

Senate Education Committee

Testimony on SB 450

Cheryl L. Semmel, Executive Director

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Thank you for the opportunity to testify on **SB 450**, which would add additional dollars to the current formula by increasing Base State Aid Per Pupil (BSAPP) and increasing Local Option Budget (LOB) authority over the next 2 years, beginning in School Year 2012-2013.

USA|Kansas supports this bill and applauds the authors for finding a reasonable solution to one of the most challenging responsibilities of state government. The best thing we can do for our great state is to provide a quality education for every student to ensure there is an educated work-force and an innovative entrepreneurial culture in Kansas that will help grow our economy. Administrators believe SB 450 is a great step in the right direction.

SB 450 maintains the current formula and works to restore funding for all districts over the next two years. Specifically, SB 450 adds \$74 to the BSAPP in FY 2013 (to \$3,854) and adds another \$74 to the BSAPP in FY 2012 (to \$3,928).

USA|Kansas supports SB 450, because it **restores funding to every district**, not just those select districts that have low assessed valuations and/or low enrollments. SB 450 is **equitable AND retains the weightings**, which are critical to our districts as our demographics change. Raising the base over two (2) years, as described in SB 450, and maintaining the weightings will definitely help support the needs of our most challenging students.

SB 450 also establishes a **two-year funding plan**. A multi-year plan would most certainly allow us to make strategic spending decisions, rather than "best guess" decisions based on what we think the Legislature will appropriate each year. School district administrators and our Boards of Education would gladly support a multi-year funding plan that allows us to be good stewards of our patrons' tax dollars. We can engage in long-term planning, which allows not only for the opportunity to be innovative, but also to be more efficient in the use of our resources.

Allows for additional local authority. USA|Kansas understands that some districts would like to access additional local funding; one option we have discussed is the ability to access additional dollars by raising the cap on the LOB.

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SB 450 also raises the legal cap from 31 percent to 33 percent in FY 2013, and to 35 percent in FY 2014 - all to be equalized. The bill also removes the provision in current law requiring an election to adopt an LOB more than 30 percent, restoring board authority and the protest petition process. We support both of these provisions.

Administrators believe that **equalization** is an especially powerful and important aspect of any funding formula given the significant variance in the value of a mill across the state. We are pleased to see that SB 450 would equalize to 35 percent.

However, over the last three years, the state hasn't appropriated enough money to pay all the equalization aid districts could receive according to the current finance formula. As a result, KSDE prorated aid to school districts. For FY 2012, districts eligible for LOB equalization aid received just less than 86 percent of the aid due, down from 92 percent in FY 2011. The Governor's budget maintains the same funding level for FY 2013.

While we believe that the increased [equalized] LOB authority in SB 450 may be helpful to districts, **we encourage the Legislature to appropriate additional funds to ensure that equalization aid is not further prorated.**

In closing, I would like to thank you for your continued support of education and for realizing the importance of investing in education.

The mission of United School Administrators of Kansas (USA|Kansas), through collaboration of member associations, is to serve, support, and develop educational leaders and to establish USA|Kansas as a significant force to improve education.

Kansas Association of Elementary School Principals
Kansas Association of Middle School Administrators
Kansas Association of School Business Officials
Kansas Association of School Personnel Administrators
Kansas Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development
Kansas Association of Special Education Administrators
Kansas Association of Secondary School Principals
Kansas Council of Career and Technical Education Administrators
Kansas School Public Relations Association
Kansas School Superintendents' Association