

Approved: 3/7/01 Date

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE K-12.

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Ralph Tanner at 9:00 a.m. on February 14, 2001 in Room 313-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except:

Committee staff present: Ben Barrett, Legislative Research
Carolyn Rampey, Legislative Research
Avis Swartzman, Revisor of Statutes
Ann Deitcher, Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee:

The Chair introduced Speaker Kent Glasscock who told the Committee how pleased he was with the work of their Subcommittees.

The Chair then recognized Vice-Chair, Kathe Lloyd who chaired the House Education Subcommittee on Accountability. (Attachment 1).

Offering the minority report of the Subcommittee were Representatives Peterson and Phelps. (Attachment 2).

It was moved by Representative Tomlinson and seconded by Representative Lloyd that both the Subcommittee and Minority reports be formally entered into the minutes. The motion passed on a voice vote.

The Chair explained to the Committee that they would request the Revisor to draw up a bill. When this bill is filed for the full Committee, it will then be determined the days it will be heard and conferees will be invited. This will occur after turn-around. The bill has been "blessed" as a parliamentary process, thereby affording the Committee more time in which to work it.

Representative Huebert spoke in regard to **SB 432** saying he understood they were charged to look at it and build upon it. The Chair said that the Committee, as well as conferees, would have an opportunity to dispel any doubts about whether **SB 432** had been fulfilled or if there were still things to be done.

The discussion on **SB 432** was closed.

Representative Tomlinson offered the report of the Subcommittee on School Finance. (Attachment 3). A brief discussion followed.

The meeting adjourned at 10:50 a.m. The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, February 15, 2001.

February 9, 2001

To: House Committee on Education

From: House Education Accountability Subcommittee:

Chair: Representative Kathe Lloyd

Members: Representatives Lisa Benlon, Willa DeCastro, Lana Gordon, Steve Huebert, Judith Loganbill, Jim Morrison, Ethel Peterson, Eber Phelps, Gerry Ray, and Jonathan Wells

Re: Final Report

The House Education Accountability Subcommittee held six meetings and heard from representatives of the State Department of Education, practitioners in the field, and other interested parties. It also was aware of a significant body of research on early childhood education and successful teaching practices.* It gave careful consideration to issues relating to accountability and submits its final report to the full Committee. It is the Subcommittee's hope that, by focusing policy on kindergarten and the early elementary grades one through three and by ensuring that each child learns the basic skills of reading, writing, and math, continued effort will be made to help children in Kansas have the best education possible.

Subcommittee Activities

The Subcommittee spent considerable time evaluating programs that focus on preparing children in the early grades to learn the basic skills they will need for the rest of

* Research articles and studies include: *Developmentally Appropriate Practices for Young Children*, by Susan B. Neuman, Carol Copple, and Sue Bredekamp; *Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children*, National Research Council; *Identification and Assessment to Prevent Reading Failure in Young Children*, by Joseph K. Torgesen; *Long-Term Cognitive and Academic Effects of Early Child Education on Children in Poverty*, by W. Steven Barnett; *The High/Scope Perry Preschool Study Through Age 27*; by L.J. Schweinhart, H.V. Barnes, and D. P. Weikert; *Good Teaching Matters a Lot*, by Katy Haycock; *A Strategy for Assuring High Caliber of American's Teachers*, by Lowell Milken; *Teacher and Classroom Context Effects on Student Achievement: Implications for Teachers Evaluation*, by S. Paul Wright, Sandra P. Horn, and William Sanders, and *The Teachers We Need and How to Get More of Them*, by the Thomas B. Fordham Foundation.

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their academic careers. Foremost among these skills is the ability to read. In this regard, the Subcommittee received reports from the State Department of Education on the implementation of the mastery of basic reading skills program enacted in SB 432 by the 2000 Legislature and on Quality Performance Accreditation (QPA). It also received information from educators in the field and other interested parties.

