

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE HIGHER EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Terrie Huntington at 1:30 p.m. on February 12, 2009, in Room 786 of the Docking State Office Building.

All members were present.

Committee staff present:

Renae Jefferies, Office of the Revisor of Statutes
Mary Galligan, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Jennifer Horchem, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Kay Scarlett, Committee Assistant

Conferees appearing before the committee:

Regent Gary Sherrer, Chair of the State University Admissions Task Force
Jacqueline Vietti, President of Butler Community College and Admissions Task Force member
David Brant, Senior Vice President, Central National Bank, Topeka, and Admissions Task Force member
Jonathan Krueger, Emporia State University Student, ESU Student Government Legislative Director, and Admissions Task Force member
Andy Tompkins, Dean, College of Education, Pittsburg State University, and Admissions Task Force member (written only)

Others attending:

See attached list.

Representative Mah moved to approve the minutes of February 2, 3 and 5. Seconded by Representative Palmer, the motion passed.

Hearing on HB 2197 - State educational institutions; admission standards

Chairman Huntington opened the hearing on **HB 2197** and asked Renae Jefferies, Office of the Revisor of Statutes, to brief the committee on the bill. She explained that this legislation specifies that students from non-accredited private secondary schools could be admitted to a state university with an ACT score of 21 points or more. Also, up to 10.0 percent of admitted students who would transfer 24 credit hours to a state university would not have to meet the minimum admission standards. This would be the same policy that is currently applied to freshmen admissions to state universities. The Board of Regents would have to establish the criteria and guidelines for exemptions to be applied systemwide. The Board would have to present a report on the number and percentage of exceptions made by January 31 of each year to the Legislature. This and related reports would be submitted at one time to the Legislature.

Under this bill the standard pre-college curriculum would no longer require one unit of computer technology. In addition, for students who attend a school that does not have units of credits or grade point averages, the Board of Regents would determine the students' level of education and grade point average. **HB 2197** would give the Board of Regents the authority to adopt rules and regulations establishing standards for the admission of students to state universities. The standards could be different for each state university in accordance with each institution's educational mission. If the rules and regulations are more rigorous than those outlined in current law, they would not go into effect before the 2014-2015 academic year. (Attachment 1)

A copy of the State University Admissions Task Force Final Report is available from the Kansas Board of Regents.

Regent Gary Sherrer, Chair of the State University Admissions Task Force, testified in support of **HB 2197**, legislation that embodies the recommendations of the Admissions Task Force. In 1996, Kansas shifted from an open admission policy to a qualified admissions statutory framework. After a decade of operation under this framework, the Kansas Board of Regents established a State University Admissions Task Force to complete a review of the standards and to make recommendations for university admissions policies for the year 2010 and beyond.

CONTINUATION SHEET

Minutes of the House Higher Education Committee at 1:30 p.m. on February 12, 2009, in Room 786 of the Docking State Office Building.

Ultimately, the Task Force made 11 recommendations to the Board: 8 related to qualified admissions, 2 related to transfer, and 1 related to concurrent enrollment. While some of the recommendations do not require statutory change, those requiring statutory change are included in **HB 2197**. Three major recommendations are:

1. A provision that students, both resident and non-resident, be allowed admission by earning a composite ACT score of 21 or higher.
2. Provisions for the creation of exception windows designed specifically for transfer students with at least 24 credit hours. A transfer exception window would be established for resident and non-resident students and mirror the current 10% exception window for incoming freshmen.
3. Remove the one unit in the field of computer technology requirement from the statutorily defined pre-college curriculum.

Regent Sherrer said the single largest change included in this bill is the provision that gives the Board the responsibility to establish admissions standards to state universities. This change puts the responsibility and accountability for admissions standards with the Board of Regents. ([Attachment 2](#))

Jacqueline Vietti, President of Butler Community College and member of the Admissions Task Force, appeared in support of **HB 2197**. She was especially pleased with the additional windows for transfer students and shifting the responsibility for setting admissions standards to the Board of Regents.

