

June 23, 2016

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

In light of the fiscal crisis of the state of Kansas and the deadline issued in the opinion of the Kansas Supreme Court, though far from ideal, the Shawnee Mission School District supports the following provisions in an immediate “short-term fix” to the current educational calamity.

Fund the 81.2 percent equalization of the Local Option Budget, hold districts harmless from loss on the L.O.B. equalization, and create a “clean” bill that funds the immediate problem. If necessary, deduct one-half of one percent of General State Aid from each school district, with a “marker” that would restore this reduction as state revenues allow. In addition, fund the Hold Harmless provision of school districts that have the highest need first. Simply, fund the districts that would require the highest mill levy increase first, until available resources are exhausted.

Shawnee Mission is not on the list of highest need school districts for this hold harmless provision. My testimony is not necessarily based upon what is best for the long term solution to the current crisis, but rather a compromise to ensure there is no gap in the services our students need and our communities rightly expect us to deliver. This spirit of compromise is also offered to demonstrate a continued interest to get us (all of us) to the discussion of the long term solution. The resolution of a crisis must bring compromise, and with compromise, generally no one is happy, which is the current situation. Success does not necessarily equate to happiness.



Dr. Jim Hinson, Superintendent