2 years in the House I have talked with all of you about possible methods for improving public education. Although we may have differed on some minor points, I've heard three common themes from everyone. Parental involvement in the public school system is the most important ingredient for success, local boards are in a better position to make decisions for their schools, and the state board should make assessment of local districts to make sure all are achieving academic success. HB 2285 is an omnibus of improvement ideas that I have derived from each of you on this committee.

Talking with each of you on education issues has helped me chisel my way up the learning curve of K-12 curriculum. I know there will be ways for you to improve this legislation and many of you have already suggested amendments to make this bill more user friendly. This is your bill, our bill, and I welcome any improvements you think might make it an even stronger bill.

The following 7 points summarizes HB 2285.

1. *State Board of Education shall accredit and monitor local school districts. The state board shall delegate curriculum design and general supervision to local school boards.*
2. *Local board of education shall develop measurable goals that shall include truancy levels, national normed test averages, and community involvement.*
3. *The state board shall select one nationally normed test to administer across each local school district. The test shall be have a wide distribution such as the Iowa Test of Basic Skills ITBS, The Metropolitan Achievement Test MAT, or the California Achievement test CAT.*
4. *The state board will provide each registered voter 5 year graphical trends of parental and community involvement in the public school system and the local districts nationally normed composite test score for each appropriate grade. The packet shall also include a separate 5 year graphical trends of local district total budgets, w/ administrative cost trends, w/ student FTE trends. Administrative costs shall include*

House Education
 2-19-97
 Attachment 1

any school district employee that does not spend a minimum of 6 hours a day teaching students.

5. *The Kansas Assessment Test shall be reduced by 50% in student test length. Areas to be omitted include those covered by the selected nationally normed test. This condensed test would still include testing of critical thinking skills, testing of writing composition, and open ended math/science questions.*
6. *Site counsels shall consist of a minimum of 8 parents, 5 teachers, and 2 business/community leaders. The state board shall develop simple indices to measure community involvement such as mentor programs or business partnerships.*
7. *Allows local school boards to post and teach historical documents such as the national anthem, the United States Constitutions, the speeches/writings of our founding fathers, the speeches/writings of the United States Civil Rights Leaders.*

Suggested Amendments:

1. Start sending information to registered voters in July after selected normed test has been administered for 4 years. Test shall be selected by 7/30/97 and administered starting 8/15/97. The first report to registered voters will be in July of 2000.
2. State clearly that the parental and community involvement measure is primarily an assessment of the parents/community participation in the school system and indirectly a measure of the local school boards ability to provide mechanisms for parent/community involvement.
3. All school building administration shall have no more than a 20% voting block on a site council. The teachers shall have at least a 20% voting block on a site council. The parents shall have at least a 40% voting block on the site council and the community members at least a 10% block.
4. Change community leaders to community/business members on site council makeup.
5. Add or other widely distributed achievement tests to nationally normed test selections.
6. The Kansas assessment shall be reduced by a minimum of 50% of current testing time so as not to duplicate areas covered under the nationally normed test.
7. Administrative costs shall include any school district employee that does not spend a minimum of 60% of their working day teaching students.
8. Remove the strikeout of social studies on page 1 line 37 of the bill.

In closing I would like to say that the American Heritage portion of this bill has been modified from past Heritage bills to address the sincere concerns about religious freedom and separation of church and state. If you look on page 3 lines 40 & 41 pre-colonial and post federalist has been removed because of specific objections raised by the Mainstream Coalition. Furthermore, we have included section (b) on page 4 lines 3 & 4 to say there shall be no revision of American history and section (c) states that religious reference will be presented in a manner which neither furthers the establishment of a specific religion nor demeans any mode of worship. We have done all we can to accommodate the opponents of the American heritage bill short of banning religious reference from all history books. I believe this is the best compromise possible.

Thank you for consideration of this bill and I stand ready for questions.



The Community In Education Bill

Gives Local Control to Local School Boards

- ◆ Initiates more parental and community participation on Site Councils
- ◆ Initiates local control of school curriculum and goal selection
- ◆ Reduces the scope of Kansas Assessment so teachers can have more time to teach
- ◆ Allows for posting and teaching of historical documents

Gives assessment responsibilities to the State Board of Education

- ◆ State Board will create indices to measure parental involvement
- ◆ Measure community involvement
- ◆ Measure & select a nationally normed test
- ◆ Kansas assessment will test critical thinking skills and shall be scaled back not to duplicate normed testing areas
- ◆ Measure classroom performance
- ◆ Measure school violence, truancy, and drop-out rates

Assigns State Board to supply academic/budget information to the public

- ◆ Parental and community involvement - 5 year graphical trends
- ◆ National normed test scores - 5 year graphical trends
- ◆ School district budget & enrollment - 5 year graphical trends
- ◆ Kansas Assessment test scores - 5 year graphical trends

If you would like to co-sponsor this bill see Cliff Franklin (Dist. 23) by February 4th

STATE OF KANSAS

DAN THIMESCH
REPRESENTATIVE, 93RD DISTRICT
30121 WEST 63RD STREET SOUTH
CHENEY, KANSAS 67025
(316) 531-2995



TOPEKA

HOUSE OF
REPRESENTATIVES

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

AGRICULTURE
EDUCATION
TRANSPORTATION

STATE CAPITOL
ROOM 278-W
TOPEKA, KANSAS 66612-1504
(913) 296-7680
1-800-432-3924
(DURING SESSION)

Thank you Chairman O'Neal and the Education Committee.

I support HB 2285 for a number of reasons.

Our State Assessments Tests have become very controversial over the last number of years. We have listened to concerns expressed by professionals about their reliability, valuability, and usability. Our own Post Audit study reveals that 60% of the teachers surveyed in the public schools did not like the tests.

The association of non-government schools which represent about 10% of our children in accredited schools are strongly looking to other accreditation because of their concerns of these tests.

Mostly I am concerned about how I believe our tests are being misused. The designers of these tests explain emphatically how they are supposed to be used. Under Quality Performance Accreditation in determining school improvement, these tests are not supposed to be the only indicator. There also has to be included other local required indicators, such as norm-referenced tests, teacher-developed tests, classroom grades, portfolios of student work, attendance rate, drop out rate, graduation rate, student completion of advanced math and science courses, student follow-up surveys, number of disciplinary actions, and number of violent acts by students against students or faculty.

Superintendents, principals, teachers, KSAB media and even the new commissioner have also misused the tests as showing improvement solely on the State assessment tests.

Also our report card of school districts heavily used the results of our state assessment.

I believe we need to mandate a norm test along with the state assessment test to get a true evaluation of student and school improvement. I urge your support of HB 2285.

House Education
2-19-97
Attachment 2



TO: House Committee on Education
FROM: Mark Tallman, Director of Governmental Relations
DATE: February 18, 1997

RE: **Testimony on H.B. 2285**

Mr. Chairman, Members of the committee:

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on H.B. 2285. Because it contains a number of subjects, I will direct my remarks to each section or subsection.

Section 1 (a) - School accreditation system.

We have no objection to this section. We believe it simply restates the current quality performance accreditation system.

Section 1 (b) - State Assessments.

KASB supports a statewide student assessment program. However, we have not specifically endorsed all aspects of the current state assessment program, and would not necessarily oppose a reduction or modification in the current program. We do have several serious concerns about this bill.

First, we are concerned about placing this degree of specificity regarding state assessments into law. We believe this may unduly limit the State Board's options in developing an appropriate system.

Second, most districts already use a nationally normed test in addition to the state assessments, which allows parents and patrons of each district to compare student performance with national norms. Moreover, those tests have been selected by districts because they reflect the unique curriculum and circumstances of the district.

Unless a district is lucky enough to have the State Board select the test it is using, H.B. 2285 would require those districts to either spend time administering yet another assessment, or replace their current test with the State Board's choice. If the Legislature wants a statewide national comparison, the least disruptive course would be to participate in the National Assessment of Education Progress as suggested by the Commissioner of Education.

Section 1 (c) - Site Councils and Parent/Community Involvement

House Education
2-19-97
Attachment 3

KASB supports the current statute regarding site councils. We have no major objection to the site council composition proposed in the bill, but we question why state law should be made more specific. Remember, creating position on a site council does not guarantee those individuals will participate. We believe most decisions about site council operations should be made at the local level.

