

**Testimony on SB 148**  
**Senate Commerce Committee**  
**March 7, 2007**

**Prepared by**  
**Phil Elliott, Director of Technology, Spring Hill Schools, USD 230**

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony to this committee on SB 148, a bill amending the KAN-ED act. I am submitting these remarks on behalf of the Spring Hill school district, which is located in Johnson and Miami counties. The district includes the city of Spring Hill, as well as portions of Olathe and Overland Park. The current enrollment in the Spring Hill school district is 1,782 students and the district is experiencing approximately a four percent growth per year, with an anticipated increase growth rate over the next several years.

The Spring Hill school district is committed to the utilization of technology in buildings and classrooms to enhance the learning experience. Currently, however, Spring Hill school district benefits from a limited number of the services offered by KAN-ED. In addition to receiving a modest grant, the District utilizes the Empowered Desktop supported by KAN-ED, enabling us to access research databases, test builder, productivity tools, and learning profiles.

According to KAN-ED's web site, they provide six services. They are to operate a private/statewide network, operate servers that enhance or extend the use of networked video, provide grants to help members construct networked video classrooms, provide grants to members who want to develop and/or implement innovative uses of the network, provide a controlled-access portal (the Empowered Desktop), and provide access to the nationwide higher education network usually known as "Internet2". These are great goals and we believe they are accomplishable, given the right management and direction.

State wide, state funded programs should be just that, state wide. At this point the Spring Hill school district is only able to access the Empowered desktop and apply for the grants available through KAN-ED. In order for the Spring Hill school district to gain access to the other resources, we would have to install a minimum of a 3 MB point to point circuit from our telecommunication provider at a minimum cost of a \$1,000 a month. We believe we should be able to use our existing broadband connection (6 MB) and simply "route" the traffic two directions, one to the regular Internet and the other to the KAN-ED Backbone. This could be accomplished using Layer 3 routing. Think of Layer 3 routing like a postal worker. The postal worker (technology equipment) looks at the destination address and routes the letter (information) accordingly. We have been

working with KAN-ED for three or more years to gain access (at no additional cost) to the statewide/KAD-ED network.

The Spring Hill school district is not alone, while preparing this information I spoke with ten metro area districts of similar size and similar technology implementations. They too only use the Empowered Desktop and modest grants as they also require a second connection to gain access to the other broadband services offered by KAN-ED.

Our district would like to strongly encourage KAN-ED and the Legislature to work with the state's Internet service providers to establish a strategic plan to connect all eligible entities via their existing broadband connections and to provide as many services as possible via the state-wide Intranet network. We believe that this will increase reliability of existing services, make existing state wide communications potentially more secure, and provide a platform for new and innovative uses of the network.

We also believe that there are potential benefits to developing a steering committee of eligible entity representatives to ensure that the services, procedures, and methods being provided actually benefit the groups.

In closing, I would like to thank you for your continued support of education and the opportunity to submit written testimony today.