

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE K-12 EDUCATION COMMITTEE.

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Ralph Tanner at 9:00 a.m. on March 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: Gayle Newman, Blue Valley School District
Dr. Alison Banikowski, Olathe School District

HB 2546 - Establishing Kansas skills for success in school program; imposing certain duties on state Department of Ed and school districts.

Carolyn Rampey distributed copies of a breakdown of the recently amended **HB 2546**. (Attachment 1). Following this, questions were asked by the Committee of those representatives of the Accountability Sub Committee who explained the work done to prepare the bill.

A copy of the proposed amendment to **HB 2546** was handed out. (Attachment 2).

Written testimony from Bill Marshall of Help Our Students To Succeed (HOSTS), a proponent of **HB 2546** was distributed. (Packets of this testimony will be available in this office during this session).

Gayle Newman spoke as an opponent of **HB 2546**. (Attachment 3).

Dr. Alison Banikowski spoke as an opponent of **HB 2546**. (Attachment 4).

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

HB 2546—Kansas Skills for Success in School Program

Level	Event	Who is Responsible
Entrance to Kindergarten	Upon entrance to kindergarten, students will be assessed for readiness to learn, based upon a "school readiness indicator."	The State Department of Education will determine a "school readiness definition" and will design the "school readiness indicator" for use by the Legislature in assessing the effectiveness of state-funded preschool programs in preparing children for kindergarten. This will be done in consultation with the Kansas Children's Cabinet, SRS, the State Department of Health and Environment, and other citizens knowledgeable about childhood education and children's health, including community-based nonprofit groups. School districts would have to implement kindergarten screening procedures based on the school readiness definition.
Kindergarten	Children will be evaluated to determine progress being made to acquire grade level proficiency and to diagnose skill level. Evaluations will be on the basis of assessments or diagnostic reviews built into the curriculum. Progress will be measured during the fall or spring semesters, or both.	<p>School districts must construct a plan for grade-level "identifying markers" used to measure a student's progress. Reading, writing, and mathematics "skill sets" that students must acquire by completion of the third grade will be developed by the State Department of Education. School districts may select the assessments or diagnostic reviews that will be used, which could be in addition to, or in lieu of, current assessments or diagnostic reviews, or could be assessments currently in use as long as the district meets QPA requirements.</p> <p>The purpose of the assessment would be to target specialized intervention to bring the child up to grade level in reading, writing, and mathematics.</p> <p>School districts are responsible for establishing a plan to assist children who need help and for determining the interventions, based on input from each child's parents and teachers. In developing interventions, school districts must consult and are encouraged to partner with community-based and nonprofit organizations in providing services and interventions.</p>

"Interventions" must be provided children who need help. The intervention plan could include a restructured school day, additional days, summer school, or individualized instruction. (Full-day kindergarten shall not be required.) The attendance of a child at an intervention may be required by a district, but the parents of a child could waive the attendance.

Level	Event	Who is Responsible
	<p>A mechanism must be created to track the progress and interventions of a child who needs assistance until the child accomplishes grade-level markers. A child who does not accomplish grade-level markers, in spite of intervention, will be subject to measures taken in the child's best interest, including more intensive intervention or retention to repeat the grade.</p>	<p>School districts must create mechanisms to track the interventions and progress of students who need assistance. School districts also must determine levels of accomplishment for each grade and the ways student progress will be measured.</p>
First Grade	<p>Same as for kindergarten, except:</p> <p>Interventions provided by districts for students who need help must include a first grade reading intervention that is a research-based method designed for first graders that has a proven success rate and features sustained learning over time using a short-term, one-on-one tutoring intervention when considered necessary or intensive research-based small group tutoring.</p>	<p>The first grade reading intervention must be selected and implemented by school districts.</p>
Second Grade	<p>Same as for kindergarten, except:</p> <p>School districts must continue to use the second grade reading diagnostic as part of assessment of student progress.</p>	<p>The second grade reading diagnostic is required by the state, but school districts may select the assessment they will use.</p>
Third Grade	<p>Same as for kindergarten, except:</p> <p>Beginning in 2002-03 school year, the third grade accomplishment examination will be given to all third grade pupils at the end of the school year.</p>	<p>The State Department must develop the third grade accomplishment examination and pilot the examination in the spring of 2002. The State Board of Education would determine whether the third grade accomplishment examination would be in addition to or in lieu of any other assessment.</p>

