

SESSION OF 2025

SUPPLEMENTAL NOTE ON SENATE BILL NO. 48

As Amended by Senate Committee on
Education

Brief*

SB 48, as amended, would amend law regarding school district accreditation to require demonstration of improvement in academic performance each year.

This bill would require conclusive evidence of improvement in student academic achievements to be shown in order for school districts to maintain accreditation starting July 1, 2026, and thereafter. The bill would require this improvement to be demonstrated by student academic performance improved from that of the preceding school year and the State Board of Education to set required academic performance improvement targets. It would also require the State Board to hold both school districts and each public school accountable for meeting accreditation rules and regulations. Current law holds only school districts accountable through these rules.

The bill would also require school districts to be in compliance with the building needs assessment requirement, at-risk regulations, and applicable state statutes, rules, and regulations. The bill requires corrective action of any noncompliance by no later than June 30 of the succeeding school year. Corrective action plans would be required for school districts that are conditionally accredited, accredited with conditions, or otherwise not fully accredited. Failure of the school district to correct noncompliance due to failure to demonstrate conclusive, measurable evidence of

*Supplemental notes are prepared by the Legislative Research Department and do not express legislative intent. The supplemental note and fiscal note for this bill may be accessed on the Internet at <https://klrd.gov/>

improvement in student academic performance by this timeline would result in the loss of accreditation.

Background

The bill was introduced by the Senate Committee on Education at the request of a representative from the Kansas Policy Institute.

Senate Committee on Education

In the Senate Committee hearing, **proponent** testimony was provided by a representative from the Kansas Policy Institute. This testimony discussed the lack of measures currently in place for the accreditation system, which has been in place since 1992. The representative said there is a current disconnect between using student performance and accreditation compliance.

Written-only proponent testimony was provided by a representative from a representative from the Kansas School Board Resource Center.

Opponent testimony was provided by representatives from the Kansas Association of School Boards, Kansas PTA Advocacy Team, and the Kansas State School Board of Education. Opponents stated that this bill would be a potentially harmful approach to accreditation, and an issue that should be discussed by working with the Legislature and among these stakeholders and discussed mechanisms for compliance available to school districts.

Written-only opponent testimony was provided by representatives from Blue Valley Schools, Kansans for Excellence in Education, Kansas National Education Association, and Wichita Public Schools.

No other testimony was provided.

The Senate Committee amended the bill to:

- Strike language regarding student state assessment scores;
- Add language to tie school district compliance with the building needs assessment requirement in KSA 72-1163 and at-risk requirements in KSA 72-5151 through 72-5154;
- Strike language regarding federal statutes for school district accreditation requirements; and
- Strike language regarding English language arts and mathematics curriculum standards.

Fiscal Information

According to the fiscal note prepared by the Division of the Budget on the bill as introduced, the Department of Education is not able to estimate the number of challenges that would be made; however, based on current staffing levels and current staff workloads committed to the accreditation process, the Department is unable to fit these new duties into the current agency structure. The agency would require additional staff in the Accreditation and Design Program to facilitate challenges to school district and school building compliance. This would also require additional travel to follow up and investigate compliance challenges.

The Department estimates that an additional 5.0 FTE positions and additional expenditures totaling \$471,922, all from the State General Fund, would be needed to implement requirements of this bill in FY 2026. This estimate includes salaries and wages totaling \$427,172 for 1.0 Assistant Director, 1.0 Investigator, 2.0 Public Service Executives, and 1.0 Administrative Specialist. The total estimated expenditures include \$28,000 for travel and subsistence costs, \$6,750 for fuel and office supplies, and \$10,000 for computer equipment. These new positions would be ongoing

and expenditures in future years would increase by the rate of inflation along with any statewide salary increases for state employees that would be authorized. Any fiscal effect associated with enactment of the bill is not reflected in *The FY 2026 Governor's Budget Report*.

The Kansas Association of School Boards reports that the enactment of the bill could require school districts to redesign curriculum and add additional test preparation into their procedures. These additional actions would require additional administrative costs for these districts. In addition, the bill would increase the potential for districts to lose accreditation in any given year. However, a fiscal effect cannot be estimated.

Education; accreditation requirements; academic performance; accountability measures; school district