Jonathan Krueger, Emporia State University Student, ESU Student Government Legislative Director, and one of two student members on the Admissions Task Force, spoke in support of **HB 2197**. He felt removing the computer educational requirement and setting an ACT score of 21 for home schooled and non-accredited high school students were major improvements. He also supports granting authority to the Board of Regents to set admissions standards. ([Attachment 3](#))

David Brant, Senior Vice President, Central National Bank, Topeka, and member of the Admissions Task Force, expressed support for **HB 2197** encompassing many of the Task Force's recommendations. He was pleased to learn about the overall success of college admissions in Kansas. However, he was amazed as to how complicated our admissions requirements can be for certain groups of students, such as those that have been home schooled or from non-accredited schools, and for both resident and non-resident transfer students. He believes it's time for Kansas to update our admissions requirements and for the Legislature to encourage and empower the Board of Regents to make the admissions process both relevant and effective to serve our State and today's students. ([Attachment 4](#))

Andy Tompkins, Dean, College of Education, Pittsburg State University, and member of the Admissions Task Force, submitted written testimony in support of **HB 2197**. He believes that our first attempts at qualified admissions in Kansas have been helpful and formed a good foundation; now it is time to make some needed adjustments to make the system even better. ([Attachment 5](#))

The hearing on **HB 2197** was closed.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:05 p.m. The next meeting of the House Higher Education Committee is scheduled for February 16, 2009.

HOUSE HIGHER EDUCATION COMMITTEE GUEST LIST

DATE February 12, 2009

NAME	REPRESENTING
David Boucher	Intern - Rep. Mah
GARY SHERRER	KS Bd of Regents
Vanessa Lamoreaux	KS Board of Regents
David Brant	Central National Bank
Jonathan Krueger	Emporia State University
Jackie Nieth	Butler Community College
DAVID BURGESS	JOHNSON COUNTY COMM. COLLEGE
KEITH PANGBORN	KEARNEY & ASSOC.
Travis Lowe	Pinger, Smith & Assoc.
Andy Schlapp	WSU
Don Beggs	WSU
Julene Miller	KBOR
Kathyrne Muelh	KBOR
Tom KREBS	KASB

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MEMORANDUM

To: House Committee on Higher Education
From: Renae Jefferies, Assistant Revisor
Date: February 12, 2009
Subject: House Bill No. 2197

HB 2197 amends K.S.A. 76-717 concerning admission of students to state educational institutions. On page one of the bill, line 17, an exception to the rules and regulations is noted. Additionally on page 1, a new paragraph (2) is inserted which allows a Kansas resident who graduates from a non-accredited private secondary school to be admitted to a state educational institution if the student has a composite ACT score of not less than 21 points. In subparagraph (A) of paragraph (4) at the bottom of the page, the subparagraph is amended to allow any Kansas resident who is 21 years of age or older and who graduates from a non-accredited private secondary school to go to a state educational institution.

On page 2 in paragraph (5), language was inserted requiring the report on the number and percentage of freshman class admissions that are exceptions to the admissions standards be made to the legislature on or before January 31 of each year.

Additionally on page 2 paragraph (6):

- Limits a state educational institution to admitting no more than 10% of the total number of resident transfer admissions from an accredited community college, university or other college as exceptions to the minimum admissions standards prescribed in paragraph (6);
- requires the board of regents to adopt rules and regulations prescribing criteria and guidelines to be applied on a systemwide basis for the purpose of admitting students who have earned at least 24 credit hours of transferable course work to a

state educational institution as exceptions to the minimum standards prescribed by this paragraph;

- requires the board of regents, on or before January 31 of each year, to submit a report to the legislature containing the number and percentage of transfer admission permitted as exceptions to such standards during the preceding year.

On page 3:

- New paragraph (8) is inserted which allows a non-Kansas resident who has graduated from a non-accredited private secondary school meeting registration requirements substantially equivalent to those in K.S.A. 72-53,100 through 72-53,102 to be admitted to a state institution if the person has a composite ACT score of 21 points or more.
- Paragraph (9) contains the same amendments as to paragraph (6) on page 2, except that these amendments apply to nonresident students.
- Subsection (b) is amended by taking away the requirement of one unit of computer technology as a precollege curriculum prerequisite.
- Subsection (c) strikes the requirement of a 2.0 grade point average with “the required grade point average.”