We also strongly support efforts to increase parent and community involvement, but we question whether "simple indices" can be developed. Look at the list proposed. Parents as Teachers programs cost money to initiate - money not available to spend in the regular classroom. The ability to develop mentor programs and school-business partnerships is probably much easier in urban areas than rural areas, and both efforts require "non-instructional" resources. Schools where most parents are well-educated professional with high incomes will have a much easier time organizing active parent groups than schools serving economically disadvantaged populations. In short, these indicators may be unfair and have little meaning.

Section 1 (f) - Performance and Expenditure Reports

First, we question whether the cost of mailing reports to every registered voter is the best expenditure of state resources, especially when the news media has been eager to publish data on student performance and district expenditures.

Second, if school districts must report administrative costs and trends, this report should also include a listing of all state and federal mandates which increase a district's administrative responsibilities. Furthermore, it would be deeply misleading to include the cost of librarians, counselors, nurses, food service employees and bus drivers in "administrative costs."

Section 2 (a) - Historical Documents

School boards and employees may already read and post these documents, and frequently do so. If the Legislature wants to pass a law saying that these documents are important, fine.

Section 2 (b) - ?

We have no idea what this subsection means.

Section 2 (c) - Discriminatory Revision Based on Religious References

We are not aware of any "discriminatory revision" occurring in Kansas. We fail to see how this subsection could be enforced if there is.

Section 3 - Distribution of this act.

Interestingly, this section creates another administrative mandate.



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

Susan Chase Testimony on HB 2285
before the House Education Committee
February 18, 1997

Thank you Mr. Chairman and members of the committee for allowing me to speak. I am Susan Chase and I represent the Kansas National Education Association. I am here to speak in opposition to HB 2285.

Although we are in opposition to HB 2285 we do not necessarily oppose the intent of parts of this bill. For example we congratulate the sponsors of this bill for understanding and trying to address the issue of parental involvement. We agree that parental involvement in the schools is one of the most important parts of a quality education. We do not agree that you can achieve that by mandating the number of parents or others on site councils or by having the state board determine what are indicators of good parental involvement. Those items are truly a local decision and each district must work with its own community to determine the best composition of site councils and the best way to achieve parental involvement.

We are also concerned about accurate and reliable measures of student performances as are the sponsors of the bill. Yes, time is an issue in testing. I do not believe that reducing the state assessments by 50% and mandating a norm referenced test will achieve a more accurate and reliable measure of what Kansas students know and can do in less time than is currently being used. Norm-referenced tests have their place, but do not measure students according to the standards and level of excellence that we have set for Kansas students.

Finally, we are concerned with the section on the posting of historical documents. We are not aware of any school district where any historical documents are banned or censored. In discussing this with teachers none of them indicated that they had been given any mandates on the posting, reading or teaching of historical documents. We are concerned, however, with the statement that there shall be no exclusion of American history in this state in the writings, documents and records described. Does this mean that whenever American history is taught all of the above must be covered? If that is the case I am not sure that there will be much time for anything other than American history. It also raises the concern of other pieces of American history not addressed in the list and their exclusion or inclusion. In other words, this is a curriculum decision and it should be made at the local level with teachers, community people and parents deciding what should be covered and when it should be covered.

Thank you very much for listening to our concerns. KNEA urges this committee to not pass this bill out favorable.

House Education Committee
Representative Mike O'Neal, chairman
HB 2285

Diane Gjerstad
Wichita Public Schools

February 18, 1997

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee:

HB 2285 raises many concerns within the district. We do not disagree with the spirit of wanting reliable student achievement information and to foster greater community involvement within our schools. But imposing another statewide test and council quotas, will be expensive.

Wichita Public Schools Strategic Action Plan number 1.2, 6.2 states:

To increase "people power" in the Wichita Public Schools by increasing adult presence in schools and improving interaction between schools, homes, and the community.

Wichita Public Schools recognizes the significance of each volunteer contribution. Collectively the impact is profound on our district. We utilize community members in a wide array of committees, such as our district wide budgeting process, communications advisory committee, community advisory council, and more recently in the comprehensive assessment and graduation competency redesign and special education advisory committee, to name a few.

The district supports community involvement through Partnership Team Training which has been provided for fifty-nine schools and 187 participants. In March the second phase will include additional training on development of action plans designed to increase the level and quality of involvement of parents, business partners and community members.

The district provides parent education classes on topics such as family math, reading/writing connections for parents and informational sessions on assessments. The Parent Teacher Resource Center (formerly the IRS building) is dedicated to training and parent/teacher activities.

Volunteer training is available in monthly sessions. During the 95-96 school year 7462 parent and community volunteers contributed 252,420 hours of support at school site as tutors, site council members and even monetary.

Site councils are valued. Training has been developed by the district to aid all participants, including principals. Shared decision making conferences and training is regularly available.

To fully share information with site council members the district provides a monthly forum where a wide variety of topics are discussed. Members who attend are provided materials to take back to their respective site council. In addition an annual two day site council conference is held each fall in Wichita.

Data collected for 96/97 shows our total membership breakdown as: 798 parents, 560 staff, 65 business, 33 students and 141 community members. Site council membership averages 16.9 people per council and they meet on the average of 6.9 times per year.

Ranking of topics discussed: logistics/organization, planning and academics as the top three. A complete list of topics discussed by our site councils is included in this packet.

House Education
2-19-97
Attachment 5

Some buildings have great difficulty in keeping a site council active. Levy Special Education Center and the Arkansas Avenue Gateway School are two examples of buildings which have a non-traditional population—Levy kids can be severely physically handicapped, it is a great burden on their parents to attend a meeting. Gateway students have been suspended or expelled from their regular building and may be enrolled for two weeks to 186 days. Both of these buildings have a site council, Gateway's includes community police officer, but they will have limited appeal to community/business people.

Two quick examples of how our site councils work. One elementary's site council drafted the entire campus improvement plan; meet monthly, a split day/evening meeting; monthly topics include progress report on plan implementation, curriculum, goals, personnel and budget. The site council has piece of all decisions. Two examples of the council's contribution include an Animated Phonics program and Spanish for intermediate students. (The principal was very surprised that the community wanted this.)

A high school's council makes the expenditure decisions on the building budget allocation. Teachers present programs before the council, who decides funding priorities and which programs meet the goals of the building. The council also interviews candidates for positions then making recommendations to the board.

The point being that parental and business involvement will vary by building, student age level and community. Placing more requirements in the statute and membership quotes could cast a chilling effect on the development and growth councils are experiencing. Current law is working quite well.

On the issue of a single mandated state wide normed test:

Returning the emphasis on norm referenced tests is not consistent with philosophy of continuous improvement. Comparing Kansas schools with each other rather than identifying growth and improvement within schools is not consistent with a philosophy that all schools should improve. Schools which serve high income communities will have little incentive to improve and schools which serve low income communities will find the process very discouraging.

USD 259 has a long history of using normed reference test. Over time these tests have done little to drive instruction. Basically, these tests measure what we know as drill and practice type teaching activities. They do little to measure application of skills, i.e. writing coherently, solving math problems.

Large populations shift the mean or average very slowly. Smaller populations of students' scores tend to fluctuate more dramatically. In such situations, schools that appear to do very well one year can do just as poorly the next based on just a few different students in the mix at a given grade level. We see this often in Title I schools where a school's scores would appear to go through the ceiling one year only to be down the next.

Although performance assessment is not as exact and may not measure up to tightly developed normed tests, they have at least driven the way instruction is being delivered and assessed in classrooms across the district. Normed reference tests have not done that.

What needs to be decided is what is the purpose of testing students in Kansas. Is it so they can do well at answering multiple choice questions? Or, is it help students develop skills and apply that knowledge in real work situations. Teachers using formative assessment based on curriculum standards will teach and test to the standards, the results will be improved student achievement.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, I would stand for questions.

