



Madam Chair and Committee Members,

I appreciate this opportunity to present testimony in support of SB 428.

The Kansas School Board Resource Center is a nonprofit organization that provides training, model policy, and governance guidance to school board members. The proposed changes in SB 428 are driven by our experience working with school board members and their feedback.

Many board members tell us their superintendents will not allow them to be part of the process, let alone “conduct” it as required in state law. Some districts contend that they follow the procedures set forth in K.S.A. 72-1163, but the reports they publish indicate otherwise.

USD 489 Hays is one of those districts. The report published for [Roosevelt Elementary](#) uses part of the template recommended by the Kansas Department of Education, but the page designed to answer the [questions stipulated in state law is missing](#).

2021-2022 State Assessments Review for 2023-2024 Budget Considerations

District: _____	Bldg #	Grades Served:
School: _____		

(A) Identify the barriers that must be overcome for each student to achieve grade level proficiency on _____

(B) Identify the budget actions that should be taken to address and remove those barriers.

(C) Identify the amount of time the board estimates it will take for each student to achieve grade level proficiency on the state assessments if the budget actions would be implemented.

In 2015, Hays had 13% of students reading below grade level, and 50% were proficient; now, 33% are below grade level, and only 33% are proficient.

How is the school board expected to correct this unfortunate situation if the district doesn't allow board members to conduct the needs assessments as required in state law?

Many school board members tell us they want the opportunity to lead the process. They are surprised when they learn that they are supposed conduct assessments in each school and review their assessment results, identify problems and obstacles, and then, when finalizing their budget, prioritize changes to overcome their academic deficiencies.

An example of how to use the BNA process effectively comes from a district that asked me to help them start the process. A board member, principal, and six teachers discussed the low reading scores in an elementary school. While listing barriers, we discovered that only one of the six teachers felt comfortable teaching reading. The other five teacher volunteered this shocking information; all we had to do was ask for their input.

They reallocated resources in the budget to make the teacher trained in the science of reading the reading instructor and train the other teachers, and hired another third grade teacher. That is exactly how the BNA process is supposed to work.

Statewide outcomes are similar to those in Hays; one-third of students are below grade level in reading and math, and less than a third of students are proficient. Overall outcomes are worse than pre-pandemic levels,

State of Kansas - All Students Math				State of Kansas - All Students ELA		
Year	Below Grade Level	Grade Level, Needs Remedial Training	Proficient	Below Grade Level	Grade Level, Needs Remedial Training	Proficient
2015	23%	44%	32%	21%	37%	41%
2016	27%	38%	33%	24%	35%	40%
2017	28%	38%	33%	27%	34%	37%
2018	29%	38%	33%	29%	34%	37%
2019	28%	39%	33%	29%	34%	37%
2021	34%	38%	28%	30%	35%	35%
2022	34%	36%	29%	34%	34%	32%
2023	33%	36%	31%	33%	34%	33%

Source: KSDE; all students tested, rounded to the nearest whole number

We cannot continue doing things the way we have always done them. School board members must be a driving force in developing student achievement needs and the district budget. Change will only occur when the adults in education management are compelled to change their behavior with legislation like SB 428.

Please recommend SB 428 for passage on behalf of students across Kansas.