On page 4:

- Subsection (d) strikes “of 2.50” and inserts “the required” grade point average on a 4.0 scale.
- New subsection (f) directs that the “board of regents may adopt rules and regulations establishing standards for the admissions of students to state educational institutions that differ” from “those set forth in subsection (a) and that such standards may be different for each state institution in accordance with each institution’s educational mission. The rules and regulations adopted pursuant to this subsection shall be more rigorous than those set forth in subsection (a) and shall not be effective prior to academic year 2014-2015.
- New subsection (g) allows the various reports required by the statute to be compiled and submitted to the legislature in a single report.

The act would be effective upon publication in the statute book.



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**House Higher Education Committee
February 12, 2009**

Testimony in Support of HB 2197

Regent Gary Sherrer

Good afternoon Chairwoman Huntington, Ranking Member Mah, and members of the committee. On behalf of the Kansas Board of Regents, and as the Chair of the Board's State University Admissions Task Force, I am here to testify in support of HB 2197, legislation that embodies the recommendations of the Admissions Task Force. Joining me this afternoon are some members of the Task Force, who will provide brief comment following my testimony.

In 1996, Kansas shifted from an open admission policy to a qualified admissions statutory framework. After a decade of operation under this framework, the Kansas Board of Regents established a State University Admissions Task Force to complete a review of the standards and to make recommendations for university admissions policies for the year 2010 and beyond.

The charge of the Board of Regents specifically asked the Task Force to consider optimal admissions policies from a state higher education system perspective that reflected 5 principles:

1. Provide widespread access for qualified students;
2. Retain the state's best and brightest students for postsecondary study in Kansas;
3. Enhance prospects for student success;
4. Foster seamlessness across the state's postsecondary system; and
5. Promote the efficient use of limited state education resources.

Sixteen individuals from all regions of the state with outstanding civic and professional backgrounds joined me to begin a critical examination of admission to our state's universities.

Before I talk about the specifics of the Task Force recommendations and HB 2197, I would like to take a moment to discuss the Task Force itself. Their names are found on page 15, Appendix A of the Task Force report.

First, the Task Force was not composed entirely of education professionals. In fact, a majority of the members would best be described as "consumers" of higher education including current postsecondary students and representatives from business and industry.

Second, the members that were education professionals were not just from the realm of higher education. We know that families and students begin preparing for higher education early. We

House Higher Education Committee
February 12, 2009
Attachment 2

also know that adults are an important group in higher education that can be overlooked. The Task Force reflected this diversity with members from K-12, postsecondary, and adult education.

With a diverse roster, the Task Force determined it would receive testimony from education professionals who work on the "front lines" everyday. All told, the Task Force received over 16 hours of testimony from June through August. All state universities were asked to provide testimony. Also providing testimony were the Kansas State Department of Education, the Kansas Association of School Boards, USA Kansas (representing the United School Administrators of Kansas, the Kansas Association of Supervision & Curriculum Development, and the Kansas Association of Secondary School Principals), the Kansas National Education Association, the Kansas Association of Community College Trustees (representing the community colleges as a whole), the Kansas Association of Technical Colleges (representing the technical colleges as a whole), and Washburn University.

Each presenter was asked to frame their testimony by addressing three questions:

1. What is working with the current qualified admissions standards?
2. What is not working?
3. What recommendations does the stakeholder have for improving the policies?

While listening, the Task Force found that qualified admissions, or QA, has served a number of purposes, including communicating that admission to Kansas' universities is not automatic and helping to structure the high school experience through the creation of the QA pre-college curriculum. The testimony also revealed that there are issues that must be addressed if the standard is to remain relevant in the 21st Century.

Ultimately, the Task Force made 11 recommendations to the Board; 8 related to qualified admissions, 2 related to transfer, and 1 related to concurrent enrollment. While some of the recommendations do not require statutory change, those requiring statutory change are included in HB 2197. There are 3 I would like to discuss at this time.

When QA standards were passed the Legislature could not have foreseen the changes in educational trends. Increasingly students are graduating from non-accredited high schools, most notably home-schooled students. Currently these students must be admitted through the exception window which reduces the slots available for other deserving students. Admission through the exception window is also reported to be viewed negatively by prospective students and parents.