HOUSE BILL NO. 2546

Kansas Skills for Success in School Program

TIMELINE

Date	Must Be Accomplished
July 1, 2001	Legislative Educational Planning Committee is expanded to 15 members and will consist of three subcommittees: the Subcommittee on Early Childhood, the Subcommittee on K-12 Education, and the Subcommittee on Postsecondary Education.
By October 31, 2001	State Department of Education must determine a "school readiness definition."
By October 31, 2001	State Department must define a skill set for reading, writing, and mathematics which children should be able to execute upon completion of the third grade.
By October 31, 2001	State Department must set goal that, by 2010, at least 90 percent of the pupils exiting the third grade have acquired reading, writing, and mathematics skill sets, as determined on the basis of the third grade accomplishment examination.
On November 1, 2001	State Department must report progress toward implementation of the act to the Legislative Educational Planning Committee.
By August 1, 2002	State Department must develop a "school readiness indicator" for use with children upon entrance to kindergarten.
By August 1, 2002	School districts must construct a plan for identifying markers to indicate whether a child is progressing adequately toward acquisition of the skill sets and for diagnosing each child's skill level.
By August 1, 2002	School districts must have plans for providing each child needing assistance with locally-determined interventions, including an intensive first grade reading intervention.
Spring semester, 2002	State Department must pilot the third grade accomplishment examination.
2002-03 school year	Statewide program begins.
2002-03 school year	Third grade accomplishment examination must be given statewide to determine whether pupils have mastered reading, writing, and mathematics skill sets. Examination will be administered each year to all third grade pupils upon completion of the grade. The examination given in school year 2002-03 will set the school's baseline.

Date	Must Be Accomplished
FY 2003 and thereafter	State Department of Education, Kansas Children's Cabinet, SRS, State Department of Health and Environment, and any other state agency or state-funded program which impacts early childhood development must report in their budget requests how state-funded early childhood programs impact the children served by such programs from birth to entry into kindergarten, according to the school readiness definition.
By 2010	The goal that at least 90 percent of pupils exiting the third grade must acquire reading, writing, and mathematics skill sets, as determined on the basis of the third grade accomplishment examination must be attained. If the goal is not attained, the State Department must develop a new plan for attainment of the goal.

By October 31, 2001	State Department of Education must determine a school readiness definition.
By October 31, 2001	State Department must define a skill set for reading, writing, and mathematics which children should be able to execute upon completion of the third grade.
By October 31, 2001	State Department must set goal that by 2010, at least 90 percent of the pupils exiting the third grade have acquired reading, writing, and mathematics skill sets, as determined on the basis of the third grade accomplishment examination.
On November 1, 2001	State Department must report progress toward implementation of the act to the Legislative Educational Planning Committee.
By August 1, 2002	State Department must develop a school readiness indicator for use with children upon entrance to kindergarten.
By August 1, 2002	School districts must construct a plan for identifying markers to indicate whether a child is progressing adequately toward acquisition of the skill sets and for assigning each child's skill level.
By August 1, 2002	School districts must have plans for providing each child reading assistance with locally-determined interventions, including an intensive first grade reading intervention.
Spring semester, 2002	State Department must pilot the third grade accomplishment examination.
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1-4

HOUSE BILL NO. 2456

Reconstitution of the Legislative Educational Planning Committee

The existing Legislative Educational Planning Committee (LEPC) would be expanded and given new duties. The Committee's current statutory charge pertains to postsecondary education only.