**Wichita Public Schools USD 259
SITE COUNCIL OPINION SURVEY 1996**

QUESTION	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neither		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1. Our school site council participates in making decisions for our school.	15	2.2	35	5.2	57	8.5	281	42.1	279	41.8
2. Our site council has influence (indirect or direct) on the way money is spent in our school.	19	2.9	84	12.8	167	25.5	258	39.3	128	19.5
3. Our site council has influence (indirect or direct) on hiring decisions in our school.	56	8.5	145	22.1	209	31.9	169	25.8	76	11.6
4. Our site council has influence (indirect or direct) on curriculum decisions in our school.	23	3.5	94	14.2	158	23.9	282	42.7	103	15.6
5. Our site council has influence (indirect or direct) on goal setting in our school.	17	2.6	33	5.0	49	7.4	352	53.2	211	31.9
6. Site council decisions are based on a concern for improving student performance.	15	2.3	9	1.4	28	4.2	289	43.6	322	48.6
7. We have the skills to work effectively as a group to solve school problems.	12	1.8	28	4.2	65	9.7	301	45.1	262	39.2
8. We feel good about the way decisions are made in this school.	17	2.6	29	4.4	93	14.0	281	42.2	246	36.9
9. People involved with our school are aware of our school site council.	18	2.7	69	10.4	127	19.1	321	48.3	130	19.5
10. Involvement of community members on our site council improves the school.	14	2.1	19	2.9	78	11.8	270	40.7	282	42.5
11. Our school site council offers recommendations that influence the operation of the school.	15	2.3	28	4.2	56	8.5	363	54.8	200	30.2
12. Our school site council meets regularly.	13	2.0	16	2.4	9	1.4	203	30.5	424	63.8
13. We inform the school community of the school site council's actions.	13	2.0	68	10.3	122	18.5	265	40.3	190	28.9
14. Our site council understands the school's mission.	12	1.8	8	1.2	24	3.6	285	42.9	336	50.5
15. Our school continues to improve.	17	2.6	12	1.8	43	6.5	251	38.0	358	51.1
16. Information requested by site council members is provided in a timely manner.	9	1.3	19	2.8	72	10.8	301	45.1	266	39.9
17. Site council members participate in the development of the agenda.	9	1.4	38	5.7	122	18.5	321	48.6	171	25.9
18. Site council members have received adequate training.	16	2.4	65	9.9	233	35.4	276	41.9	69	10.5
	Almost Never		Rarely		Sometimes		Often		Almost Always	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
19. Teachers participate in school decision-making at our building.	5	0.8	8	1.2	69	10.6	261	40.1	308	47.3
20. Other school employees participate in school decision-making at our building.	6	0.9	38	6.0	167	26.2	244	38.3	182	28.6
21. Parents/community participate in school decision-making at our building.	10	1.5	45	6.9	180	27.8	271	41.8	142	21.9
22. Students participate in school decision-making at our building.	41	6.5	118	18.8	248	39.5	165	26.3	56	8.9
23. Central Office Administration participates in school decision-making at our building.	22	3.5	50	8.0	189	30.2	245	39.2	119	19.0
24. Building Administration participates in school decision-making at our building.	9	1.4	12	1.9	67	10.7	191	30.4	349	55.6

Addendum to "Report to the BOE: Site Councils 1/96"

Site Council Discussion Topics: A Summary School Year 1994-95

In June of 1995, principals submitted a summary of site council meetings including a listing of the topics discussed in the meetings. These topics were placed in the most appropriate category from the alphabetical list below. The list reflects discussion topics at all three levels (high school, middle school and elementary) for the entire school year, the number of times the category was reported, and the percentage of the total the number reflects. The amount of time spent discussing the various topics is not given nor implied; the report is reflective of topics only.

Academics

Rank: 3

Percentage of total: 12%

Topic Areas: Accreditation, achievement, advisement, curriculum, graduation, homework, math, reading, testing

Activities

Rank: 5

Percentage of total: 9%

Topic Areas: Awards, activity calendar, fundraising, Choices Fair, graduation activities, sports, miscellaneous

Budget

Rank: 4

Percentage of total: 10%

Topic Areas: General, capital outlay, grants

Community

Rank: 10

Percentage of total: 3%

Topic Areas: Business, marketing, police

Environment

Rank: 9

Percentage of total: 4%

Topic Areas: Crime, facilities, energy plan, climate survey

Logistics

Rank: 1

Percentage of total: 19%

Topic Areas: Guidelines/norms/organization of council, election of officers, goals/purpose of site council, procedures/bylaws, surveys, training

Parents

Rank: 7

Percentage of total: 7%

Topic Areas: Conferences, Involvement, organization, volunteers

Planning

Rank: 2

Percentage of total: 17%

Topic Areas: Campus Improvement Plan, QPA/NCA/accreditation, school profile, target goals, climate survey results, mission statement

Procedures

Rank: 6

Percentage of total: 8%

Topic Areas: School calendar, discipline, enrollment

Staff

Rank: 8

Percentage of total: 6%

Topic Areas: Allocations, inservices and training, hiring

Student

Rank: 11

Percentage of total: 3%

Topic Areas: Orientation, code of conduct

Transportation

Rank: 13

Percentage of total: less than 1%

Topic Areas: Bussing Issues

Miscellaneous

Information categorized and sorted by Ted Bates, CAC Member
02/17/97

Topics discussed at Site Council Meetings 1995-96 as listed by principals

- 6th grade survey
- Academic achievement
- Accelerated Reader
- Accreditation
- Air conditioning
- Allocation process for staffings
- Alternative instruction program
- Alternatives for school organization
- Analysis of test data
- Appreciation letters
- Asbestos removal
- Awards Breakfast
- Becoming a magnet
- BEST grant interest
- Bingo Night
- Birthday lottery
- Block part
- Block schedule presentation
- BOE communications
- Boeving tutors
- Bond issue
- Brainstorming session on strengths and needs of school
- Budget
- Budget planning
- Building repairs
- Business partnerships
- Bussing
- Calendar
- Calendar survey
- Campus Improvement Plan
- Capital improvement requests
- CD-ROM and Internet
- Charter schools
- Choices Fair
- Choices Fair
- Christmas Wish list project
- Class size
- Classroom alterations
- Climate Survey
- Committee report on pupil behavior
- Communications
- Community items
- Community perception survey
- Computer update
- Conflict resolution program
- Congressional contacts for support of Local option budget
- COPE program
- Crime prevention in the neighborhood
- Crime stoppers
- Curriculum alignment
- Curriculum changes
- Curriculum focus
- Custodial issues
- Demographics
- Destinations
- Discipline committee report
- Discipline policy
- Discussed Edison project
- District and school mission statement
- District assessment plan
- Diversity
- Domain counseling report
- Dress code
- Election of officers
- Electronic monitoring concerns
- Energy conservation
- Energy report
- Establishment of schedule
- Exit interviews
- Expectations agreement
- Extended learning time
- Fall Party
- Family Night Activities
- Fence
- Field trips
- Final exam policy
- First full team visit
- Flag patrol suggestions
- Follow up on reading/math family night
- Foreign language
- Foreign Language proposal
- Fun Night
- Fund raising
- Fund raising policy
- G.O. M.A.D.D. review
- Gang and drug information
- GED
- Goals
- Golden Apple competition
- Golden Apple purchases
- Graduation
- Grant application
- Hall noise before school dismisses
- Halloween Party
- Handbook
- Hazardous Busses
- Health center
- Homework policy
- Honors Banquet
- HOSTS
- Impact of school closings
- Increasing parent involvement
- Inservice plans
- Instructional design
- ISSR
- JROTC recommendation
- Junior achievement program
- Junior League
- K-8 Expansion
- Kansas Read Week
- KASB material available
- KEDDS/LINK grant award
- Kindergarten program
- Language Arts audit update
- Latchkey
- LDP
- Leadership proposal
- Letter to Board of Education
- Library update
- Local option budget
- Looping
- Lunch time problems
- Magnet proposal
- Marketing
- Marketing brochure
- MAT-7 results
- Meet an author night
- Member expectations, rules of conduct
- Met with Dr. Vaughn
- Middle school opportunities
- Money for fitness center
- Motto
- Myers-Briggs test results
- NCA update
- Neighborhood Initiative group
- New computers - Jostens
- New furniture
- New SQIS system
- Newsletter
- Open house
- Opinion survey
- Optimist club information
- Paper expense/usage
- Parent responsibility agreement
- Parent shadow day
- Parent Survey
- Parent teacher hotline
- Parental Expectations
- Parents for Public Schools
- Parking and traffic
- Partnership seminar
- Pay to play report
- Personnel hiring
- Phone calls regarding absence
- Phone survey
- Planned February dance
- Planning parent resource room
- Playground rules
- Policies
- Possible school closing
- PR
- Predicted enrollment
- Principals report
- Printing options
- Prioritize topics
- Prioritizing needs
- Program Updates
- PTA nominations
- PTA report
- PTO/site council merger
- Purpose
- QPA
- Realtor open house
- Recruiting new members for PTO
- Recruitment of tutors
- Relocation to another school
- Report on "lunch with the principal"
- Report on copiers
- Retention of students
- Review and affirm mission statement
- Review of BOE Policies
- Review of test scores
- Revise student handbook
- Rubrics based assessment
- Safe Kids campaign
- Safety
- Safety patrol
- School Carnival
- School closings
- School clubs
- School logo
- School philosophy
- School profile
- School starting time
- School store
- School structure
- School supplies
- School uniforms
- Science assessment
- Security lighting at school
- Setting goals
- Sexual Harassment policy
- Shadow your child or student
- Shared schools
- Site council guidelines
- Site council role and direction
- Skate Party
- Social with staff
- St. Patrick's Day parade
- Staff Allocation
- Staff Christmas Buffet
- Staff development priorities
- State assessment results
- Student planner/enrollment fees
- Student recruitment
- Student Safety
- Suggestions for improving site council meetings
- Summer school plans
- Summer school/Camp
- Survey on widening entry
- Suspension incidents
- Tardy concerns
- Teacher of year award
- Teacher requests
- Team Training
- Technology
- Title One issues
- Total Talent Training
- Tournament
- Tours
- Training for site council
- Update on playgrounds
- Update on principal replacement
- Valentine Party
- Vending machines
- Vision casting
- Volunteer hours
- Voter registration
- Wellness ideas/integration
- Wichita clinic update
- Wings soccer program
- Winter carnival
- WorkKeys report
- Workshops
- Writing assessments

