

Written Testimony before the

**Joint Meeting of the House Committee on Appropriations
And
Senate Committee on Ways and Means**

on

School Equity Funding

by

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Chairman Ryckman, Chairman Masterson, and Members of the Committees:

During difficult times, leadership emerges, I don't think anyone will argue the fact that Kansas education is facing difficult times. Setting aside all politics, it is imperative all parties work together and lead not only for a solution, but for the benefit of all students and families across Kansas.

On Monday, June 20, six superintendents, Chairman Masterson, Chairman Ryckman, Randy Watson, Dale Dennis, and KSSA leadership gathered to discuss a possible solution to solve the equity challenge. The group agreed there may be other ways to achieve equity; however, at this point, the quickest and more certain path to ensure a constitutionally equitable system is to restore both the previous capital outlay formula (based on the median valuation per pupil) and the previous LOB formula (based on 81.2 percentile of valuation per pupil). We understand this would cost the state approximately \$38 million.

As we worked together, there were items of agreement and challenge; yet, throughout the process, strong dialog prevailed. When we exited on Monday, a plan was constructed with the most challenging component being a reduction of .005% to all school districts. As each of your committees work today, a total of three revenue plans exist including the plan KSSA constructed with Chairman Masterson and Chairman Ryckman. The plans have common revenue sources and unique revenue sources, but each plan achieves the necessary \$38 million.

It is difficult for KSSA to endorse any particular revenue proposal due to the varying budget situations in our member's school districts; however, we encourage lawmakers to find an acceptable compromise among competing ideas. **If all revenue options are explored and exhausted and a reduction cannot be avoided to the general school fund to provide additional equity dollars, we implore this amount should not exceed .005%.**

KSSA has identified four priorities we ask lawmaker to considered in working towards a solution:

1. Keep schools open
2. Equity for all schools; we can support any plan that fully supports equalization of LOB and Capital Outlay
3. Extraordinary needs fund must be available with expanded criteria to support all schools
4. A Clean Appropriation Bill with a single focus on equity

I regret my inability to present my testimony in the presents of the committee, but if I can be of any additional assistance or support please don't hesitate to contact me. Both chairman have my mobile contact information. I will return to Topeka on Monday, June 27.

We appreciate your consideration in this matter.