



Early Childhood, Special Education and Title Programs

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16 February 2017

TO: Rep. Dan Hankins – Chair, House Health and Human Services Committee

FROM: Dr. Marvin J. Miller, Chair, Kansas Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC)

RE: HB 2206 – An act concerning health and healthcare, relating to coverage of telemedicine

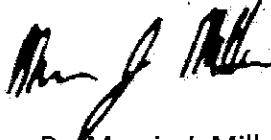
Good afternoon, Mr. Chair and members of the committee. **Kansas SEAC supports this bill.** SEAC is a legally mandated special education advisory council comprised of a coalition of parents, teachers, administrators, and related services providers appointed from across all regions of the state. SEAC is required to be composed of majority representation who either have a disability themselves or are parents of a student with a disability. Our sole mission is to identify unmet needs in special education and to recommend remedies to the State Board of Education and the Kansas legislature when necessary.

As a parent of a daughter with Down Syndrome, I have watched speech and language therapists tirelessly work wonders as they have coaxed out clear articulation and communication so that we can now understand her spoken words. Speech and Language pathologists (SLP) are a vital component of the special education team. Just as there is a shortage of special education teachers in Kansas, there continues to be a scarcity of qualified SLP providers. To provide the necessary in school services, many districts have begun using the only available option to them – tele-health providers – in accordance with professional best practice guidelines established through considerable research.

Yet the use of tele-providers come with a burdensome drawback. Under current Kansas law, districts are not able to submit tele-provider SLP services for partial Medicaid reimbursement costs. What does this mean? Rural districts are often required to tap a larger portion of their already meager special education funds more so than urban districts – realistically reducing the monies available across the board for all other special education initiatives. *Passage of this bill would rectify this inequality and increase the benefits not only for*

our students who require tele-provider speech and language services – but all special education students. Kansas SEAC supports this bill.

Thank you!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Marvin J. Miller". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "M".

Dr. Marvin J. Miller
Chair, Kansas Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC)
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