SITE COUNCIL FORUM

A Nuts and Bolts Look at

THE BUDGET \$

November 14

6:30 - 8:00 p.m.

Instructional Support Center

Presenters:

LINDA JONES

Executive Director, Financial Services

and

BILL REAGAN

Division Director, Business Support Services



Decisions, Decisions...

Site Councils are called upon to participate in making decisions that have great educational impact. To facilitate this process, a series of Site Council Forums will focus on these major areas:

- * Budget
- * Personnel
- * Curriculum and Instruction
- * Organization
- * Planning

All school sites are encouraged to send at least one site council member to every forum. Participants will receive overheads, outlines, and other information to share with their school site councils.

FUTURE FORUMS:

January 9



Components of Campus Improvement Plan:
Using data for Decisions

February 6



Working Together:
Tools for Consensus Building

March 6



Curriculum:
Standards, Instruction, Assessment, and Alignment

April 10



Personnel Issues

May 1



Orientation for New Site Council Members.

WILLIAM G. (BILL) MASON
 REPRESENTATIVE, 75TH DISTRICT
 BUTLER COUNTY



TOPEKA

HOUSE OF
 REPRESENTATIVES

HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE
 TESTIMONY
 February 19, 1997
 HCR 5007

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS
 CHAIRMAN: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
 VICE CHAIRMAN: JOINT COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC
 DEVELOPMENT
 MEMBER: BUSINESS, COMMERCE AND LABOR
 FEDERAL AND STATE AFFAIRS
 BOARD MEMBER: KANSAS TECHNOLOGY
 ENTERPRISE CORPORATION

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

I appreciate the chance to come as a proponent of HCR 5007 that would ask the State Board of Education to look at the district boundaries of schools across the state. While not popular, this is an issue that we should examine to see if there are any areas of significant savings in expenditures and in the improvement of the quality of education.

The Legislature has the total responsibility for setting school boundaries but we have not been doing our job. It has been 34 years since this issue has been addressed. The State's finance mechanism, population patterns, building requirements, choice of schools, both parents working and many other factors have changed drastically since 1963. We must look at this issue from a different perspective. The fact that we have over 10,000 students going to other districts is one indication that there are changes that should be made.

In my own county, we have 9 school districts. I am not sure there are too many but it certainly is not the most efficient system we can design. We have 3 districts that tried bond issues for new buildings in the November election. All three lost because of the makeup of school boundaries. Let me tell you about one. Bluestem USD 205 wanted to replace a 70+ year old building with 3 1/2 foot hallways, basement rooms without 2nd exits and other fire hazards. The fire marshall has continued to allow them to use the building with some areas off limits. The west side of the district comes within one mile of the Augusta district. The parents in that area will not vote for a new school several miles away when they can go to school next door. Who loses? The kids in Bluestem who cannot go to another school. The other districts are different but the failure of the bond issues were clearly as a result of the makeup of the district.

I believe it is long overdue that we should have an ongoing study of districts and their boundaries for economy and efficiency. We are spending approximately 2/3 of all State General Fund budget (our taxpayers money) on Education. It is going to be extremely difficult to find significant new money to fund education at a higher level. We have a real dilemma. We must find many of those dollars within the system.

We now have an inefficient system, in my opinion. In some cases we are bussing students from areas where we have adequate room in schools to schools where we pay low enrollment weighting, provide transportation and help the local district pay for new buildings. Business, industry and families have had to look at every aspect of their activities to be more cost efficient. Should we expect no less from our schools. Many of our schools have had great success in lowering their expenditures and have few additional things that they can change on their own. There is no real incentive for districts to look at their boundary lines on their own initiative.

There is no consistent mapping of districts across the state. Good appropriate decisions can not be made without good up to date information. There is very little available today.

How can anyone not agree that our info is outdated? The legislature has the responsibility and should live up to that responsibility. Does anyone believe that we have the most efficient system possible? How many places are we bussing too far? How many places are we paying low enrollment weighting when other alternatives might be better? How many times are we participating in building new school buildings when a change in boundaries might save millions?

Every person needs a medical checkup regularly. Would we wait 34 years for that checkup? If we were not feeling well or someone kept telling us that we look like we are having problems would we not take heed and have someone take a look? Should we do less for our children's education?

The whole scene changed when we changed the school finance law. Previously, local districts had a different criteria. When the worth of a district was in buildings, industries, farm land and houses, the efficiency or inefficiency of a school district affected primarily the local district. Now that our taxpayers 33 mill levy is funded through the state, the local district valuation is not the big issue it was before the school finance law was passed.

Right now the only place to find new money for technology, teachers and administrators salary increases, increases in Special Ed funding and keeping up with the inflation rates is for the school districts to come with hat in hand asking for more appropriations or go to local taxpayers for the LOB. I believe that more and more taxpayer groups are going to stop any new LOB's or renewals. We must find new ways to make sure that our most valuable asset, our children, are getting the good quality education that we want for them.

This resolution asks for a study to be made. It does not suggest or allow any boundary to be changed. It calls for a report to be made for study in the 1998 legislative session. I encourage you to have a full complete study that would help quantify any potential changes that could be beneficial.

I urge your support of HCR 5007.

DELBERT SHAFFER
P.O. BOX 142
BENTON, KS 67017
316 778-1495

House Education Committee
Testimony for HCR 5007
February 19, 1997

MR. CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE:

Thank you for the opportunity to present comments on the proposal to change school boundary lines in Kansas. I am Delbert Shaffer and live in the western part of Butler county between Benton and Towanda in the Circle School District. I represent myself and am here today as a private citizen only.

I was chairman of the Benton-Greenwich School Board #52 when talks began with Vanoria, Silverton, Oil Hill and Towanda about forming a consolidated Circle School District in 1956 through 1959. The consensus was that the west side of the Consolidated Circle School would be a long ways from Towanda and a K through grade 5 or 6 school would be established for the west side. That has never happened and the west side of the district in the Wichita Tallgrass area, 18 miles southwest of Towanda, makes little use of the Circle School District. They send most of their students to Parochial, Charter, Private or Wichita schools close to their homes because Circle School has never provided the K through 6th grade school as agreed.

The boundary lines of Circle School looks like a jigsaw puzzle. Busses from different school districts travel the same roads morning and evenings. The Circle board is not worried about losing the valuable west side of the district because it is locked into Circle School by State law. This provides no incentive to help the west side of the district. The present school boundary law has outlived its original purpose and is used as a stifling tool against some areas.

I propose studying the school boundary laws with a goal of reducing costs and putting competition back in the schools of Kansas. Some competition is always good.