Composition

- Fifteen members (current number is 11), consisting of six Senators and nine Representatives, as follows:
 - Chair, vice-chair, and ranking minority member of Senate Education Committee, or their designees
 - Chair, vice-chair, and ranking minority member of Senate Ways and Means Committee, or their designees
 - Chair, vice-chair, and ranking minority member of House Education Committee, or their designees
 - Chair, vice-chair, and ranking minority member of House Higher Education Committee, or their designees
 - Chair, vice-chair, and ranking minority member of House Appropriations Committee, or their designees

The Legislative Coordinating Council shall annually designate the chair, vice-chair, and ranking minority member of the Committee.

The Committee shall be divided into the following subcommittees:

- Early Childhood
- Kindergarten through 12th Grade Education
- Postsecondary Education

Subcommittee members would be appointed by the chair, vice-chair, and ranking minority member of the LEPC. Each subcommittee would consist of

three members of the House and two members of the Senate. Two members of each subcommittee would be minority party members—one from the House and one from the Senate. The chair of the LEPC would appoint the chairs of the subcommittees. Subcommittees would meet at the request and upon the approval of the chair of the LEPC.

Duties of the LEPC

- Plan for public and private postsecondary education in Kansas, including vocational and technical education (existing charge)
- Explore, study, and make recommendations concerning all facets of education in Kansas relating to any age group
- Review implementation of legislation relating to educational matters by the Department of Education

HOUSE BILL No. 2546

By Committee on Appropriations

3-1

Proposed Amendment

To House Bill No. 2546

House Education Committee
Date: 2/14/01
Attachment # 2-1

AN ACT establishing the Kansas skills for success in school program; imposing certain duties on the state department of education and school districts;

; concerning the legislative educational planning committee; amending K.S.A. 46-1208a and repealing the existing section

Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Kansas:

Section 1. (a) On or before 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 other citizens knowledgeable about early childhood education and children's health, shall determine a school readiness definition. ~~Based upon the definition of school readiness so determined, the state department of education shall design a school readiness indicator for use with children upon entrance to kindergarten.~~

including community-based nonprofit groups

including indicators which help assess a child's school readiness

The school readiness definition along with indicators will be used by the legislature to assess the effectiveness of state funded preschool programs in the preparation of children for kindergarten. All school districts will implement locally developed kindergarten screening procedures based on the school readiness definition under this section.

(b) On or before October 31, 2001, the state department of education shall define a skill set for reading, for writing and for mathematics which a child at the completion of third grade should be able to execute if the child has mastered third grade level reading, writing and mathematics. Such skill sets shall not be minimum level skills, but shall reflect grade level proficiency.

The state board of education will determine whether this accomplishment examination is in addition to or in lieu of any other assessment.

(c) The state department of education shall design a third grade accomplishment examination to be administered at the end of each school year, beginning with the 2002-03 school year, to determine whether pupils have achieved mastery of the reading, writing and mathematics skill sets. The examination shall be administered to all third grade pupils upon completion of the grade.

(d) On or before October 31, 2001, the state department of education shall set a goal that by 2010, not less than 90% of pupils exiting the third grade have acquired the reading, writing and mathematics skill sets to be determined on the basis of the results of the third grade accomplishment examination. If the goal is not achieved, the state department of education shall establish a new plan to meet the goal.

grade-level

Sec. 2. (a) School districts shall construct a plan for identifying markers which indicate whether a child is progressing adequately toward acquisition of the skill sets designed by the state department of education and for diagnosing each child's skill level. The school district shall use