The solution to this issue is addressed in HB 2197 with the provision that students, both resident and non-resident, be allowed admission by earning a composite ACT score of 21 or higher.

Another issue that was consistently discussed by presenters concerns transfer students. The modern college student is very likely to attend multiple institutions. Students may be enrolled in and taking courses simultaneously from a university, an area community college, and through an online institution. Currently some students that transfer must be admitted in the exception window, reducing the over-all number of slots available. This means there may be fewer slots

open to those graduating from high school and may close the exception window to deserving students.

In answer to this issue the legislation includes provisions for the creation of exception windows designed specifically for transfer students with at least 24 credit hours and a GPA of 2.0. A transfer exception window would be established for resident and non-resident students and mirrors the current 10% exception window for incoming freshman.

HB 2197 also changes the pre-college curriculum, specifically the computer literacy requirement. The Task Force heard consistently from K-12 stakeholders that this requirement is outdated and must be changed. Because technology is now integrated into most classes, this requirement represents an unnecessary burden. From higher education stakeholders the report was also consistent on two items. One, in many cases, students are more knowledgeable than the classes require. And, two, the requirement may be especially challenging to meet for non-resident students who are unable to test-out of the requirement and who come from schools where technology courses that meet the statutory requirement are not available.

In answer to these consistent arguments from front-line professionals, HB 2197 removes the one unit in the field of computer technology requirement from the statutorily defined pre-college curriculum.

The single largest change included in this bill is the provision that gives the Board the responsibility to establish admissions standards to state universities. This change does not represent a transfer of power; rather it puts the responsibility and accountability for admissions standards with the Regents.

The responsibility for admissions standards residing in a Regents-like body is common across the U.S. In fact, Kansas is unique in its approach to state university admissions, and is the only state we could find that places the responsibility for admissions standards with the Legislature.

A survey of all the Regents-like bodies in the U.S. was conducted to inform the Task Force and Board's recommendation to present this statutory change. Of the responding 37 states, only Florida and Colorado include admissions requirements in statute. And, in both cases, the relevant statute establishes minimum standards with institutions allowed to set higher standards consistent with their missions and roles, or a Regents-like body is allowed to set higher standards.

In neighboring states the Regents-like bodies are authorized to set admissions criteria at some level. In Missouri, for example, their Regents-like body establishes selectivity levels. In Oklahoma the regents establish minimum requirements, and in Colorado, statute provides general guidance for admission with most requirements set by their Department of Higher Education.

Even the general public supports the Board having authority to set admissions standards. A public opinion poll, conducted by a nationally respected firm, showed that 71% of Kansans support the recommendation included in HB 2197 to give this authority to the Regents.

And, finally it is worth noting that many of the changes included in HB 2197 would not have been necessary (for example the homeschooled issue) if the Board had the responsibility to set admissions standards initially. Placing responsibility with the Board allows the necessary flexibility to adapt to evolving educational trends and brings Kansas "up-to-date" with our national counterparts.

With this new responsibility comes accountability. The Board stands ready to accept the responsibility, and will remain accountable to higher education professionals, consumers, and the Legislature concerning the impact of more rigorous admissions standards.

It is important to note that any changes cannot be made without adequate time provided to allow students and the system to adjust to new standards. In fact, any changes more restrictive than current standards cannot take effect until the 2014-2015 Academic Year.

The alignment of the K-12 and higher education system plays, and will continue to play, the largest role in the success of students. While admissions standards and statutes cannot be the only lens through which education success is gauged, these issues play a role in fostering that success.

The critical examination of the current state university admissions standards was guided by input from stakeholders and constituents with a shared interest in fostering student success in education and the workforce. The legislation before you seeks to capitalize on their efforts to position Kansas in the context of the rapidly changing workforce environment, and the context of fostering the necessary alignment between all levels of education.

I hope that you will join the Regents, the Task Force members, stakeholders, and the people of Kansas in supporting these changes in admissions standards to position Kansas higher education for the future.

Members of the committee, thank you for your time this afternoon. At this time, I would be happy to answer any questions that you may have about the legislation or items included in the Task Force Final Report that was distributed to each of you with a copy of this testimony.