Respectfully submitted,
Delbert Shaffer

House Education
2-19-97
Attachment 7



Testimony on H.C.R. 5007

before the
House Committee on Education

by
John W. Koepke, Executive Director
Kansas Association of School Boards

February 19, 1997

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, we appreciate the opportunity to appear before you on behalf of the member boards of education of the Kansas Association of School Boards with regard to the important issues contained in H.C.R. 5007. The subject of school district boundaries and school district consolidation has been the focus of considerable discussion within our organization in recent years and has led to the adoption of a comprehensive policy on the issue by our Delegate Assembly. That policy statement reads as follows:

School District Unification

KASB believes that state law should authorize boards of education to close any school attendance facility or to change the use of any attendance facility.

KASB opposes legislation to establish special systems of district structure within the unified school district law.

KASB believes Kansas should review school district boundaries on a regular schedule so boards of education will have reasonable security in planning attendance centers and educational programs. Boundary changes should take educational quality into account as well as school efficiency.

KASB opposes any legislation which would directly or indirectly result in state mandated consolidation of Kansas unified school districts.

Given the language contained in this policy statement, our opposition to the study proposed in H.C.R. 5007 should be clear. Numerous studies of the effect on educational quality and efficiency with regard to school district consolidation have been conducted in Kansas and other states. We do not

House Education
2-19-97
Attachment 8

believe that another study would contribute anything beyond that learned in the most recent Kansas study, the one conducted by the Legislative Division of Post Audit in 1992. That study concluded, as have the studies it cited from other states, that consolidation of school districts does not achieve significant cost savings.

We continue to believe that the issue of school district boundaries and school district consolidation are best addressed at the local level. Many of the wounds inflicted as a result of the mandated school district consolidation of the 1960's have yet to heal. It seems to us a far more productive issue to address at this time would be to implement the first area addressed in the KASB policy statement, that of giving local school boards full authority to control their existing facilities.

In short, we believe there is little to be gained by the conduct of the study outlined in this resolution and much anxiety would be needlessly generated. We appreciate the opportunity to express these thoughts and I would be happy to answer any questions.

Testimony on House Concurrent Resolution No. 5007

Delivered by Bernard White
Superintendent of Schools
USD 307, Ell Saline Schools
1757 N. Halstead Rd.
Salina, Ks. 67401

HCR 5007, lines 41 - 43 directs the Kansas State Board of Education to "undertake a comprehensive study of the organization of school districts in this state to determine if the public school system could be more **efficiently** and **effectively** operated under a different configuration". At first appearance, this resolution seems to be looking to find the best solution to the education problems in this state.

Upon reviewing the resolution and the sponsors of HCR 5007, I find some real concerns with which we must deal.

(1) If HCR 5007 is truly in the best interest of the students of this state, why is it sponsored by only representatives of large, urban areas of the state? This resolution is not being pursued in the best interests of the students of the entire state, but in the best interests of the category four schools whose representatives are sponsoring the resolution. As a small, rural school, I have heard the charges made that we are the recipients of this large "windfall" of money known as "low enrollment weighting". It is true, we do receive additional money for each student in the districts under 1900 students. As far as the "unfair amount" of this money, I am not in agreement. We are neighbors to a category four school. If the general fund budget for the two schools is examined for the school years since 1991-1992 through 1995-1996, and corrections made for such changes such as student growth and the including of transportation aid in the general fund budget, you would find that the budget for USD 307 grew by 13.23%, while the budget for our neighboring category four district has grown by 9.7%.

The rural districts of this state have always needed more money per student to educate their students because of the economy of numbers. The formula did not weight the expenditures heavily to the rural and small districts as has been charged.

(2) The reason the resolution is being requested is that we have a number of schools that have not been able to pass local option budgets and the increase in aid that they received at the time the funding method was

House Education
2-19-97
Attachment 89

approved has not grown adequately to allow for increases in budget. This problem is not a problem only for the category four districts, but also for districts such as ours. If USD 307 had not been experiencing growth from within the district boundaries, we would have an identical situation. Had the legislature allowed for the base budget per pupil to be increased as was needed since the funding formula was changed for the 1992-1993 school year, these districts would not be facing the stated current problems of "inadequate funding" for their students. I have heard a number of representatives state that the current funding formula places a "price on the students head" and is not the appropriate method of figuring the base budget of the district. Might I ask what is more appropriate than to fund the district budgets with the number of students being educated as the primary force driving the expenditures?

(3) The most serious problem of HCR 5007 is that the resolution is to take into account the **efficiency and effectiveness** of the school district boundary alignments. As I read through the criteria the Kansas State Board of Education is to consider, I see the consideration for district enrollment, travel requirements, proximity of other districts, size and condition of facilities, commerce and tradition, and finally property tax base.

My concern is that if we are analyzing schools for **efficiency and effectiveness**, why are we not spelling out any **effectiveness** measures, such as graduation rate, dropout rate, ACT test scores, students seeking post secondary education of one type or another, and disaggregated information about what districts work better for the minority students, females, and overall student performance. Why do we include the word **effectiveness** at all?

The real purpose of this study should be to analyze schools and determine if we have a trend in the **quality** of the graduates that might result in the reduction of social expenditures on such things as welfare and prisons. Those are the real measures of a school's **effectiveness and efficiency** in our world of today.

TESTIMONY
REGARDING HCR 5007
KANSAS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
EDUCATION COMMITTEE

by

Bill Grimes
Superintendent
USD 423, Moundridge

February 19, 1997

House Education
2-19-97
Attachment 10

Members of the Kansas House of Representatives Education Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to present my testimony here today concerning HCR No. 5007. This directive lays the groundwork for another round of school consolidation, such as the one completed in 1969. To this day, people across the State are still hostile about the effects of that one.

As an example, in the mid-80's when I arrived in the Moran-Marmaton Valley School District as a new high school principal, I had to discipline a student by suspending him for one day. I had no more than called his mother to inform her than she came FLYING in the door of my office, yelling that I wouldn't have done that to a MORAN kid.

Thoroughly confused, I said, "Excuse me, he is one of ours."

Mother replied, " You know d____ well he's from Elsmore, (a small community 8 miles south of Moran that lost their high school to consolidation more than 20 years earlier) and you can't tell me that you don't treat our kids differently."

I could not convince that mother then, and I still could not today, now almost 30 years after the fact. The same story is true in many, many small towns around the State. Just stop and talk to someone in a small town that has a deserted school building, if indeed you can find anyone available. That person will tell you how losing their school stole the life from their community. They will NEVER forget or forgive.

The instructions for the State Board are to "...(c) envision a configuration of school districts that would serve the needs of Kansas children, Kansas taxpayers, and Kansas society in the most efficient and effective manner attainable" When the legislature's own post audit committee studied reconfiguration (in August, 1992), they concluded that the only way to make consolidation cost effective was to close buildings. In the vast majority of neighboring districts that might be candidates for consolidation, neither district is capable of absorbing the enrollment of the other without costly new construction. Therefore, without new construction, the only way to consolidate districts is to use the existing buildings and transport the children. I do not want to be the person to tell a parent in Moundridge that "I'm sorry, but we are now part of the new Hesston-Goessel-Moundridge School District. Your first grader will be allowed to attend school here, but your sixth grader will be bussed to Goessel, and your sophomore will be at the Hesston center." As a matter of fact, there are many such scenarios happening in Kansas as we speak. NO ONE is happy about it! It is being done because no one location can accommodate the students and to appease the communities where each attendance center is located by keeping that building open. IT DOES NOT SAVE MONEY.....IT COSTS MORE !

The most important considerations of all are the needs of the children. I have already alluded to the extended bussing, the longer days, the inability to remain in their own communities; what about achievement? Families by the thousands are moving from metropolitan areas to suburban and rural settings and schools where their children can receive the quality of education for which Kansas is famous: smaller classes, teachers who know each student, teachers who meet each parent, and more personalized instruction that leads to documented higher achievement, higher graduation rates, and fewer dropouts. BIGGER is NOT BETTER where children are concerned. Educators do not think so, parents do not think so, and neither do responsible taxpayers.

Just as the Moundridge District passed a \$4 million bond issue this fall (with a 2 to 1 margin) to provide better learning facilities for our children, you will find very few communities that will not vote to raise their own taxes rather than lose their school. In fact, reexamine the outcry in Wichita and Lawrence when authorities wanted to close neighborhood schools, let alone whole districts.