SB 432. SB 432 requires the State Board of Education to develop and implement a mastery of basic reading skills program in kindergarten and grades one through three in order to attain the goal of mastering basic reading skills by the time pupils complete the third grade. To do this, the State Board must identify state standards and outcomes pertinent for each grade kindergarten through three, develop a plan to monitor the reading progress of pupils at each grade level, and specify the means to determine mastery of reading skills by each pupil upon completion of the third grade. In implementing the program, the State Board must include a component for requiring school districts to provide interventions for pupils who are not making satisfactory progress toward mastering basic reading skills.

The legislation requires the State Board to report to the 2001 Legislature its plan to implement the program. During the 2001-02 school year the State Board must develop program standards and must implement the program in school districts in the 2002-03 school year.

Dr. Sharon Freden, Assistant Commissioner of Education, and Steve Adams, head of the School Improvement and Accreditation section of the State Department of Education, presented the State Board's report. After receiving input from an advisory committee comprised of primary reading teachers, representatives of institutions of higher education, administrators, and State Department staff, the State Board in December of 2000 adopted a strategy to implement the mastery of basic reading skills program that incorporates and builds on initiatives currently in place, including existing state assessments and QPA. Specifically, the State Board intends to use curricular reading and writing standards already in place to identify grade specific reading standards. An instructional support document will be developed to address the needs of children who are not progressing satisfactorily. A primary tool to assess reading skills will be the second grade diagnostic assessment first used in 1999. Schools currently use this test at the beginning of the second grade to determine each student's reading level. The State Board recommends that the test also be used at other grade levels, including the third grade, to identify those students who are not making satisfactory progress and who may need help. The State Board intends to develop a professional development plan to provide training to primary grade teachers to assure that the program is properly implemented.

Testimony from a Reading Specialist. Gayle Newman, an elementary reading specialist from USD 229 (Blue Valley) described her job and talked about what makes a child a good reader and how she works with individual students and serves as a resource to her school. In her view, teacher education programs are doing a good job of preparing new teachers to teach reading at the early grades and school districts have a number of innovative and effective reading programs. She said in her school district, the identification

of children with reading problems begins when they enter kindergarten. Assessment most often at a young age is on the basis of observation, not structured tests. Ms. Newman believes the second grade reading diagnostic assessment is a good tool. She told the Subcommittee she uses the second grade assessment to develop strategies to help students with reading problems. When providing interventions, she said all resources used to improve a child's progress should be well documented and, once improvement is made, less monitoring of the child's progress should occur unless the child falls behind again. She emphasized that assessments should be performance-based and embedded in the curriculum.

The Development of Quality Performance Accreditation. Dr. Freden reviewed with the Subcommittee the development of QPA in Kansas and traced it back to the 1980s when accreditation on the basis of outcomes and pupil performance that could be measured emerged as priorities among educators and the public in general. In Kansas, an outcomes accreditation task force was created in 1989 that was made up of legislators, local board members, teachers, and administrators. One of the things the task force concluded was that a number of districts already were using effective schools principles. The task force's report led to the adoption by the State Board in 1991 of QPA—an outcomes-based program for school improvement based on accountability measures, such as performance on state and local assessments. QPA was made statutory in 1992 as part of the School District Finance and Quality Performance Act.

Reports from the Field. Chris Cooper, an elementary school principal in USD 435 (Abilene) and Dr. Mary Devin, Superintendent of USD 475 (Geary County Schools) shared their perspectives with the Subcommittee. Mr. Cooper explained that the North Central Association (NCA) and QPA staff work closely together, so schools that have chosen to become accredited by the NCA do not have to duplicate QPA work. According to Mr. Cooper, NCA accreditation utilizes the same process but involves more paperwork and more frequent accreditation visits (five over the five-year cycle instead of two). There presently are about 550 schools that are NCA accredited.

Dr. Devin described the activities of the Accreditation Study Task Force, a group of teachers, administrators, board members, and parents representing the entire state who have been charged by the State Board with evaluating QPA and making recommendations to the Board in August of 2001 on how QPA might be improved. The Task Force will evaluate components of the current system that are working well, what needs to be changed, what other states are doing, and how the process could be streamlined and simplified. The Task Force has met six times and is in the process of analyzing a survey of perceptions toward QPA held by various stakeholder groups. The Task Force will continue meeting throughout the spring and summer of 2001 and will finalize its report in June and July.