reading, writing and mathematics

2-2

1 assessments or diagnostic reviews during kindergarten and each of the
 2 grades first, second and third to determine a child's level of performance.
 3 Each school district's plan shall embed the assessments or diagnostic re-
 4 vs into the curriculum and implement a measure to check each child's
 5 progress during the fall or spring semesters or both such semesters. The
 6 school district shall establish a plan for providing each child needing as-
 7 sistance with locally determined interventions. The plan may include, but
 8 need not be limited to, a restructured school day, additional school days,
 9 summer school, individualized instruction and such other interventions
 10 as the school district may deem necessary. The plan shall not include a
 11 requirement for full-day kindergarten attendance. In addition to the fore-
 12 going, the plan providing for interventions shall include implementation
 13 of a first grade reading intervention that meets the following specifica-
 14 tions: A research-based reading intervention method designed for first-
 15 graders with a proven track record of ~~[a 75%]~~ success ~~[rate]~~, with sustained
 16 learning over time using a short-term, one-on-one tutoring intervention
 17 ~~from 12 to 20 weeks.~~ The diagnostic reviews or assessments may be im-
 18 plemented in addition to current assessments or diagnostic reviews, or in
 19 lieu of current assessments or diagnostic reviews, as long as the district
 20 continues to meet quality performance accreditation requirements. School
 21 districts shall continue to implement the second grade reading
 22 diagnostic currently required by the state.

23 (b) When a child has been identified as needing assistance, the school
 24 district plan shall create a mechanism to track the child's interventions
 25 and progress. When a child has accomplished the district-determined
 26 level of accomplishment, no further tracking will be necessary unless the
 27 child falls behind in another grade. If the child does not accomplish the
 28 grade-level markers defined by the school district despite intervention,
 29 ~~the child will be retained to repeat the grade.~~ The school district will
 30 determine the measures by which the child's progress is measured.

31 Sec. 3. The state department of education shall pilot the third grade
 32 accomplishment examination in the spring of 2002. The school readiness
 33 indicator required by subsection (a) of section 1, and amendments
 34 thereto, shall be developed by the state department of education on or
 35 before August 1, 2002. The plans required by subsection (a) of section 2,
 36 and amendments thereto, shall be constructed by school districts on or
 37 before August 1, 2002. The statewide program shall begin in the 2002-
 38 03 school year. During the first year, each school district will administer
 39 the third grade examination to set the school's baseline.

40 ~~Sec. 4. (a) There is hereby created the joint committee on education~~
 41 ~~review which shall be within the legislative branch of state government~~
 42 ~~and which shall be composed of five members of the senate and five~~
 43 ~~members of the house of representatives.~~

and to target specialized intervention to bring the child up to grade level in reading, writing and mathematics

based on input from teachers and parents for the individual child

The district may require attendance at such interventions unless a parent waives the child's attendance.

or, if the district currently has appropriate grade level markers, or offers appropriate diagnostic reviews or assessments, or tracking procedures for interventions, the district may continue to use such locally determined practices

when deemed necessary or intensive research based small group tutoring

No more than 10% of the first grade pupils across the state shall receive a first grade reading intervention grant pursuant to section 9 and amendments thereto.

If the district currently has appropriate grade level markers, or offers appropriate diagnostic reviews or assessments, or tracking procedures for interventions, the district may continue to use such locally determined practices.

there will be action taken in the best educational interest of the child to reach the grade-level markers. Such action may include, but is not limited to, other more intensive interventions or retention to repeat the grade

(c) Local school districts and schools, in developing and providing these educational interventions, shall consult with community-based and nonprofit organizations in developing, planning and implementing these services and interventions. Local school districts and schools are also encouraged to partner with and contract with these organizations for the provision of these interventions.

2-3

1 ~~(b) The president of the senate shall appoint three senators and the~~
2 ~~minority leader shall appoint two senators as members of the committee.~~

3 ~~(c) The speaker of the house of representatives shall appoint three~~
4 ~~representatives and the minority leader shall appoint two representatives~~
5 ~~as members of the committee.~~

6 ~~(d) Any vacancy in the membership of the joint committee on edu-~~
7 ~~cation review shall be filled by appointment in the manner prescribed by~~
8 ~~this section for the original appointment.~~