In conclusion, to even bring up an issue that evokes so much anger, pain, and bitterness shows a lack of sensitivity to those adversely affected. Savings at the State or local level are questionable at best. Taxpaying citizens have already demonstrated that their local schools will be fiercely defended. This study is NOT in the best interest of the schools of Kansas nor in the children we serve.

WACONDA Unified School District No. 272

Serving Cawker City • Downs • Glen Elder • Tipton

Sharon Treaster, Superintendent



DATE: February 19, 1997
TO: House Education Committee
FROM: Dr. Sharon Treaster
Superintendent, Waconda U.S.D. #272
RE: House Concurrent Resolution No. 5007

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment today on a concurrent resolution directing the State Board of Education to undertake a study of school district organization and to render a blueprint for attainment of the optimal school district configuration.

I am Sharon Treaster, superintendent of Waconda U.S.D. #272. It is an honor to be here today and I appreciate the opportunity to discuss optimal school district configuration. I live in a sparsely populated area of Kansas in the north central part. My school district, U.S.D. #272 embodies 411 square miles, and parts of three counties: Mitchell, Osborne, and Smith. Within the 411 square miles are the towns of Glen Elder, Tipton, Cawker City and Downs with a total population of 3,197 people. The area's economic base is agriculture. Our transportation system carries 211 students daily. We have a total enrollment of 580: 37% of our kids ride the bus. Some of these kids are on the bus over an hour and travel 60 miles one way.

Location of U.S.D. #272-You have a map attached that shows the location of U.S.D. #272

I recently completed a dissertation for my doctoral degree from Kansas State University. The title of my dissertation was, "A Study of the Relationship Between Enrollment Size and Math Achievement in Kansas School Districts". For my research data I used the Kansas Math Assessments results that were given to grades 4, 7, and 10 in public schools in the state of Kansas for the years 1993 and 1994. The Kansas Assessment Program is one of the tools developed to support restructuring of the Kansas school system through Quality Performance Accreditation. Mathematics was the first component of the assessment program to be implemented.

The purpose of my study was to determine if school enrollment size and student achievement hold any implications for policy makers regarding further consolidation and efficiency measures. With the rising costs of education and a cry from the public for schools to get back to basics, policymakers should examine the school size question.

65.76 percent of Kansas's schools are rural with enrollment of 51.71 percent of Kansas students (U.S. Dept. of Educ. NCES, 1991-92).

Optimum School Size

Research has not yet revealed an "optimum" school or district size. The studies which have been conducted show a broad range enrollment for the best size school.

From 1930 to 1972, the time frame of consolidation, expenditures in U.S. public schools increased from less than \$90 to almost \$1,000 per pupil. Even when discounted for inflation, this was more than a 400% increase. It would appear that the consolidation movement had little success in dampening costs (Guthrie, 1979).

What has been taken into consideration in regard to optimum size has been related to financial savings. A number of studies have attempted to related school size to financial efficiency. Although
P.O. Box 326 • Cawker City, Kansas 67430 • Phone (913) 781-4328

larger schools can often be more cost effective in some budget categories, these savings are often offset by diseconomies of scale, defined as the financial disadvantages associated with increased size of an organization. Some potential diseconomies of larger or consolidated schools include increased costs of transportation, higher rates of vandalism, lack of school bond issue support, increased salaries due to higher salary schedules, and more specialized staff to offer the promised programs (Sher & Tompkins, 1977).

Optimum per Pupil Expenditure

Education is in competition for funds with other public services, and it is increasingly important to be able to show whether and under what circumstances additional dollars can lead to improved student outcomes. The results of a study by Wendling and Cohen (1981) showed that greater teacher quality, as measured by experience and degree status, was related to achievement of pupils. The same held for both approved operating expenditures per pupil and instructional expenditures per pupil. Greater expenditures were associated with greater levels of reading achievement.

There has been research done that suggests strong evidence that money affects the quality of schooling and that the quality of schooling influences not only test scores but later earnings as well.

If all children possessed equal endowments and were subject to identical non-school environmental factors, equal school expenditures might bring equality in educational achievement. But even with equal expenditures among school districts, equal achievement might not be attained. Equal numbers of dollars do not ensure equal quality of even quantity of resources, wages and salaries vary, as does the quality of teachers, principals, support staff, and so does the efficiency with which these resources are used to produce educational outcomes.

Data for Study

The purpose of this study was to determine if a significant relationship exists between school enrollment size and math achievement in Kansas schools. The dependent variable in this study was math achievement as measured by the Kansas Math Assessments for 1993 and 1994. The independent variables for this study were school enrollment size, average daily attendance, discipline referrals, number of dropouts, expenditure per pupil for the district, number of expulsions, number of pupils on free or reduced lunches, pupil/teacher ratio, average district salary for teachers, number of students in special education, and number of suspensions.

The data for this study came from the Center for Educational Testing and Evaluation, University of Kansas

Conclusions of my research

1. There was one significant correlation in the correlation matrix that suggested that students in grades seven in 1994 had decreasing math scores with increasing school size.
2. Expenditures per pupil and teacher's salaries appear to be significantly related to math achievement (positively).
3. The variables of drop-out, suspension, pupil/teacher ratio and expulsion appear to be significantly related to math achievement (negatively).
4. The variable free and reduced lunches, which is an indication of socioeconomic status, appears to be significantly related to math achievement (negatively).
5. Based on the preponderance of data in this study, there is no evidence to support that greater achievement could be gained by further consolidation of schools.
6. Based on the preponderance of data in this study, there is no evidence to suggest that small schools experience greater student achievement than do large schools.
7. Based on Conclusions #5 and #6, the effect of any policy discussion involving consolidation would speak more to fiscal efficiency than to academic effectiveness with the limitations of the impact of school enrollment size.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The purpose of this study was to determine if a significant relationship exists between school enrollment size and math achievement in Kansas schools. The dependent variable in this study was math achievement as measured by the Kansas Math Assessments for 1993 and 1994. The independent variables for this study were school enrollment size, average daily attendance, discipline referrals, number of dropouts, expenditure per pupil for the district, number of expulsions, number of pupils on free or reduced lunches, pupil/teacher ratio, average district salary for teachers, number of students in special education, and number of suspensions.

The data for this study came from the Center for Educational Testing and Evaluation, University of Kansas. The data for the measure of academic achievement consisted of the Kansas Assessment Test for Mathematics representing grades four, seven and ten for years 1993 and 1994. The data for the independent variables: school enrollment size, percentage of students on free and reduced lunch, percentage of students in special education, pupil/teacher ratio, average district salary for teachers, percentage of drop-outs in each school district, the average daily attendance, discipline referrals, out of school suspensions, and expulsions were taken from the Annual Building

Reports made to the state of Kansas by the building principals and superintendents. The data for expenditures per pupil were recorded from the financial reports sent to the State of Kansas by superintendents of each district.

The Kansas Math Assessments were analyzed in two steps to determine if school enrollment size is related to math achievement. The first step was a simple correlation of school size versus math achievement. The second step was a multiple regression using a partial F test to partition out the contribution of school enrollment size when other independent variables were also in the model. Two multiple regressions were used in this study: one contained all eleven independent variables, while the second used a forward selection technique. Since there were three grade levels and two years, it was necessary to have six separate hypotheses (one for each grade level and year) for each regression analysis.

Results

The Pearson correlation coefficient was used to describe the relationship between two variables (in this study, number of students and math score). It can vary from -1 to +1. If the correlation coefficient is negative, it means that a school with a high number of students is likely to have a low average math score. If the correlation is positive, it is likely that a school with a high number of students will have a high average math score. If the correlation is zero, there is no relation between the two variables. A $< .05$ was used, so if the value stated after the 'P=' is larger than .05 one would conclude that there is no relationship between the two variables and that the correlation is not statistically significant.

The correlation coefficients between school enrollment size and the

criterion variable, math achievement, were as follows:

In grade four in the year 1993 the correlation coefficient was $-.0004$ and $P=.990$.

In grade four in the year 1994 the correlation coefficient was $-.0063$ and $P=.857$.

In grade seven in the year 1993 the correlation coefficient was $.0036$ and $P=.940$.

In grade seven in the year 1994 the correlation coefficient was $-.1124$ and $P=.021$.