Dr. Devin said preliminary observations about QPA are that the process needs to be stabilized so that changes from year to year are minimized. She said teachers and administrators also need to be able to have time away from the classroom to do the

paperwork and preparation associated with QPA. Problems identified by the Task Force include a lack of consistency in definitions and the need for more professional development.

Input from the Kansas Association of School Boards. Mark Tallman endorsed the goal that every child should be reading at grade level by the end of the third grade and that students should master academic standards as they progress through school. He noted that adding testing and mandating standards do not necessarily result in improved student performance and encouraged the Legislature not to mandate more assessments until it is known whether more testing will be imposed at the national level as the result of education proposals made by President Bush.

Input from the Commissioner of Education. The Subcommittee Chair, Representative Lloyd, and the Commissioner of Education, Dr. Andy Tompkins, met and discussed the importance of developing basic skills in kindergarten and grades one through three stressing the importance of district-level involvement and control. Dr. Tompkins discussed proposals to require that students be retained if they fail to progress satisfactorily and said research findings indicate that retention after the third grade seldom is effective and produces mixed results at the lower grades. However, he indicated that, if a child were to be retained it should occur as early as possible. Further, there are cases when retention works. He said that if there is a retention policy there also must be intensive help for the child to improve. Dr. Tompkins questioned the value of a mandate to retain students in the face of parental opposition, noting that school districts presently have the authority to hold students back but often do not because parents object.

Dr. Tompkins expressed concern about adding more tests to the testing program currently in place if the possibility exists that the federal government also will impose more tests. He also addressed the idea of giving teachers bonuses on the basis of achievement of students in grades kindergarten through three on the grounds that a bonus program limited to teachers in the early grades would inherently be unfair to other good teachers and could encourage a migration of teachers away from the upper grades.

Subcommittee Recommendations

The Subcommittee believes the last decade has been fruitful in terms of focusing on outcomes-based measures of student achievement and recognizing the importance of the mastery of basic skills, especially in the early grades. This focus is evidenced by the implementation of QPA and the more recent enactment of legislation implementing the mastery of basic reading skills program in kindergarten and grades one through three.

Building on these achievements, the Subcommittee recommends additional measures that would target children at an age when mastering basic skills in reading, writing, and mathematics is essential to future academic success. They include:

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- The development by the State Department of Education of a "school readiness definition" and a "school readiness indicator" that will be used for children entering kindergarten.
- The development by the State Department of Education of "skill sets" for reading, writing, and mathematics that each child should master upon completion of the third grade;
- Setting the goal that 90 percent of all third graders will master the skill sets, as determined by a "third grade accomplishment examination" to be administered at the end of the third grade;
- The development of "markers" by local school districts to measure whether a child is progressing adequately toward acquisition of the skill sets at the end of kindergarten and grade levels one through three;
- Regular assessments or diagnostic reviews, chosen by the district, during kindergarten and first, second, and third grades to determine a child's level of performance;
- Locally-developed intervention strategies to help students who need assistance, including a first grade reading intervention; and
- Mandatory retention for a child who does not accomplish the district-determined grade-level markers despite intervention.

In addition, the Subcommittee recommends the creation of review committee comprised of Legislators which would monitor the State Department of Education and its implementation of legislation pertaining to elementary-secondary students and would have authority to review state-funded preschool and early childhood programs.

These initiatives are incorporated into proposed legislation, which has the following major components:

- By October 31, 2001, the State Department of Education, in consultation with the Kansas Children's Cabinet, the State Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services, the State Department of Health and Environment, and others knowledgeable about early childhood education shall determine a *school readiness definition*. Based on this definition, the State Department of Education shall design a *school readiness indicator* for use with children upon entrance to kindergarten.
- By October 31, 2001, the State Department of Education shall define *skill sets* for reading, writing, and mathematics which a child should be able to

execute by the end of the third grade. These skill sets *shall not be minimum level skills*, but should reflect grade level proficiency.

