

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Clay Aurand at 9:00 a.m. on February 4, 2009, in Room 711 of the Docking State Office Building.

All members were present except:

Representative Lana Gordon- excused  
Representative Melvin Neufeld- excused

Committee staff present:

Sharon Wenger, Research Analyst, Kansas Legislative Research Department  
Dale Dennis, Deputy Commissioner, Kansas State Department of Education  
Janet Henning, Committee Assistant

Conferees appearing before the committee:

Cheryl Semmel, Director, United School Administrators of Kansas  
Dr. David Brax, Superintendent, Buhler, USD #313  
Diane Gjerstad, Wichita Public Schools USD #259  
Mark Tallman, Kansas Association of School Boards  
Mark Desetti, Kansas National Education Association  
John Morton, Superintendent, Newton USD #373 (written testimony)

Sharon Wenger, Research Analyst, Kansas Legislative Research Department, distributed copies of the "boundary study", a part of the report by the Augenblick-Meyers firm and requested by Rep. Crow. ([Attachment 1](#))

Chairman Aurand advised Committee members that the Committee would not be working **HB 2002** as previously announced because of time constraints.

**HB 2105 - Teacher and administrator contracts; notice of non-renewal.**

Cheryl Semmel, Director, United School Administrators of Kansas, addressed Committee members as a proponent of **HB 2105**. Ms. Semmel told Committee members that **HB 2105** would allow districts, for a limited period of time, to notify teachers of non-renewal to a reasonable number of days following the adoption of the state budget. This would allow school districts to make decisions based on more accurate information about the financial resources available to the district. Ms. Semmel told Committee members that administrators remain committed to ensuring a quality education for each child and are communicating regularly with staff - instructional and non-instructional - as they prepare for anticipated cuts and remain focused on that common goal. ([Attachment 2](#))

Dr. David Brax, Buhler USD #313, spoke to Committee members as a proponent of **HB 2105**. Dr. Brax told Committee members that **HB 2105** would positively impact non-tenured teachers throughout the state and would alleviate some arbitrary time constraints on school administrators and board of education to make staffing decisions. ([Attachment 3](#))

Diane Gjerstad, Wichita Public Schools USD #259, spoke to Committee members as a proponent of **HB 2105**. Ms. Gjerstad told Committee members that because Wichita Public Schools has a reduction in force policy in the bargaining agreement with the United Teachers of Wichita, they would ask the committee to allow for a district to use either current law or the proposed language in ©. However, the district does not have a reduction in force policy for administrators. For this reason, they would like the option to exercise the new language on page 2, section 2 © which would extend the deadline to notify administrators. Ms. Gjerstad further stated that the district would ask the provisions in © be optional for teachers; and the bill clearly allow a district to use either option for teachers and administrators to best deal with staffing issues within their district. ([Attachment 4](#))

Written testimony was received from Dr. John Morton, Superintendent, and Dr. Mike Clagg, Assistant Superintendent for Human Services, Newton USD 373, in support of **HB 2105** and distributed to Committee members. ([Attachment 5](#))

A question and answer session followed the presentation.

Mark Tallman, Assistant Executive Director/Advocacy, Kansas Association of School Boards, spoke to Committee members in opposition of **HB 2105**. Mr. Tallman told Committee members that their members have previously adopted a specific policy position support the May 1 and May 15 dates. ([Attachment 6](#))

Mark Desetti, Director Legislative and Political Advocacy, Kansas National Education Association, spoke to Committee members in opposition of **HB 2105**. Mr. Desetti told Committee members that the system we have now is working and KNEA sees no reason to change it. ([Attachment 7](#))

A question and answer session followed the presentations.

Chairman Aurand closed the hearing on **HB 2105**.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:45 a.m. The next meeting is scheduled for February 10, 2009.