9 ~~(e) All members of the joint committee on education review shall~~
10 ~~serve for terms ending on the first day of the regular legislative session~~
11 ~~in odd-numbered years. The joint committee shall organize annually and~~
12 ~~elect a chairperson and vice-chairperson. If the chairperson is a senator,~~
13 ~~the vice-chairperson shall be a representative. If the chairperson is a rep-~~
14 ~~resentative, the vice-chairperson shall be a senator. The vice-chairperson~~
15 ~~shall exercise all of the powers of the chairperson in the absence of the~~
16 ~~chairperson. If a vacancy occurs in the office of chairperson or vice-chair-~~
17 ~~person, a member of the joint committee, who is a member of the same~~
18 ~~house as the member who vacated the office, shall be elected by the~~
19 ~~members of the joint committee to fill such vacancy. Within 30 days after~~
20 ~~the effective date of this act, the joint committee shall organize and elect~~
21 ~~a chairperson and a vice-chairperson in accordance with the provisions of~~
22 ~~this act.~~

23 ~~(f) A quorum of the joint committee on education review shall be six.~~
24 ~~All actions of the joint committee shall be by motion adopted by a majority~~
25 ~~of those present when there is a quorum.~~

26 ~~(g) The joint committee on education review may meet at any time~~
27 ~~and at any place within the state on the call of the chairperson, vice-~~
28 ~~chairperson and ranking minority member of the house of representatives~~
29 ~~when the chairperson is a representative or of the senate when the chair-~~
30 ~~person is a senator.~~

31 ~~(h) The provisions of the acts contained in article 12 of chapter 46 of~~
32 ~~the Kansas Statutes Annotated, and amendments thereto, applicable to~~
33 ~~special committees shall apply to the joint committee on education review~~
34 ~~to the extent that the same do not conflict with the specific provisions of~~
35 ~~this act applicable to the joint committee.~~

36 ~~(i) In accordance with K.S.A. 46-1204 and amendments thereto, the~~
37 ~~legislative coordinating council may provide for such professional services~~
38 ~~as may be requested by the joint committee on education review.~~

39 ~~(j) The joint committee on education review may introduce such leg-~~
40 ~~islation as it deems necessary in performing its functions.~~

41 ~~(k) In addition to other powers and duties authorized or prescribed~~
42 ~~by law or by the legislative coordinating council, the joint committee on~~
43 ~~education review shall~~

2-4

1 ~~(1) Monitor and oversee the implementation of all legislation passed~~
 2 ~~during the preceding year concerning students who are enrolled in kin-~~
 3 ~~dergarten through grade 12, and~~
 4 ~~(2) have the authority to review state funded preschool and early~~
 5 ~~childhood development programs to see if such programs are reaching~~
 6 ~~or attaining the school readiness indicators.~~

[see attached

7 Sec. 5. The state department of education shall report its progress
 8 toward implementation of the provisions of this act to the education re-
 9 view committee on November 1, 2001, with continuing annual reports
 10 and other reports as requested by the chairperson of the education review
 11 committee.

[Renumber sections accordingly

12 Sec. 6. The state department of education, the Kansas children's cab-
 13 inet, the state department of social and rehabilitation services, the state
 14 department of health and environment, along with any other state agency
 15 or state-funded program which impacts early childhood development,
 16 must all report in their ~~fiscal year 2003~~ budget requests how ~~their~~ early
 17 childhood programs impact children from birth to entry into kindergarten
 18 according to the school readiness definition.

[state-funded

[the

[served by such programs

19 Sec. 7. This act shall take effect and be in force from and after its
 20 publication in the statute book.

[Sec. 7. K.S.A. 46-1208a is hereby repealed.

Sec. 4. K.S.A. 46-1208a is hereby amended to read as follows: 46-1208a. (a) The legislative educational planning committee is hereby established and shall be composed of ~~11~~ 15 members, ~~six of whom shall be members of the house of representatives and five of whom shall be senators. At least five members of the committee shall be of the minority party, with at least two thereof from each house. Members of the legislative educational planning committee shall be appointed by the legislative coordinating council. The committee shall be permanent with membership changing from time to time as the legislative coordinating council shall determine.~~ as follows: The chairperson, vice-chairperson and ranking minority member of the senate committee on education or their designees; the chairperson, vice-chairperson and ranking minority member of the senate committee on ways and means or their designees; the chairperson, vice-chairperson and ranking minority member of the house committee on education or their designees; the chairperson, vice-chairperson and ranking minority member of the house committee on higher education or their designees; and the chairperson, vice-chairperson and ranking minority member of the house committee on appropriations or their designees. The legislative coordinating council shall annually designate the chairperson, vice-chairperson and ranking minority member of the legislative educational planning committee from among the members of the committee.