Master
skills

- The State Department of Education shall design a *third grade accomplishment examination* to be administered to all third graders at the end of each school year, beginning in school year 2002-03, to determine whether pupils have mastered the reading, writing, and mathematics skill sets.
- By October 31, 2001, the State Department of Education shall set a goal that by 2010, 90 percent of the pupils exiting the third grade statewide shall have acquired the reading, writing, and mathematics skill sets, on the basis of the results of the third grade accomplishment examination. If the goal is not achieved, the State Department shall establish a new plan to meet the goal.
- School districts must construct plans for identifying markers which indicate whether a child is making progress toward acquisition of the skill sets. A school district shall use locally-determined assessments or diagnostic reviews during kindergarten and each of the first, second, and third grades to determine a child's level of performance. The plan must embed the assessments or diagnostic reviews into the curriculum and implement a measure to check each child's progress during the fall or spring semesters, or both.
- A school district must establish a plan for providing each child who needs assistance with locally-determined interventions. The plan may include, but is not limited to, restructured school days, additional school days, summer school, and individualized instruction. In addition, the interventions must include the implementation of a first-grade reading intervention that is research based and has a proven 75 percent success rate and is characterized by sustained learning over time using a short-term, one-on-one tutoring intervention from 12 to 20 weeks.
- Diagnostic reviews or assessments may be implemented in addition to current assessments or reviews, or in lieu of current assessments or reviews, as long as the district continues to meet QPA accreditation requirements. School districts must continue to implement the second grade reading diagnostic currently required by the state.
- A school district plan must include a mechanism to track the intervention and progress of a child who has been identified as needing assistance. Once a child has accomplished the district-determined level of accomplishment, no further tracking will be necessary unless the child falls behind in another grade. If the child does not accomplish the grade-level markers defined by the school district despite of intervention, the child will be

retained to repeat the grade. The district will determine the measures by which the child's progress will be measured.

- The State Department of Education shall pilot the third grade accomplishment examination in the spring of 2002. The school readiness indicator shall be developed by August 1, 2002. School district plans shall be constructed by August 1, 2002. During the first year, each school district will administer the third grade examination to set each school's baseline.
- The State Department of Education, the Kansas Children's Cabinet, the State Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services, the State Department of Health and Environment, and any other state agency or state-funded program which impacts early childhood development must all report in their FY 2003 budget requests how their early childhood programs impact children from birth to entry into kindergarten according to the school readiness definition.
- In order to oversee activities relating to elementary-secondary education, the Joint Committee on Education Review would be created. The Joint Committee would be composed of five members of the Senate and five members of the House appointed by the Legislative leadership to two-year terms. The Joint Committee would elect its own chairperson and vice-chairperson and would have authority to meet at any time and at any place in the state on its own initiative. The Joint Committee would be authorized to introduce legislation and would have the following specific statutory powers:
 - Monitor and oversee the implementation of all legislation passed during the preceding year concerning students who are enrolled in kindergarten through grade 12.
 - Review state-funded preschool and early childhood development programs to see if such programs are reaching or attaining the school readiness indicators.

Minority Report
Accountability Subcommittee
House Education Committee
February 8, 2001

Mr. Chairman and member of the Committee:

The members of the Subcommittee whose names appear at the end of this report respectfully submit this minority report.

72-7534. Basic reading skills; mastery program; report to legislature. (a) The state board of education shall prepare a strategy for identifying, developing, and implementing a mastery of basic reading skills program in kindergarten and each of grades one through three of school districts based upon the goal of mastery of basic reading skills by pupils upon completion of the third grade. In carrying out this directive, the state board shall:

(1) Identify state standards and outcomes of mastery of basic reading skills in kindergarten and each of grades one through three;

(2) prepare a plan for monitoring the progress of pupils in kindergarten and at each applicable grade level in achieving mastery of basic reading skills; and

(3) specify the means to be used for determining mastery of basic reading skills by each pupil upon completion of grade three.

(b) The state board's strategy shall include a component for requiring school districts to provide interventions for pupils who are not making satisfactory progress toward mastering basic reading skills such as, but not limited to, a restructured school day, additional school days, summer school, or individualized instruction.

(c) The state board of education shall report to the 2001 legislature a strategy and proposed plan for implementing the mastery of basic reading skills program with development of standards during the 2001-02 school year and commencement of the plan in the 2002-03 school year. The state board report to the 2001 legislature shall include estimates of the cost to the state of implementing the program.

