

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Clay Aurand at 9:05 A.M. on January 31, 2008 in Room 313-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except:

Owen Donohoe- excused
Benjamin Hodge- absent

Committee staff present:

Theresa Kiernan, Office of Revisor of Statutes
Dianne Rosell, Office of Revisor of Statutes
Dale Dennis, Kansas State Department of Education
Martha Dorsey, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Sharon Wenger, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Janet Henning, Committee Assistant

Conferees appearing before the committee:

Scott Frank, Legislative Post Audit
Mark Tallman, Kansas Association of School Boards
Mark Desetti, Kansas National Education Association
Cheryl Semmel, USA Kansas
Gary Price, Superintendent, USD 250 (written testimony)
Bill Reardon, Kansas City, Kansas Public Schools

Chairman Aurand announced to Committee members of the change of meeting room for the week of February 4th only. The House Education Committee will meet in the Docking State Office Building, Room 783 at 9:15 AM.

HB 2605: School finance; high density at-risk formula; linear transition Calculation

Scott Frank, Legislative Post Audit, spoke to Committee members regarding estimating base-level costs for regular education using an outcomes-based approach. This outcomes-based approach was designed to identify the estimated costs of meeting the performance outcomes standards adopted by the State Board of Education. For districts that are not meeting these outcomes, this approach will identify a level of spending that should give them the opportunity to achieve those outcomes, provided they spend their money effectively. For districts that are exceeding outcomes, the approach will identify a level of spending that would be sufficient to allow them to meet outcomes. (Attachment #1)

Mark Tallman, Assistant Executive Director/Advocacy, Kansas Association of School Boards, spoke to Committee members and stated the KASB appears as a proponent of HB2605, but with an important qualification. The KASB supports the concept of a “linear transition” for the high density at-risk weighting, because the KASB believes that districts experiencing a loss in budget authority should have that loss phased-out or cushioned by some mechanism. Requiring a district to lose all of its high density weighting as a result of a small change in the enrollment of students eligible for at-risk funding would require a significant reduction in services for at-risk children.

However, the KASB opposes the provision in this bill that, in effect, funds the linear transition by reducing aid to the districts with the highest percentage of low income children. The school finance resolution adopted this year by KASB expressly supports additional at-risk funding. The KASB has taken that position based on the clear evidence that increased at-risk funding has dramatically increased achievement for all students. (Attachment #2)

Mark Desetti, Kansas National Education Association, urged the Committee to consider amending **HB 2605** with a hold harmless provision before passing the bill out favorably. (Attachment #3)

Cheryl Semmel, Executive Director, USA Kansas, told Committee members that **HB 2605** is intended to modify K.S.A. 72-6455 and replace the 40 percent and 50 percent benchmarks for determining at-risk funding with a linear transition that increases funding as the percentage of students eligible for free meals increases.

CONTINUATION SHEET

MINUTES OF THE House Education Committee at 9:05 A.M. on January 31, 2008 in Room 313-S of the Capitol.

USA Kansas supports implementing a linear transition formula for high-density at-risk students, while at the same time expressing concerns about the technical aspects of **HB 2605**. (Attachment #4)

Gary Price, Superintendent, USD 250, gave written testimony in support of the concepts of **HB 2605**. (Attachment #5)

Bill Reardon, Kansas City, Kansas Public Schools, spoke to Committee members in opposition of **HB 2605** and requested the Committee alter the bill to provide state funding or to allow the legislation to once again die until the State will cover the cost of this change in the school finance formula.. (Attachment #6)

A question and answer session followed the presentations.

The Chairman closed the hearing on **HB 2605**.

The meeting adjourned at 10:30 AM. The next meeting is scheduled for February 4, 2008 in the Docking State Office Building, Room 783 at 9:15 AM.