(b) The legislative educational planning committee shall be divided into three subcommittees as follows: (1) Subcommittee on early childhood; (2) subcommittee on kindergarten through 12th grade education; and (3) subcommittee on postsecondary education. Members of each subcommittee shall be designated by the chairperson, vice-chairperson and ranking minority member of the legislative educational planning committee. Three members from each subcommittee shall be members of the house of representatives and two members on each subcommittee shall be

members of the senate. Two members of each subcommittee shall be minority party members as follows: One member of each subcommittee shall be a member of the minority party of the house of representatives and one member of each subcommittee shall be a member of the minority party of the senate. The chairperson of each subcommittee shall be selected by the chairperson of the legislative educational planning committee. The subcommittee shall meet at the request and upon the approval of the chairperson of the legislative educational planning committee.

~~(b)~~ (c) The legislative educational planning committee shall plan for public and private postsecondary education in Kansas, including vocational and technical education; explore, study and make recommendations concerning all facets of education in Kansas relating to any age group; and review implementation of legislation relating to educational matters by the department of education. The committee shall annually make a report and recommendations to the legislature and the governor and may cause the same to be published separately from other documents which are required by law to be submitted to the legislative coordinating council. The reports and recommendations of the committee shall include a developmental schedule for implementation of educational goals established by the committee. The committee shall from time to time update such schedule as new or additional information is developed or refined.

~~(e)~~ (d) The provisions of the acts contained in article 12 of chapter 46 of the Kansas Statutes Annotated, and amendments thereto, applicable to special committees shall apply to the legislative educational planning committee to the extent that the same do not conflict with the specific provisions of this act applicable to the committee.

~~(d)~~ (e) Upon request of the legislative educational planning committee, the state board of regents and the state board of education shall provide consultants from the faculties and staffs of institutions and agencies under the respective control and jurisdiction thereof.

~~(e)~~ (f) The legislative educational planning committee shall meet upon the call of its chairperson. The legislative educational planning committee may introduce such legislation as it deems necessary in performing its functions.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
Accountability Subcommittee

After visiting with the Accountability Subcommittee and reading their final report concerning Kansas students in kindergarten, grades 1, 2, and 3 learning the basics of reading, writing, and math, I began to consider variables, options and possible ramifications. The following three areas emerged which influence the success of our students in these grades and subject areas.

The first area to consider is population. As the number of students in our buildings and classes increase, the number of students struggling with learning also increases. When analyzing test data, some patterns and similarities are noted regarding the population in the lowest quartile. These patterns differ from school to school. Some schools may notice students in the lowest quartile that are ELL, SES, 504 plans and/or disabled or they may note a performance difference between the genders. Once a population is targeted then instruction can be focused toward those students.

Programs and instruction is another area to consider when providing academic success for students. Programs are a key component for students especially for those students performing in the lower quartile. Students who have participated in early intervention programs, such as; Parents As Teachers, Head Start, Four Year Olds At Risk, Pre-Schools, and full day kindergartens have the advantage of increasing the likelihood of academic success. Reading programs should include phonemic awareness (manipulation of sounds), phonics skills (letter sound relationships), fluency (speed, accuracy, and expression), and comprehension (understanding) to maximize students' ability to become proficient readers. Students performing in the top 75% of their class will successfully learn to read, write, and do math if they are instructed in a consistent curriculum. Students performing in the lower 25% of their class are more likely to experience success when their instructional programs compliment their individual learning styles. Diagnostic and direct instruction will also enhance success for the lower quartile students. For buildings where a large portion of their population is achieving below grade level in reading, a program called "Success for All" has been helpful in improving reading ability. Of course, the key ingredient for student success, is professional development. Instructors must have a full bag of tricks – strategies – to meet the instructional needs of the diverse population within their classrooms. When students are instructed on their level, have fun and experience success learning will increase!