History: L. 2000, ch. 138, § 9; July 1.

You may notice that some of the dates given in the last paragraph above are already past. This is because the previously stated material is from Senate Bill 432, passed and signed into law in 2000.

We have not included the provision for creating a Joint Committee on Education Review. We believe this committee to be unnecessary and to be duplicating the duties already delineated for the following entities: the State Board of Education, the State Department of Education, the Senate Education Committee, and the House Education Committee.

According to the majority report, "The Joint Committee would elect its own chairperson and vice-chairperson and would have the authority to meet at any time and at any place in the state on its own initiative. The Joint Committee would be authorized to introduce legislation and would have the following specific powers:

- "Monitor and oversee the implementation of all legislation passed during the preceding year concerning students who are enrolled in kindergarten through grade 12.

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- “Review state-funded preschool and early childhood development programs to see if such programs are reaching or attaining the school readiness indicators.”

Think about that—these recommendations usurp the local school board’s oversight and initiatives. What is next—subpoena power? This is a solution searching for a problem. Let’s use our energy and resources to fix real problems, using the procedures already established. Carefully thought-out programs that are allowed to develop as planned are the answer. We respectfully submit them—SB432 as passed by the 2000 session of the Kansas Legislature.


Rep. Ethel M. Peterson


Rep. Eber Phelps



**REPORT OF THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON SCHOOL FINANCE
TO THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION**

Chairman

Representative Robert Tomlinson

Members

Representatives Marti Crow, Karen DiVita, John Faber, Geraldine Flaharty,
Deena Horst, Bill Mason, Ralph Ostmeyer, Bill Reardon, Sue Storm,
and Daniel Williams

Subcommittee Activities

Meetings. The Subcommittee held eight meetings—on January 17, 23, 25, and 30 and February 1, 6, and 7 (two meetings).

Major Public School Funding Plans. The initial organizational meeting was followed by two meetings during which the Subcommittee heard detailed explanations of the comprehensive public education funding proposals authorized by: The State Board of Education, the Governor's Vision 21st Century Initiative Task Force on K-12 Education: Financing for Results, the Governor, the School Finance Coalition, and Schools For Fair Funding. A presentation on behalf of Wichita USD 259 also highlighted certain specific school finance concerns. (Information on these proposals is available in the Subcommittee files.)

An Alternative Approach to Financing Public Education. Dr. Kent Hurn, Professor of Education at Washburn University and Superintendent of Seaman (USD 345), presented material on program directed funding for public education. He focused on the *Strayer/Haig* school funding model. Dr. Hurn explained that this model, developed in 1923, provides one approach for constructing a state school foundation finance program. Dr. Hurn explained the context in which this school funding model was devised. At that time, virtually all school funding plans were largely property tax reliant. Then, school transportation systems, special education programs, school lunch programs, and various other related endeavors which now are common to school systems did not exist.

The funding model addressed vast differences in the property tax bases of schools and supported local choice in school programs. According to Dr. Hurn, the notion was that the wealthiest school district would levy a property tax at a rate necessary for the purpose of providing a basic education. This basic level of education would be determined by the

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governing body which administers education certification. That would be the State Board of Education in Kansas, which, among other things, establishes minimum high school graduation requirements. Whatever mill rate was necessary to fund the basic program by the richest district would be levied by every school district. The state, then, would make up the difference in costs necessary to fund the basic program. Each school district would be allowed to add any program it chose. The program would be paid in the same proportion by the state as applied to the basic program.

Dr. Hurn listed the following pros and cons of this school funding approach:

Pros

- Recognizes education as a state function.
- Is politically popular because of the minimum education requirements.
- Supports local control.
- Enhances fiscal independence.
- Facilitates local initiative and efficiency.
- Encourages reorganization of school districts.
- Establishes a demand for a minimum local tax effort.

Cons

- Requires defining what constitutes a basic education.
- Relies locally only on the property tax.
- Did not contemplate special education.
- Does not produce financing equity.
- Reluctance of the legislature to finance equalization.
- Wealthy districts allowed to forge ahead on poorer districts.
- Does not address large and small district issues.
- Does not consider large increases in gas, utilities, and insurance.

