

Approved: _____
Date

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION.

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Representative Ralph Tanner at 9:00 a.m. on February 15, 2000 in Room 313-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except: A quorum was present

Committee staff present: Avis Swartzman, Revisor of Statutes
Ben Barrett, Legislative Research Department
Carolyn Rampey, Legislative Research Department
Renae Jefferies, Revisor of Statutes

Conferees appearing before the committee: Representative Tom Sloan
Representative Kent Glasscock
Bill Seidl
Dr. Gary George, Superintendent, Olathe
Craig Grant, KNEA
Mark Tallman, KASB
Diane Gjerstaad, Wichita Public Schools

Others attending: See Attached List

Hearings on **HB 2719 - State educational institution, tuition waivers for graduate student receiving national fellowships** were opened.

Representative Tom Sloan, sponsor of the bill, appeared before the committee as a proponent of **HB 2719**. (Attachment 1) Representative Sloan stated that passage of this bill will not require the spending of additional State funds, but it will allow our universities to successfully compete with out-of-state schools, and its passage is desired by the faculty and university presidents.

Hearings on **HB 2719** were closed.

Representative Light moved to pass **HB 2719** favorably. Representative Peterson seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Hearings on **HB 2796 - School districts, early childhood education programs** were opened.

Representative Kent Glasscock appeared before the committee as a proponent of **HB 2796**. (Attachment 2) Representative Glasscock stated that early childhood education is the key to success in education. He also stated that at-risk students stand to benefit enormously from early programs. Representative Glasscock further commented that Kansas schools can give children the keys to successful futures and prepare our youth for the challenges in life by targeting our resources on the early years. Representative Glasscock then stood for questions.

Bill Seidl also appeared before the committee as a proponent for **HB 2796**. He stated that full day kindergarten has definite benefits, however funding is a key issue. He would like to see full day kindergarten funded for all Kansas students because the future of education depends on early childhood programs.

Dr. Gary George appeared before the committee with comments on **HB 2796**. He stated that, while he sees and acknowledges the benefits of early childhood educational programs, he has a number of concerns. He feels that funding issues should be addressed fully.

Craig Grant appeared before the committee with comments and concerns regarding **HB 2796**. He stated that while his organization (KNEA) applauds the effort to give at-risk students a healthy educational start in school, they have a problem with the portion of the bill that calls for the collection of fees for some participants in the full day program.

Mark Tallman appeared before the committee with further comments on **HB 2796**. He stated that his organization, KASB, is in favor of a full day program but has some concern over the funding, which comes in the form of grants rather than guaranteed funding. It is their belief that the ‘working poor’ would be left out of full day programs because of difficulty in paying the fees. They would like to see the mandate removed from the bill and the final responsibility for such programs left to the local school boards.

Diane Gjerstaad appeared before the committee as a proponent of **HB 2796**. She stated that she supports the expansion of the four-year-old at-risk numbers and the implementation of a full day kindergarten program. However, she also stated that she feels the bill, as written, has several policy issues that she could not agree with. Among them are the question of mandates without adequate funding, the idea that full day kindergarten somehow costs less than higher grades, and the fact that grants for pre kindergarten and full day kindergarten funding are competitive.

Hearings on **HB 2796** were closed.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:50 a.m.