

Date: May 8, 2013
 House Committee on Pensions and Benefits
 Attn: Representative Steve Johnson and Committee Members
 Testimony in support of Working After Retirement from KPERS

I am the superintendent of Hutchinson Public Schools, USD 308, located in Reno County. I am submitting information regarding my district and two other smaller districts in Reno County – Nickerson Public Schools and Pretty Prairie Public Schools. The remaining districts of Fairfield, Buhler, and Haven are supporting of working after retirement, but did not give me information specific to their districts current working retirees.

Working after retirement has allowed our districts to fill a number of hard-to-fill teaching positions. Hutchinson Public Schools currently has 13 certified staff members working after retirement. Of these, 77% are employed in hard-to-fill teaching positions. Pretty Prairie currently has two persons working after retirement, both are in hard-to-fill positions. The superintendent of Pretty Prairie does not know whom he would find to teach 9th grade math thru calculus if not for the retiree he was able to hire two years ago. Nickerson currently has a foreign language teacher working after retirement. Hutchinson and Nickerson also each employ one retired building principal in addition to a number of classified staff members, such as bus drivers, paraprofessionals, and custodians working after retirement.

While many persons believe only administrators work after retirement, this is simply not the case. Kansas continues to have a severe shortage of math, science, and special education teachers. Librarians, counselors, foreign language teachers, as well as other specialty teachers, are in short supply as well. The farther west one travels, the harder it is to fill such teaching positions with a properly certified teacher. You will notice from the table below that both Hutchinson and Pretty Prairie are using a retired teacher to staff our calculus classes. Replacement teachers for calculus are next to impossible to find, and neither school knows what it will do to fill these positions when the current retirees are no longer able or willing to teach for us.

As a superintendent, I am extremely concerned about our ability to hire teachers for hard-to-fill positions if we cannot continue to use those working after retirement. If any changes are made to the system, those who are currently retired must be allowed to continue to work in our schools, or we will face a crisis in math, science, and special education classroom across the state. Should you desire to limit working after retirement, those already in the system must be grandfathered in such a way that they are allowed to continue working, so there is not a mass exodus of hard-to-fill teachers across the state. There simply are not new teachers in the college pipeline to take their place.

The breakdown for each district's use of working retirees in teaching and administrative positions is summarized in the table below.

	Hutchinson	Nickerson	Pretty Prairie
Special Education Teachers	3		
Science Teachers	1		
Calculus Teachers	1		1
School Counselors	2		
Librarians			1
Foreign Language Teachers	1	1	
Technical Education Teachers	1		
Reading Support Teachers	2		
Elementary Classroom Teachers	1		
Building Principals	1	1	

Submitted by: Dr. Shellaine Kiblinger Date: 5-5-13
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