Testimony on HB 2197
February 12, 2009

Thank you, Regent Sherrer, for that introduction and opportunity to serve on this task force. Good afternoon, Madam Chairwoman, members of the committee. My name is Jonathan Krueger and I am a Junior Political Science Major at Emporia State University. The opportunity that I had to serve as a member of this task force was very exciting and it was refreshing to note that students were included in a process that we had experienced. Both Lydia and I had the unique experience to bring to the task force of having been admitted to college through the current qualified admissions process. As a college student, the legislation has an impact on the future students of Emporia State University, and students at all of our state's universities. I am proud to stand in support of House Bill 2197 and would like to address two specific points of that legislation for you briefly.

First, the computer technology requirement in the existing pre-college curriculum is terribly out-dated and must be removed. During the period in which we received more than sixteen hours of testimony, we heard consistently from all constituency groups about the same issues surrounding this technology requirement. Striking it from the statute, as this legislation does, enables the curriculum to mirror the already integrated approach to technology almost every high school employs.

Keeping up with trends is important, and just as integrated technology has found its way into grade schools, the growing home schooled and non-accredited high school student population trend must be acknowledged. The negative perception of some families and students of having to be admitted through the exception window is completely un-necessary. House Bill 2197 enables these bright students to proudly enter their college experience and enables Kansas to be responsive to these changing trends. And, I might add, these trends are always changing. Granting the authority to the Board to set admissions standards enables Kansas Universities to be responsive to these trends, enhance their students' experiences, and it positions Kansas higher education to excel and be the premiere higher education choice of students in the future. I thank you for your time and would be happy to stand for questions following the conclusion of the testimony.

Jonathan D. Krueger
Legislative Director
Associated Student Government
Emporia State University



House Committee on Higher Education
February 12, 2009

Testimony in Support of
HOUSE BILL 2197

David Brant

Senior Vice President – Central National Bank
Member of the 2008 State University Admissions Task Force

Thank you for this opportunity to express my support for HB 2197 which would update the admissions standards for our Kansas colleges and universities.

I had the privilege of serving on the Task Force last year. In addition to the education representatives on the Task Force, there were six of us from various businesses representing the private sector. Also, my wife and I are the parents of three children: a daughter who is a sophomore in college; a son who is a high school senior headed to K-State next fall; and a 7th grade daughter who will be applying for admission in 2014.

As a taxpayer, as a parent of college students, and as a business leader, I was pleased to learn about the overall success of college admissions in Kansas. However, I was amazed as to how complicated our admissions requirements can be for certain groups of students, such as those that have been homeschooled or from non-accredited schools, and for both resident and non-resident transfer students. Further, it quickly became apparent that the 1996 “qualified admissions” statute has become outdated and is now hindering an effective admissions process and the logical coordination between high schools, community colleges, and our state universities.

I endorse HB 2197 as it encompasses many of the Task Force’s recommendations. Our higher education admissions policies and the process should adapt and be competitive in the 21st century. It’s time for Kansas to update our admissions requirements and for the Legislature to encourage and empower the Board of Regents to make the admissions process both relevant and effective to best serve our State and today’s students.

Thank you for your consideration.

Member F.D.I.C.

House Higher Education Committee
February 12, 2009
Attachment 4



Pittsburg State University

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February 11, 2009

TO: Kansas House Committee on Higher Education

FROM: Andy Tompkins, Dean
College of Education
Pittsburg State University

SUBJECT: House Bill 2197

I had the privilege of being a member of the Kansas Board of Regents Admissions Task Force. The recommendations of this task force form the substance of this bill. We met in several locations and heard from a variety of constituents. Our Chairman, Regent Gary Sherrer, provided excellent leadership in pushing the task force to look at real issues affecting our public higher education institutions and especially access.

The Kansas Board of Regents felt strongly that this topic needed to be addressed and have supported the recommendations of the task force as outlined in this bill. I fully support the recommendations in this legislation and hope you will also. I believe that our first attempts at qualified admissions in Kansas have been helpful and formed a good foundation. Now it is time to make some needed adjustments to make the system even better.

House Higher Education Committee
February 12, 2009
Attachment 5