

DATE: January 31, 2022

To: Sen. Baumgardner and Senate Education Committee Members

From: Dr. Reginald Eggleston, Superintendent, USD 475 Geary County Schools

Re: Proponent to Senate Bill #341

Madame Chairwoman and members of the Senate Education Committee, I am Dr. Reginald Eggleston, Superintendent of Geary County Schools (USD 475), submitting written testimony on behalf of the military dependent students and military families I'm fortunate to educate and serve. Please allow me to share some facts about my school district:

- The Geary County School District, USD 475, is responsible for the education of approximately 7,000 total students, with 3,500 being military dependent children, each year in grades Pre-Kindergarten through Twelfth grade.
- USD 475 has an annual student turnover rate of approximately 35%. With 67% student turnover rate every three years, it is a rare event when a student can claim to have completed Pre-Kindergarten through 12 grade in our district. Last year, it was eighty-three students total.
- Federal Impact Aid funding from the United States Department of Education (USDoE) is outlined in Title VII of ESSA (Every Student Succeeds Act).
- We currently have 514 students in our ELL program with 49 languages spoken
- We have hired 6 administrators and 129 certified staff this school year. With 28 of those being military affiliated staff.
- In USD 475 we provide appropriate and necessary special education and related services for qualifying students to provide a free and appropriate education within the least restrictive environment for students aged 3-21. Additionally, we host an infant-toddler program for ages birth to 3 for students who qualify with developmental delays.
- Services we provide our Special Education students may include the following: early childhood, speech-language therapy, social work, interpreting, transportation, assistive technology, support to personnel, attendant care, participation in extracurricular activities, nursing, extended school year, transition (internships/job shadowing, etc.), consultation, occupational therapy, physical therapy, psychological, gifted, special education services with paraeducators and/or teachers focused on academics, social-emotional, functional performance, deaf/hard of hearing, vision impaired, etc. Our December 1 count is projected to be 1,404 students receiving special education services ages 3-21 excluding gifted.
- **SEC. 7001. PURPOSE. (20 USC 7701)** *In order to fulfill the Federal responsibility to assist with the provision of educational services to federally connected children in a manner that promotes control by local educational agencies with little or no Federal or State involvement, because certain activities of the Federal Government, such as activities to fulfill the responsibilities of the Federal Government with respect to Indian tribes and activities under section 511 of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act, place a financial burden on the local*

educational agencies serving areas where such activities are carried out, and to help such children meet the same challenging State academic standards, it is the purpose of this title to provide financial assistance to local educational agencies that—

- *(1) experience a substantial and continuing financial burden due to the acquisition of real property by the United States;*
 - *(2) educate children who reside on Federal property and whose parents are employed on Federal property;*
 - *(3) educate children of parents who are in the military services and children who live in low rent housing;*
 - *(4) educate heavy concentrations of children whose parents are civilian employees of the Federal Government and do not reside on Federal property; or*
 - *(5) need special assistance with capital expenditures for construction activities because of the enrollments of substantial numbers of children who reside on Federal lands and because of the difficulty of raising local revenue through bond referendums for capital projects due to the inability to tax Federal property.*
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- USDoe Federal Impact Aid is paid out to all 50 states based on eligible students counted by school districts and for Federal Lands no longer on tax rolls in these states.
 - Kansas includes Federal Impact Aid as part of the state aid calculation for Kansas Public Schools.
 - Kansas is the **only** remaining state choosing to include Federal Impact Aid as part of the state education equalization formula. (New Mexico and Alaska were the other two states previously, but last year changed their statutory requirement, thus excluding Federal Impact Aid as part of their education funding formula calculation towards equalization.)
 - There are currently 24 school districts receiving/eligible to receive Federal Impact Aid in Kansas.
 - The total number of students enrolled in these 24 districts is 44,104. (Of which 8,730 are federally connected)
 - USD475 is only allocated 30% of its awarded Impact Aid funds while it's on base student population represents 47% of the total district elementary student population. The district uses these funds for capital projects, building repair and maintenance, and custodial costs necessary to upkeep its schools. The district is unable to collect tax revenue or raise bond funding to pay for the upkeep of its five schools on base due to their location on federal property. Balance for this inequity may be achieved by increasing the impact aid allocation sent by KDHE to the district.
 - Kansas "scoring" for military family quality of life will be affected by being the only state choosing to utilize Federal Impact Aid as part of the equalization calculations.
 - Top-level military leaders readily discuss Kansas as an option for the relocation of (or new placement of) missions and units...however, on a Federal level, Impact Aid as part of public education funding for equalization is a deterrent against final decision making.
 - Districts serving high concentrations of mobile military-connected students face unique challenges in educating and supporting the social-emotional needs of military dependents.
 - Because of the examples provided in the previous bullets, I support and respectfully request the successful passing of Senate Bill 341.

Thank you for the opportunity to express my support of Senate Bill #341.

Kansas is widely seen across the country as a military-friendly state. Kansas was also the first state to sign on to the Military Interstate Children's Compact Commission, which now has the support of all 50 states and the District of Columbia. Further steps in continuing Kansas' long history as supporting our military and critical support for districts enrolling students living on Indian Lands and those with Federal Property acquired by the U.S. before 1938 would be recognized and supported in the successful passing of Senate Bill #341.

Thank you to the committee for the opportunity to submit my written testimony.

Very Respectfully Submitted,

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