

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON SENATE WAYS AND MEANS.

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Steve Morris at 10:35 a.m. on January 11, 2001, in Room 123-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except: Senator Christine Downey - Excused

Committee staff present:

Alan Conroy, Chief Fiscal Analyst, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Debra Hollon, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Amory Lovin, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Mike Corrigan, Assistant Revisor of Statutes
Julie Weber, Administrative Assistant to the Chairman
Mary Shaw, Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee:

Dale M. Dennis, Deputy Commissioner, Kansas Department of Education

Others attending: See attached Guest List

Bill Introductions

A motion was made by Senator Jackson, with a second by Senator Huelskamp, to introduce the three Governor's Budget bills. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Senator Feleciano, with a second by Senator Jackson, to introduce a bill (1rs0036) to authorize re-authorization of the SRS Transition Oversight Committee and the re-designation of the SRS Transition Oversight Committee as the SRS Oversight Committee. Motion carried.

Chairman Morris welcomed Dale E. Dennis, Deputy Commissioner, Kansas Department of Education, who gave an overview of the Department of Education and funding issues. Mr. Dennis reviewed a chart that was distributed which was titled, "Increased State Aid Funding For Fiscal Year 2002, Comparison of Recommendations" which compared the recommendations of the State Board of Education, the Governor's Task Force and the Governor's Recommendations regarding each program (Attachment 1).

In his testimony, Mr. Dennis noted that school attendance rates in Kansas are among the best in the nation. Kansas is about 95 percent attendance which is very good overall, but there is still room for improvement.

Regarding the Kansas Cultural Heritage Center, Mr. Dennis mentioned that last year the Legislature agreed to give them \$30,000, but a proviso which was supposed to be included in the omnibus appropriations bill was dropped by accident. Due to that, the Kansas Cultural Heritage Center is not scheduled to get any dollars in the current fiscal year unless the error is corrected. The reason they put in \$43,000 in their funding is so the Cultural Heritage Center would be equal with Agriculture in the Classroom and Environmental Education.

Mr. Dennis mentioned that a big area of concern is in teacher shortages. Vacancies are up considerably from prior years. Enough teachers are being produced, as a general rule, but they are going to the private sector in math, science and business, especially teachers with good technological backgrounds, which are areas in which businesses are interested. Mr. Dennis also noted that Special Education is also a big shortage area.

There being no questions from the Committee, Chairman Morris thanked Mr. Dennis for the outstanding report that was presented to the Committee. The Chairman also noted that the Committee may have Mr. Dennis come back.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:25 a.m. The next meeting is scheduled for January 16, 2001.