Dr. Hurn cited one school finance authority who contends that a school finance equalization model should be used if the belief is that a basic educational opportunity should be available to all. Other authorities argue that full state support of education is required if the commitment is to educational opportunities that are equal without variation to all.

Discussion of Issues with Dr. Hurn. Dr. Hurn acknowledged that discussing the notion of a basic education for school finance purposes is appealing. This becomes more difficult, though, when parties move to the task of defining a specific quantity of education that is to be the focal point of the school funding program. Some will take a much more expansive view of this matter than others. It was noted that the State Board of Education's high school graduation requirements could be used as a point of departure for such discussion. These, of course, do not specify educational activity at the elementary an

middle school levels, nor are they entirely compatible with qualified admissions standards for access to the state university system.

In response to questions, Dr. Hurn agreed that there are similarities between the *Strayer/Haig* model and Kansas' former School District Equalization Act, which was based on a school district wealth equalization concept.

Subcommittee members discussed the issue of adequacy as it relates to the level of funding for a school finance program. It was noted that an inadequate level of school funding will place in jeopardy any type of school funding plan that might be in operation in a state. More recently, there has been a shift in the direction of school finance litigation from equity to adequacy concerns.

Dr. Hurn endorsed the effectiveness of the Kansas Quality Performance Accreditation system as a sound, continuous school improvement initiative that responds to concerns that some express about holding schools accountable. In response to a question, Dr. Hurn urged legislators not to be consumed by trying to explain a school funding formula to their constituents, but, instead, to emphasize adequacy concerns by focusing on the importance of having the best qualified people in the classrooms and for supporting programs, such as alternative school or early reading problem interventions, that are needed and that will have a material impact on student success.

Perspectives from Outside the "Traditional" Education Interest Community—Kansas Taxpayers Network and Kansas Public Policy Institute. Mr. Karl Peterjohn, Executive Director of the Kansas Taxpayers Network, explained that a principal thrust of his organization is to oppose all efforts to raise taxes and to better control the growth of government spending. The Network believes that the most effective means of improving Kansas schools is to create an education tax credit to empower families. Mr. Peterjohn was critical of the various ways school financial data are displayed as they often do not provide the public a full picture of trends and current spending levels. He explained that Kansas is at or above the spending level for education in this region of the country and that K-12 public school spending has been the fastest growing part of state expenditures in the last decade. He acknowledged that there will be continued pressure to improve Kansas public education, but he said the problem is not financial; rather, it is related to curriculum, instructional issues, testing, and other factors which are only marginally impacted by changing the amount of tax funds spent.

Mr. Bob Corkins, Executive Director of the Kansas Public Policy Institute, said that Kansas has not short-changed K-12 education in funding. He said that of 15 Midwestern states, Kansas ranks fifth highest in spending for education. Citing the Kansas city, Missouri public school system as an example, Mr. Corkins said that increased spending would not increase educational quality. He said that Kansas should move to a student centered funding approach under which student characteristics only would be the driver. He said that the biases in the current system toward facilities and programs should be eliminated. The

school facilities, ancillary school facilities, low enrollment, and transportation weightings were cited as features that should be addressed.

More importantly, according to Mr. Corkins, greater competition needs to be injected into the system. This could be facilitated by public school open enrollment policies, charter schools, pension reform (moving to defined contribution plans), improved school district accounting practices, funding driven school consolidation initiatives, and greater use of technology in the delivery of education services.

Committee Deliberations and Recommendations

Philosophical Basis for a School Finance Plan. The Subcommittee commenced its deliberations with a discussion of broad issues that serve as philosophical underpinnings of a school finance program and moved, more specifically, to an attempt to achieve consensus regarding members' perceptions about the infirmities of the current school funding plan.

Equity of the School Financing Program is the Goal. After extensive discussion of the concepts of equity and equality as the operating premise for a school finance system, the Subcommittee opted for an equity concept, recognizing that there is great variation among individuals in their views on equity issues. The principle is that, in carrying out its mandate to make suitable provision for the financing of the public education system, the Legislature should be guided by equity considerations as its measuring device. The Subcommittee recognized that equity does not have a uniform meaning throughout the state, but has features unique to various localities. The challenge is to provide a funding system that is perceived generally to be equitable while flexible, and not materially dependent on the local capacity to fund schools.