In grade ten in the year 1993 the correlation coefficient was $-.0091$ and $P=.865$

In grade ten in the year 1994 the correlation coefficient was $.0426$ and $P=.427$.

From the above it can be determined that only for the group of grade seven students in the year of 1994 was there a meaningful (negative) relationship between number of students enrolled and math score (correlation coefficient $=-.1124$, $p=.021$). One can then conclude that, in general, students in grade seven in 1994 performed worse on the Kansas Math Assessment as the size of the school increased.

The correlation coefficients alone do not provide enough insight into what effect school size may have on math achievement. Size must be placed into context with other variables that may influence academic achievement. The six null hypotheses used to test the relationship were as follows:

1. There is no statistically significant relationship between school enrollment size and math achievement in the fourth grade for year 1993.
2. There is no statistically significant relationship between school

enrollment size and math achievement in the fourth grade for year 1994.

3. There is no statistically significant relationship between school enrollment size and math achievement in the seventh grade for year 1993.

4. There is no statistically significant relationship between school enrollment size and math achievement in the seventh grade for year 1994.

5. There is no statistically significant relationship between school enrollment size and math achievement in the tenth grade for year 1993.

6. There is no statistically significant relationship between school enrollment size and math achievement in the tenth grade for year 1994.

Upon examining the twelve multiple regression model results given in Tables 4 through 28 it was determined that in eleven of the twelve cases school enrollment size could not be shown to be significantly (in statistical terms) related to math achievement. Only grade seven in 1994 indicated a significant (negative) relationship between number of students enrolled and math score (correlation coefficient = $-.1123$, $P=.021$) So with reasonable confidence one can conclude that, in general, students in grade seven in 1994 performed worse on the math test as school size increased. From the available data, there is little reason to believe that school enrollment size is related to math achievement.

Discussion Addressed to Policy Makers

The correlation analysis between school enrollment size and mathematic achievement does not provide exhaustive insight into what effect school size may influence academic achievement, i.e., results of this study are not sufficiently broad to permit decisions that small schools serve no useful educational purpose. Size must be placed into context with other variables that

11-7
~~11-6~~

may influence academic achievement. For example, it is interesting to note that in grade 4 and grade 7 pupil/teacher ratio was an important variable, but not in grade 10 where the pupil/teacher ratio showed negative significance with larger class size. The data therefore suggest that size may be extremely important at the elementary and middle school level, but it does not show a statistical significance at the high school level. As a result, more definitive exploration is needed to estimate the reasons behind the results before policymakers can know what happens as size increases.

The same is true for other variables. Salary, for example, for teachers and expenditures per pupil were positively related to the mean math score in 60% of the regression models. These findings parallel a study by Wendling and Cohen (1981) showing that greater expenditures per pupil were associated with greater levels of reading achievement. Another study by Card and Kruger (1990) found that teacher salaries are statistically significant predictors of an individual's later earnings. Yet it is not the case that policymakers should rush to causally link pay with achievement without further study since such work could be structured to show no effect of money on achievement.

The data demonstrate murkiness constantly. For example, it may be of some significance that in the 7th grade of 1993 pupil/teacher ratio and teacher salary were factors, but in the 7th grade of 1994 neither of these variables were significant. The variables that were significant in 1994 were dropout, enrollment size, expenditure per pupil and expulsion. The negative relationship between number of student enrolled and the math score correlation substantiates other researchers findings that these variables are related to lower academic achievement. As a result, policymakers need exhaustive and consistent data

11-8
~~11-7~~

before assuming too much from the narrow parameters of this present study.

Other variables' effect may have alternative explanations as well. For example, drop out rates are likely higher in larger schools, making comparability an issue when looking at achievement. Pittman and Haughwout (1987) explored the impact of high school size on dropout rate, using 744 schools from the High School and Beyond study. They reported that larger student bodies produce a poor school climate that encourages dropouts: "For every 400-student increase in the high school student population, there would be approximately a 1% rise in the dropout rate at that school" (Pittman & Haughwout, 1987, p. 343). These viewpoints suggest benefit to small schools not shown by the design of this study which was meant to test only one narrow issue.

Likewise, Lindsay (1982) replicated the work of Barker and Gump (1964) on the effects of school size. Lindsay found higher extracurricular participation, higher student satisfaction and attendance in schools of 100 or fewer pupils per grade. High attendance rates were three to four times more likely to be found in small high schools than large high schools. Lindsay reported that school size and socioeconomic status (SES) had independent effects: participation rates for low SES students at small schools are higher than for high SES at large schools.

By these measures, policy should be driven by many measures and policy makers must take into consideration many other aspects beyond the size of a school district when making financial considerations. This study did not present a significant finding of school enrollment size linked to academic achievement in the Kansas Math assessment, but neither did it show that small schools were doing a poorer job than large schools. They came out about the

11-9
~~11-8~~

same as far as a relationship between mean math scores and enrollment size. This present study suggests a need for more knowledge about pupil/teacher ratio, salary for teachers, and expenditures per student. It may be important for pupils to be in small classes where they garner a great deal of individual attention. It may be important for teachers to be paid a salary commensurate with other professionals. When the legislature makes decisions about school finance, it must look at the research available on the positive benefits of expenditures per student and also must consider the intangible aspects of small schools.

Policy makers should not ignore studies reaching opposite outcomes. For example, recent study from the Northwest Regional Laboratory in Portland, Oregon, shows that small schools are superior to large one on almost every measure. Kathleen Cotton, author of the report, looked at more than 100 research studies concerning the relationship between school size and difference aspects of schooling. Whenever small schools are not superior to large ones, they are just as good. As far as academic achievement, Cotton's review indicates that about half the studies find no difference in achievement and none found large schools superior. As one author suggests, student achievement in small schools is at least equal, and often superior, to student achievement in large schools (Houston, 1996).

Policymakers should also look closely at how climate affects achievement. For example, the traditional small school may be a primary source of community pride and identity. The family-like environment found in most small, rural schools may be unique and something to be cherished. Small schools are often integral parts of the communities they serve and are believed to enhance students' feeling of self-worth and civic pride--additional study is

needed to better estimate the contribution of such variables.

The arguments for smallness can be summarized as follows: Students are at the center of the school. Discipline is usually not a serious problem, thereby resulting in an increase in time spent learning. Teachers still have a sense of control over what and how they teach. Low pupil/teacher ratios allow for more individualized instruction and more attention given to students. Relationships between students, teachers, administrators, and school board members tend to be closer. Parental and community involvement is evident in small schools. While these arguments are far from closed in favor of the small school, neither should they be dismissed as 'irrelevant in the face of absent hard data.' Much work needs to be done before concluding that size makes no difference--it may make a difference in ways that do not reflect directly on math achievement. Future research to help identify and explain the effects of these less tangible characteristics of small schools is clearly needed. This study should in no way serve as a basis for closure or consolidations of schools.

The most difficult challenge facing the Kansas state legislature is to establish an adequate funding level for all school districts and to work toward that level on an equitable basis. Policymakers concerned with rural education will have to balance the inevitably higher costs of maintaining small schools with the potential advantages that small schools may offer to the students of rural communities. Such a difficult balancing act will take place in the arena of statewide concern for equity, effectiveness and efficiency in all Kansas school district and solutions will not emerge easily.

Assumptions

The conclusions of this study were based on the following assumptions:

1. The math achievement data provided by the Educational Testing Center, University of Kansas was accurate.
2. The Kansas Math Assessments for the years 1993 and 1994 are a valid and reliable measure of academic achievement.
3. The variables reported at the district level were representative and can be used as an appropriate measure for the individual schools.

Conclusions

With the assumptions accepted, the following conclusions were made:

1. There was one significant correlation in the correlation matrix that suggested that students in grade seven in 1994 had decreasing math scores with increasing school size.
2. Expenditures per pupil and teacher's salaries appear to be significantly related to math achievement (positively).
3. The variables of drop-out, suspension, pupil/teacher ratio and expulsion appear to be significantly related to math achievement. (negatively).
4. The variable free and reduced lunches, which is an indication of socioeconomic status, appears to be significantly related to math achievement (negatively).
5. Based on the preponderance of data in this study, there is no evidence to support that greater achievement could be gained by further consolidation of schools.
6. Based on the preponderance of data in this study, there is no

11-12
~~11-11~~

evidence to suggest that small schools experience greater student achievement than do large schools.

