

MINUTES OF THE SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Jean Schodorf at 1:40 p.m. on February 20, 2006, in Room 123-S of the Capitol.

Committee members absent:

Committee staff present: Deb Hollon, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Kathie Sparks, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Theresa Kiernan, Revisor of Statutes
Shirley Higgins, Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee: Mike Willome, Clerk, Wichita School Board
Jim Edwards, Kansas Association of School Boards

SB 485–Schools; student disciplinary hearing process appeals hearing

Mike Willome, Clerk, Wichita School Board, testified in support of **SB 485**. He noted that the bill included minor revisions to K.S.A. 72-8904, which requires that school boards hear an appeal within 20 calendar days after an appeal request is made and make a decision within five calendar days after the hearing. He explained that it is sometimes impossible to meet the statutory requirement when a board meets only once a month. In such cases, the board must hold a special meeting. The bill would allow the board to make an appeal decision at its next regularly scheduled meeting rather than holding a special board meeting. Mr. Willome called attention to an appeal scheduling example in his written testimony which illustrated the statutory time line issues for appeal requests for boards that meet once per month. (Attachment 1)

Jim Edwards, Kansas Association of School Boards (KASB), testified in support of **SB 485**. He noted that the bill would provide more flexibility in large districts where there is a possibility for a large number of student disciplinary hearings. (Attachment 2) In his closing remarks, Mr. Edwards informed the Committee that approximately 84 percent of the school districts in Kansas meet once a month.

There being no others wishing to testify, the hearing on **SB 485** was closed.

SCR 1618–Memorializing Congress on federal funding of education

Theresa Kiernan, Revisor of Statutes Office, explained that **SCR 1618** points out that Kansas, under the Quality Performance Accreditation System, has long pursued the goal of improving the academic performance of all students. It applauds the President and Congress for putting forth the same goals in the No Child Left Behind Act and emphasizing the urgency in improving the performance of students. It states that the No Child Left Behind Act has encouraged needed changes in public education and was initially accompanied with relatively large increases in federal funding for public elementary and secondary schools, but points out that, since that time, the federal government has decreased funding for No Child Left Behind by \$793,000,000 in 2006, reduced funding for postsecondary education by \$166,000,000, and decreased funding for programs that serve students with disabilities by \$21,000,000. The resolution memorializes Congress to make a commitment to improving the quality of education by increasing its funding for the No Child Left Behind Act, the Higher Education Act, and the Individuals with Disabilities Act. It also requests that the President, Congress, and the United States Department of Education grant waivers, exemptions, or whatever flexibility is needed regarding the requirements of the Act in any year that federal funding for public elementary and secondary education is decreased in order to prevent states from spending state and local resources on activities that have not proven effective in raising student achievement and which may not be a priority of an individual state.

Noting that he also was speaking on behalf of the Kansas National Education Association, Mr. Edwards testified in support of **SCR 1618**. He outlined President Bush's proposed budget for FY 2007 with regard to funding for Title I grants and the initiative to improve the nation's global competitiveness. In addition, he discussed the proposed elimination of 42 programs within the Department of Education. (Attachment 3)

There being no others wishing to testify, the hearing on **SCR 1618** was closed.

CONTINUATION SHEET

MINUTES OF THE Senate Education Committee at 1:40 p.m. on February 20, 2006, in Room 123-S of the Capitol.

Senator Steineger moved to recommend **SCR 1618** favorably for passage, seconded by Senator Teichman. the motion carried.

Senator Steineger moved to recommend **SB 485** favorably for passage, seconded by Senator Vratil, the motion carried.

Senator Schodorf opened discussions on the following previously heard bills: **SB 440**, which concerned qualifications for admission to state educational institutions; **SB 305**, which concerned the Kansas Comprehensive Grant Program (eligibility of students attending institutions accredited by the American Association of Bible Colleges); and **SB 375**, which concerned the retirement and disability benefits of employees of the State Board of Regents or institutions under the Board's management.

Senator Vratil moved to recommend **SB 440** favorably for passage, seconded by Senator Lee. The motion carried.

Senator Vratil moved to amend **SB 305** by adding a five-year sunset and to technically amend by including the school name, seconded by Senator Ostmeyer. The motion carried.

Senator Teichman moved to recommend **SB 305** favorably for passage as amended, seconded by Senator Vratil. The motion carried.

Senator Schodorf requested that Ms. Kiernan review the intent of **SB 375**. Ms. Kiernan noted that the bill cured a conflict that occurred in the 2005 Legislative Session, and it provided that the Board of Regents would not be required to make employer contributions to (1) KPERS death and disability, (2) workers' compensation for employees on long-term disability (the workers do not qualify for the benefit), and (3) the reserve for vacation time.

Senator Teichman moved to recommend **SB 375** favorably for passage, seconded by Senator Apple. The motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:10 p.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for February 21, 2006.