Components of an Education System Which Complies with Obligations Imposed Under the *Kansas Constitution*. The Subcommittee reached agreement on the following components of a public education finance system it believes should be provided and which should meet the Legislature's constitutional obligation:

- Foundation skills building blocks;
- Pre-college curriculum;
- Preparation for pursuing technical training; and
- Sufficiently broad curriculum for the opportunity of a child to become a well-rounded citizen.

The Subcommittee believes that, as a bare minimum, the goal of providing these components should be achieved. At the same time, school districts should retain control over discussions of how the goals are to be met and should not be restricted in meeting them on the basis of what they can afford locally to fund. The Subcommittee believes that the components it has identified should not be viewed as a barrier to future growth in areas that policymakers come to consider to be indispensable in provision of an adequate public education system.

The Current Funding Mechanism—Fundamentally Sound, but in Need of Some Major Changes. The Subcommittee addressed the issue of whether the current school finance formula is so flawed that systemic change is needed, whether the basic structure of the formula should be maintained and major alterations made, or whether the structure should be maintained and only relatively minor changes made. The consensus was that the formula continues to be serviceable, but that some major alterations are in order. The funding mechanism, quite properly, remains under constant review in order to ensure that it effectively addresses ever-changing circumstances and expectations for public education.

Priorities to Guide School Finance Consideration During the 2001 Legislative Session. There was much discussion about priorities that should be assigned for funding by the 2001 Legislature of public education for the 2001-02 school year. The Chairman urged Subcommittee members to factor into their thinking about this a perception of the amount of funding that reasonably might be expected to be available for this purpose in the absence of some form of tax increase. In particular, the discussion included Base State Aid Per Pupil (BSAPP) and all of the pupil weightings, as well as special education, certain early childhood interventions, the bond and interest matching state aid program, workforce training, accountability, and teacher recruitment. A consensus was reached on the following items:

- The increase in BSAPP should not be less than \$50.
- A linkage should be established between increases in BSAPP and increases in the correlation weight.
- The Governor's proposed increase in the at-risk weighting from 9 percent to 10 percent should be supported.
- State support of the four year-old at-risk program should increase by not less than the \$1.0 million the Governor has recommended from tobacco money for FY 2002 to expand the program by 436 children to a total, statewide, of 2,230.
- The goal for state financial support of special education funding should be for the state to guarantee in future years the maintenance of the current estimated FY 2002 level of categorical aid for special education excess costs (85.3 percent), and for this amount to be supplemented by the

amount of subsequent increases in federal aid for special education, in accord with the objective, ultimately, of reaching 100.0 percent of the excess costs of providing special education services.

- Early childhood and early grades, especially K-3, should be viewed as an education policy priority in Kansas.
- The principle contained in HB 2218 should be adopted, thus removing from the law the Kansas Public Employees Retirement System (KPERS) penalty (loss of pension benefits) which applies while a KPERS retirant teacher is employed by the school district from which the teacher retired and earns \$15,000 or more per year.
- The Legislature should fund fully the National Board Certification Teaching Excellence Awards program by adding \$11,000 to the amount recommended by the Governor for FY 2002.
- The House Appropriations Committee should explore the concept of developing a program for a two-year budget cycle for funding public elementary and secondary education.

Recommended Topics for Interim Study

In recognition of the fact that several very important school finance recommendations discussed are both complex and vexing to resolve, the Subcommittee reached consensus on certain issues it believes should be assigned to interim consideration by a school finance study committee. After considerable discussion, the listing of potential topics was pared to the following five issues upon which there was the strongest agreement:

- Special education funding, especially consideration of a student-driven funding approach such as the two-tier method that the Governor has proposed.
- School finance program equity issues.
- Pupil transportation funding method and criteria for school district provision of this service.
- Declining enrollment financial and related issues.
- Teacher recruitment, including means of attracting teachers to serve in both disciplines and geographic areas where teacher shortages exist.

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