7. Based on Conclusions #5 and #6, the effects of any policy discussion involving consolidation would speak more to fiscal efficiency than to academic effectiveness within the limitations of the impact of school enrollment size.

Recommendations

Several recommendations are appropriate based on this study. These recommendations include a need for further research and policy development.

1. Similar studies should be conducted in other geographical areas to determine if similar results would obtain in other states.
2. More research is needed to estimate the changes in achievement over a longer period of time due to relationships between variables identified as significant in this study.
3. Similar studies should be conducted to determine the extent of the influence of per pupil expenditures and teacher salaries variables on differing grade levels and to determine if the relationships found in this study continue to hold
4. Since math achievement does not seem to be strongly related to school enrollment size, factors other than achievement should be considered when consolidation is being contemplated.
5. Policy makers should be aware that math achievement appears to be highly related to expenditures per pupil and teacher's salaries. If policy makers wish to improve academic achievement, these two areas should be acknowledged when developing school finance policies.

COMMENTS FROM USD 265 PATRONS IN RESPONSE TO 1997 HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 5007

The patrons of Goddard School District have some deep concerns about House Concurrent Resolution No. 5007 which would direct the State Board of Education to undertake a study of school district organization and to render a blueprint for attainment of the optimal school district configuration.

We cannot help but wonder who would benefit from a change in school district boundaries. We hope that you would agree that the most important elements of this equation are the children...the learners in our school districts who depend upon us.

We ask you to consider the following:

- The majority of Goddard School District patrons chose to live within our district because they wanted their children to attend Goddard Public Schools.
- Goddard School District patrons chose to move into our district knowing that their taxes could be higher than in other areas of Sedgwick County...but they believed their children's education was worth that investment.
- Goddard School District attributes much of its success to parental involvement — involvement in everything from room parents to curriculum to technology needs to developing plans to meet the need of our growing enrollment. Our patrons want to participate because they believe in their schools.
- Goddard School District patrons believe we provide quality education for their children. They believe we offer opportunities that are not evident in larger school districts. They recognize that more than 75% of our students enroll in higher education programs, and 95% of Goddard graduates are accepted at the college of their choice because of the quality education they received.
- Goddard School District offers sports programs — even for young athletes who are not the “top” performers in their sport. Our patrons recognize that larger school districts cannot offer these opportunities.
- Goddard School District patrons feel that our schools are neighborhood schools because everyone in the neighborhood attends the same school. This feeling promotes lifetime loyalty to Goddard Public Schools. It also fosters an atmosphere that encourages parental involvement — one of the keys to effective schools.
- Goddard School District patrons feel they get what they pay for. Many of the patrons testifying today will tell you that is the reason the vote for our new high school was successful on the first ballot.
- Local business owners tell us that when his managers are reviewing job applications, students from Goddard School District (and other small to mid-size school districts) are given priority because they have a reputation for being hard-working, loyal employees.
- Goddard School District patrons believe there is more accountability in smaller schools, and opportunities to exercise local control to provide the best possible education for their children.
- We note with pride that all of these statements are true, while Goddard School District operates with one of the lowest per pupil costs in the state of Kansas.

As you contemplate HCR 5007, please consider these questions:

- How much would the proposed study cost the taxpayers of the State of Kansas?
- In the brief 8-9 month timeframe proposed in HCR 5007, how can a **thorough** study be completed of the magnitude being considered for a “blueprint for attainment of the optimal school district configuration.”
- How would changes in school district boundaries affect communities? Many “consolidated” school districts cannot garner sufficient support today to pass bond issues to replace crumbling school facilities because of the emotional impact of the last round of school consolidation more than 30 years ago. The scars are deep and ugly, and communities are still divided.
- Why not seek to determine where the “problems” are before engaging in a far-reaching study? House Education Committee Chairman O’Neal has suggested an audit to determine how efficient schools are presently, and to propose possible areas for refinement. Goddard School District supports such an audit, and has volunteered to do a pilot study. We encourage you to pursue such an audit before we commission a “blueprint for attainment of optimal school district configuration.”
- How would the proposed blueprint mesh with present Kansas State statute that forbids a school district with fewer than 1,650 students from closing community schools without approval of voters in that school district through the election process.
- Who would benefit from a change in school district boundaries?
- Who would pay for the bond issues Goddard School District has passed to accommodate our growing school district?
- How will the State of Kansas be impacted economically by passage of this resolution to study school district boundaries? If our district boundaries are in jeopardy, how many homes will sit on the real estate market awaiting the outcome? How will property tax values be affected? How will home values be affected?
- If district boundaries were re-drawn to become (for example) county-wide school districts, how soon would larger districts experience urban flight to counties with smaller populations? What would ultimately be accomplished by such a plan?

This is obviously a very emotional issue. But, it is also a business issue and an economic issue. Most importantly, however, it is an education issue. Our schools are working hard to achieve success through effective school principles, high standards of performance, staff development and training, and development of a community learning concept. Give us an opportunity to reach the goals we have set for school improvement. Please don't put a detour on our road to success. **The effectiveness of our schools and the future of our children is at stake.**

House Education
2-19-97
Attachment 12

CHAIRMAN O'NEAL, DISTINGUISHED MEMBERS OF THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE 102

- THANK YOU FOR THE OPPORTUNITY TO ADDRESS YOU FOR ~~TWO~~ MINUTES
Three
- AFTER RESEARCHING THE STATUTES OF THE STATE OF KANSAS AND STUDYING THE EFFECTS OF THE LAST REORGANIZATION OF KANSAS PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN THE LATE 1960'S, IT IS ^{MY} ~~MY~~ OPINION ^W ~~W~~ HOPE YOU'VE, THAT FURTHER STUDY AT THIS TIME IS NOT ONLY UNNECESSARY, BUT A MYOPIC WASTE OF KANSAS TAXPAYER'S DOLLARS! (PAUSE & LOOK)
- I MAKE THIS STATEMENT BASED UPON THE FOLLOWING FACTS & JUDGMENTS:

> FIRST > PRESENT STATUTES PROVIDES FOR ~~SCHOOL~~ DISTRICT REORGANIZATION (KSA 72-7301 thru 7306), TRANSFER OF TERRITORY (KSA 72-7101 thru 7110), AND SCHOOL CLOSINGS (KSA 72-8136 a thru 8136 e)
(PAUSE & LOOK)

> SECOND > THERE IS ALREADY A POSSIBLE REMEDY IN STATUTE FOR RESIDENTS OF A DISTRICT THAT IS A PART OF A FIRST CLASS CITY TO PETITION FOR INCLUSION INTO THAT CITY'S USD (KSA 72-8120) ONLY THE DATE IN THE STATUTE NEEDS TO BE AMENDED - THIS CAN BE DONE AT NO COST TO TAXPAYERS (PAUSE & LOOK)

> THIRD > TO BE EFFICIENT YOU MUST AMEND (KSA 72-8213) WHICH MAKES IT VIRTUALLY IMPOSSIBLE FOR A BOARD TO CLOSE ANY ATTENDANCE CENTER IN A DISTRICT WITH FEWER THAN 1,600 STUDENTS - IF THIS STATUTE

House Education
2-19-97

Attachment 13

CONTINUES IN FORCE LITTLE SAVINGS WILL EVER
BE REALIZED.

- > FOURTH > A BOUNDARY STUDY THAT DOES NOT CONSIDER COMMUNITY ISSUES & SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT WILL SEND A MESSAGE THAT KANSAS BELONGS TO ANTI-TAX, REACTIONARIES & WILL BE A SERIOUS MISTAKE !!!

ANY SOLUTION MUST FOCUS ON

- a) Student achievement
- b) Local control
- c) a safe & orderly climate
- d) potential for all students to participate & be a part of the school community
- e) Pride in and commitment to community schools

- > NO SOLUTION SHOULD FOCUS ON DOLLARS ALONE !

FAILURE TO RECOGNIZE THE ABOVE RATIONALE WOULD
BE SIMPLY ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF DECISIONS BEING
MADE IN TOPEKA WITH NO REGARD FOR THE
NEEDS AND FEELINGS OF KANSAS KIDS & KANSAS
COMMUNITIES!

THANK YOU.

Presented by Goddard High
School seniors,

Eric Strader
Amber Engstrom