

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 16, 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: Dr. Bill Hefner, Kansas Optometric Association
Representative Kent Glasscock
Jeannie Hendrix, Ottawa, KS teacher
Bill Leggett, Supt. Mankato USD 278
Perry Perkins, Assoc. Supt. Auburn-Washburn USD
Teri Howard, Ottawa, USD
Marceta Reilly

Others attending: See Attached List

Representative Tanner introduced Dr. Gary Robbins of the Kansas Optometric Association who introduced Dr. Bill Heffner of the same organization.

Dr. Heffner appeared before the committee to present a report on a state-funded vision therapy reading performance research project. (Attachment 1)

Carolyn Rampey of the Legislative Research Department appeared before the committee to present an explanation of the Four-Year-Old At-Risk program and **HB 2631**. (Attachment 2)

Hearings on **HB 2794 - State board of education, mastery of basic skills program** and **HB 2796 - school districts, early childhood education programs** were opened.

Representative Kent Glasscock appeared before the committee as a proponent of the two bills. (Attachment 3) Representative Glasscock offered an overview of **HB 2794**. He stated that the key to a successful educational experience is increasing student literacy in math and reading. Representative Glasscock also stated that the only way to assure that all children master the basic skills is to provide early intervention.

Jeannie Hendrix appeared before the committee as a proponent of **HB 2796**. (Attachment 4) She stated that she was appearing as a field representative, not an expert. As a teacher with experience in early childhood education she recognizes the importance of reaching at-risk children early in order to ensure that they will not fall behind in school. She believes that full day kindergarten programs are an important step toward this goal.

Bill Leggett appeared before the committee as a proponent of **HB 2796** and **HB 2794**. He stated that full day programs are much better than half day programs, but the key question is how to fund them. He further stated that what happens at the primary level effects a child's entire school career. In support of **HB 2794**, he stated that data shows that if a child is not reading by the end of third grade, he probably will not be able to read without extensive remedial intervention.

Hearings on **HB 2796** and **HB 2794** were closed.

Hearings on **HB 2899 - Kansas pupils reading improvement program** were opened.

Teri Howard, a reading specialist in the Ottawa schools, appeared before the committee as a proponent for the bill. (Attachment 5) Ms. Howard stated that professional development is the key to improving the

reading skills of Kansas students. She urged the committee to consider **HB 2899** favorably.

Marceta Reilly, Superintendent of Schools at Royal, Kansas appeared before the committee as a proponent of **HB 2899**. Ms. Reilly also represented the Kansas Learning First Alliance before the committee. (Attachments 6 and 7) She stated that reading is not just a school issue, but also a community issue. She believes that the additional resources outside the normal funding process are a key element in improving the reading skills of all Kansas school children.

Hearings on **HB 2899** were closed.

Hearings on **HB 2811 - Kansas competency in basic skills program** were opened.

Marceta Reilly also offered comments on **HB 2811** to the committee. She stated that this bill takes a punitive approach, and believes that decisions about promotions need to be handled at the local level.

Perry Perkins, Associate Superintendent in the Auburn-Washburn School District spoke on behalf of United School Administrators of Kansas about **HB 2811**. (Attachment8) He expressed concerns that a Basic Skills Test could set up artificially low levels of basic achievement.

Hearings on **HB 2811** were closed.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:45 a.m.