

MINUTES OF THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION.

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Dwayne Umbarger at 1:38 p.m. on March 7, 2002 in Room 123-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except: Senator Hensley (excused)

Committee staff present: Ben Barrett, Legislative Research
Theresa Kiernan, Revisor of Statutes
Judy Steinlicht, Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee: Carol Dermyer, Coordinator Student Support Services, State Department of Education
Winston Brooks, Superintendent, Wichita Public Schools
Pat Apple, Louisburg Board President
John Heim, Superintendent, Emporia Public Schools

Others attending: See Attached List

Briefing on School Violence

Carol Dermyer, Coordinator Student Support Services, State Department of Education gave an overview of Wraparound Kansas, which has been named Safe and Caring Schools Grants. Wraparound Kansas was funded in the 1999 session and assigned to the State Department of Education. Representatives were brought together from Families Together, Keyes for Networking, mental health agencies, SRS, and school districts. They developed a request for proposals that were reviewed by a panel of members across the state who had an interest in the project. Eight proposals were recommended for funding and they did fund these eight grantees. These eight are listed in the attachment with the amount awarded that year. The eight were required to include a 25% local match. The attachment shows how much went to school districts and mental health agencies. The funding for these eight grantees was approved again in the years 2000 and 2001, but the funds came from the Tobacco settlement and oversight was moved to the Children's Cabinet, but still administered by the State Board of Education.

The focus of the grant has been around prevention and early intervention. Part of the grant required an assurance of collaboration between the school, community mental health center and local community council. The eight grantees approached the project in various ways. Several brought together community mental health centers to provide services directly in the schools; others did more training and staff development in early intervention to develop prevention skills for both teachers, parents and students. They discovered that the early training seemed to be more successful and more difficulty seemed to occur when they waited until crisis happened and then tried to provide intervention.

The attachment has a brief summary of the evaluations of each of the projects and an anthology of the work done with the student improvement teams which will be used statewide with the student improvement team training. ([Attachment 1](#))

Briefing on New Facilities Weighting

Winston Brooks, Superintendent, Wichita Public Schools, described how the current "new facilities weighting" adversely impacts the Wichita school district and a number of other districts. He stated that the original intent of this weighting held true for many years, but that the changes in LOB law has eroded the original arguments and has resulted in the unintended consequence of encouraging boards of education to increase local property taxes to secure this needed funding. Mr. Brooks believes it is time to separate the new facilities weighting from LOB use. ([Attachment 2](#))

Representative Jene Vickrey introduced Pat Apple, Louisburg Board President to the Committee. Pat's district has built a new high school with a bond issue for \$19 million which is to be paid with 90% local and 10% state money. Their LOB is at 17%. They would prefer not to max their LOB to 25% because of the tax burden that would be placed on their property owners. He would like to be able to use the new

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facilities weighting without increasing the LOB to 25%. (Attachment 3)

John Heim, Superintendent, Emporia Public Schools, explained to the Committee how the new facilities weighting law affects his school district. His district is building two new elementary schools, adding on to the high school and improving other buildings. The new facilities weighting option was attractive to the district and they began making plans to increase their LOB to 25%. When a new law went into effect last year passing special education funds through the general fund, their general fund budget was artificially inflated not just by their own special education, but also by the six special education cooperatives under their district. The intent of the new facilities weighting was to provide additional state support for districts that were making a significant local effort to support their schools. Emporia is making that significant local effort. An adjustment needs to be made for the few districts that were hurt by the inability to access new facilities weighting because of the change in the law. (Attachment 4)

Committee discussion followed each conferee's testimony.

Senator Downey made a motion to approve the minutes for February 20, 21 and 25. Seconded by Senator Vratil. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 2:30 p.m.