

MINUTES OF THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION.

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Senator Dwayne Umbarger at 12:10 p.m. on March 27, 2001 in Room 521-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except:

Committee staff present: Avis Swartzman, Revisor of Statutes
 Ben Barrett, Legislative Research Department
 Carolyn Rampey, Legislative Research Department
 Judy Steinlicht, Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee: Representative Kathe Lloyd
 Representative Bill Reardon
 Representative Kenny Wilk
 Representative Rocky Nichols
 Representative Kent Glasscock
 Representative Jim Garner
 Brilla Scott, USA
 Gary Robbins, Kansas Optometric Assoc.
 Mark Tallman, KASB
 Mark Desseti, KNEA
 Diane Gjerstad, Wichita Public Schools

Others attending: See Attached List

HB 2546–Kansas skills for success in school

Representative Kathe Lloyd appeared in support of **HB2546**. (Attachment 1 & 2). This bill is a product of much research and it is the belief that this is the right thing to do for Kansas Schools and Kansas pre-school children through third grade. Representative Lloyd was the chairperson for an ad hoc committee which studied and discussed the need to improve education and to make sure that children can read and do basic math by the time they leave third grade. Representative Reardon also spoke in strong support of the bill and explained the interventions for K-3 grades and pointed out that this bill also includes the funding to carry out these interventions. (Attachment 3)

Representative Kenny Wilk appeared in strong support of **HB2546**. (Attachment 4) He stated that the committee worked hard on the policy and once the policy was in place, they called in appropriations to work out funding the program. The funding is covered in the handout. (Attachment 5)

Representative Nichols explained the appropriations part of **HB2546**. (Attachment 6) This bill is a children’s initiative bill and not a school finance bill.

Representative Jim Garner talked about what the committee wishes to accomplish with **HB2546**. The goal was to reach those young lives who have fallen behind and get them back on track so they can have successful academic performance and a successful life.

Representative Kent Glasscock believes that **HB2546** can change lives. He believes that problems need to be caught early and that essential skills must be learned early in life to succeed. **HB2546** establishes a vision for early childhood education, a strategic plan that matches the vision and the funding plan that works.

The members of the House of Representative who testified for the bill answered questions for the members of the Committee.

CONTINUATION SHEET

March 27, 2001

Brilla Scott, United School Administrators, said that **HB2546** appears to be a duplication in effort and stated that more testing is simply not needed. The teachers already know what the “essential skills” are. What is needed are the resources to provide the necessary interventions. Funds need to be available for teachers to develop strategies to meet the diverse needs in their classrooms. (Attachment 7)

Gary Robbins, Kansas Optometric Association offered testimony pointing out concerns that he feels need to be addressed. (Attachment 8) They believe that the school districts need to establish a plan for eye exams by an optometrist or ophthalmologist to determine if the child suffers from a vision problem. The routine exams given to children in the schools now do not detect many vision problems. A child must be able to see to read and learn writing and math skills.

Mark Tallman presented testimony in opposition of **HB2546**. Mark’s testimony is an analysis by the Kansas Association of School Boards expressing the concerns in different sections of the bill. The concerns are addressed in the handout. (Attachment 9)

Mark Desetti, Kansas National Education Association, gave testimony in opposition of **HB2546**. (Attachment 10) He stated that there are duplications in this bill, it mandates specific interventions, and puts an enormous testing burden on our smallest children.

Diane Gjerstad gave testimony opposing **HB2546**. (Attachment 11) The Wichita Public Schools are strongly opposed to more testing. They agree with the intent of the bill, but argue that the schools already know what to do, they just need the resources.

Meeting adjourned at 2:00 p.m.