

March 30, 2011

Chairperson Rhoades and Members of the House Appropriations Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to appear on behalf of Topeka Public Schools, USD 501. My name is Dr. [REDACTED] and I am superintendent of Topeka Public Schools. I appear in opposition to this proposal.

This proposal suggests we treat children equally, rather than equitably.

- Equality means that we would treat all non-proficient students the same, regardless of poverty or wealth.
- Equity – the way, in which we currently operate - means that we treat all non-proficient students fairly, taking into account the resources available to them through their communities, schools and families.
- Neither way is perfect; therefore, we must decide what is best.

Our current system is working, as at-risk students are improving their academic performance.

- Topeka Public Schools has nearly 75 percent of its students at-risk.
- Attached are graphs demonstrating that the current method of funding at-risk students has been successful in increasing student performance.
- Under this new proposal, Topeka Public Schools would have to cut another \$5 million from our budget.
- As a result, we would have to eliminate efforts directly tied to improving performance of our at-risk students.
 - We would have to lay off more than 100 teachers.
 - We would have to eliminate efforts to decrease truancy and improve professional development.

This begs the question: would cutting 5 million dollars from our budget and laying off 100 teachers improve or harm student performance in our district?

- Without a doubt, this proposal would hurt at-risk students in Topeka Public Schools.

Currently the state expects us to identify achievement gaps between children of wealth, and children of poverty. We are then called on to close these achievement gaps.

- If we no longer consider poverty or wealth in the way we support our students – how can we be expected to maintain these considerations in the way we value achievement?

It is clear that this proposal would harm not just the students in Topeka Public Schools, but those students most in need throughout the Great State of Kansas.

I ask you to join me in opposing this measure.

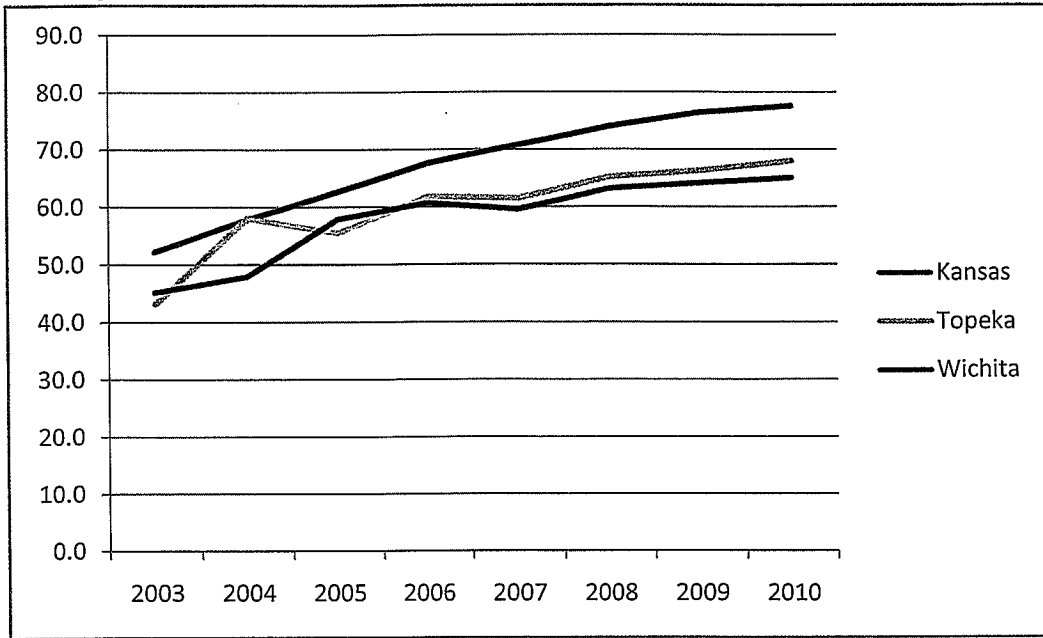
Thank you for your time and consideration.

Appropriations Committee

Date March 30, 2011

Attachment 2

Reading % Proficient of Students on Free and Reduced Lunch



Math % Proficient of Students on Free and Reduced Lunch