Assessment is the third area that requires consideration when developing successful instruction for students. Research indicates that a group administered, standardized test given to fourth graders and below is the least valid type of assessment. The most worthwhile assessments are imbedded in curriculum and instruction. Kansas has two excellent examples of this kind of assessment in place in the Six Trait Writing Assessment for fifth grade and the Individual Reading Inventory for second grade students. These assessments given in a pre-post-test format are valuable in revealing student growth and guiding instruction. This assessment may be given a third time at the end of first semester to evaluate and monitor the growth of those students functioning below grade level. The QPA process in Kansas requires triangulation of data. This provides three measures at various levels of student performance to determine growth trends, monitor student performance, and guide instruction.

When these three areas are working in unison instructional activities are created which encourage a love of reading, writing and math. This is vital in the creation of a nation of students who choose to read, write, compute, and problem solve!

House Education Committee

Date: 3/14/01

Attachment # 3

Topic: House Bill 2546, Skills for Success
Speaker: Alison K. Banikowski, Ph.D., USD #233 - Olathe
Date: March 14, 2001



HB 2546 addresses three areas – reading, writing, and mathematics. Our district believes strongly that all of these areas are critical to students' future success. The bill also focuses on K-2, which our district also believes is a critical stage for developing these foundational skills.

However, though our district is thoroughly committed to insuring grade level competence in reading, writing and mathematics for every child, we have concerns with HB 2546.

1. **Accountability:** A system for accountability is already in place, through the State Accreditation Program (QPA). This comprehensive accountability system of setting goals, implementing interventions, and assessing results is in place. Target goals in reading and math are required. Further accountability is achieved through yearly school report cards, reports to Site Councils and local Boards of Education, and results disclosed to the media. HB 2546 duplicates the accountability system already in existence.

2. **Adding An Assessment:** The HB's 3rd Grade Exam adds another assessment to an already extensive testing program required by QPA, including State Assessments, nationally standardized and local measures. Recent input from educators and patrons across the state indicate there are concerns about the amount of instructional time lost to assessing students. Additionally, no new test should be added until President Bush's plan for testing students yearly is known.

3. **A High-Stakes Test:** We are concerned that a high stakes, single test, which could result in the retention of students, will require extensive development and field-testing in order to be educationally valid and statistically reliable. Provisions are not outlined for limited English speaking students, special education students, and recent "move-ins". We do not believe this test can be developed within the outlined timeframe.

4. **Intervention Strategies:** HB 2546 requires schools to implement additional strategies to improve students' skills. These intervention strategies require additional funding. For example, implementation cost estimates for the one-on-one reading program are near one million dollars for Olathe. Extended learning opportunities, such as after school classes and summer school require funds for teacher salaries, additional materials, and potentially transportation.

5. **Retention:** We strongly question the rationale for including the requirement for retention. There is a wealth of research available indicating retention or repeating the same grade level with the same material and sometimes the same teacher does not improve student learning. We strongly encourage the committee to ask for a summary of the research on retention. We further believe that the complex decision of retention cannot and should not be made solely on the basis of one assessment tool. Retention should be a local decision made by a team who best know the child, including parents. The 3rd Grade Exam, which is still not developed, nor tested for reliability and validity over time, could be used to make a fatal decision for a child, with long lasting repercussions. Of all the elements of the bill, this one concerns us the most.

6. **Joint Committee, Section 4:** The joint committee in HB 2546 duplicates the work of the State Board of Education, adding to the cost of state government.

In conclusion, we want to reinforce our support for reading, writing and mathematics as a focus. However, we believe that the State of Kansas already has in place programs to reinforce these academic areas. These programs include the State Accreditation program (QPA) and the State Assessment program. Though we encourage the committee to abandon HB 2546, we do encourage the legislature to provide funding for additional programs to meet the needs of all learners who may need special strategies and additional time to learn. Thank you

House Education Committee

Date: 3/14/01

Attachment # 4