

MINUTES OF THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Dwayne Umbarger at 1:36 p.m. on January 16, 2002 in Room 123-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except: Senator Corbin (excused)  
Senator Hensley (excused)

Committee staff present: Ben Barrett, Legislative Research  
Carolyn Rampey, Legislative Research  
Theresa Kiernan, Revisor of Statutes  
Dale Dennis, Deputy Commissioner of Education

Conferees appearing before the committee: Cindy Lane, Associate Director, Wyandotte County Cooperative  
Deborah Haltom, Director of Special Ed Shawnee Mission  
Gerald Reynaud, Executive Director of Special Serv. Olathe  
Sue Denny, Executive Director of Student Serv., Blue Valley

Others attending: See attached list.

Chairman Umbarger introduced Cindy Lane, Associate Director of Wyandotte County Cooperative. She stated that they realize special education is just one factor in our State's current education funding challenge. The IDEA will contribute directly to the rising cost of providing quality education to all students. They have looked at funding formulas used across the country and discussed how these other funding options might impact their district and reviewed practices that contribute to the rising costs of special education. Her colleagues will share what they have learned with the Committee today. ([Attachment 1](#))

Deb Haltom, Director of Special Education, Shawnee Mission, spoke about the new federal law and the funding formulas. Deb shared some of the concerns they have with the formulas and shared some of the challenges they have in their districts. ([Attachment 2](#))

Gerry Reynaud, Executive Director of Special Services, Olathe, spoke about the challenges of meeting the needs of exceptional children. Significant challenges are the passage of the new federal law itself and the expanded definition of student eligibility which over the years has added children ages 3 to 5, autism, the milder form of autism, Asperger Syndrome and children diagnosed with ADD and ADHD. This has greatly increasing the number of children qualifying for the services. The additional equipment and personnel needed is very costly. Mr. Reynaud stated that while they embrace the importance of providing a free appropriate public education for children with exceptionalities, the IDEA and Complementary State Laws have presented them with extraordinary challenges, complicated regulations and litigious due process procedures. ([Attachment 3](#))

Sue Denny, Executive Director of Student Services, spoke about the costs of educating the special education students. Students are coming to school with severe and significant medical conditions, some of which need full time one on one nurses at a cost of \$33 per hour for the nurse alone. There are needs for interpreters, special sound amplification systems which cost \$1000 per unit, special communication devices which cost \$50,000, special forms of transportation and many more extra costs. Maintenance for this equipment is an ongoing expense. They support education of these students and feel that it is not just a cost, but an investment. This investment has resulted in students that have participated in paid employment through their transition program. ([Attachment 4](#))

Cindy Lane gave closing remarks offering their resources in any manner deemed appropriate by the Committee. Her closing remarks are included in attachment 1 above.

Questions were answered for the Committee and the meeting adjourned 2:30 p.m.

