



Oral neutral testimony before
Senate Education Committee
On

HB 2060 – Establishing the special education and related services funding task force

By Scott Rothschild, KASB Communications Editor
srothschild@kasb.org
Wed. March 15, 2023

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony on HB 2060. Kansas teachers and paraprofessionals work hard every day to try to provide the best education possible to students with special needs. The formation of a task force to conduct hearings and receive information about special education, specifically funding, is a laudable endeavor that could hopefully produce even better services than we have today.

We would support the bill outright but for our concern with the makeup of the task force under the proposal. We believe the task force would produce better recommendations if it had a wider array of individuals with first-hand knowledge of special education.

Historically, a previous special education task force carved out specific membership from education groups, such as KASB, KNEA and USA-Kansas, which represent school boards, teachers and administrators. These are the people who will be responsible for implementing or living with any changes that may emanate from this task force. In addition, having more parents of students who currently receive special education services on the task force would be a further step in the right direction.

Also, while we applaud efforts to study and improve special education, we steadfastly believe such a study cannot delay any action on increasing special education funding now. Many of our districts are diverting many millions of dollars from general education to special education because both the state and federal government have not fulfilled their commitments to special education. This hurts all our students.

KASB, along with other major education organizations, supports the governor's five-year phase-in of SPED funds to reach the statutory level of 92 percent. We believe increased funding for special education should be budgeted and not linked to other education policy proposals. We believe the increased funding from the state, pushing the feds to do likewise and a well-represented and knowledgeable task force committed to making our services even better can all be done at the same time. Nearly one in five Kansas students receive special education services and they deserve our best efforts.

Thank you.

KASB is a non-profit service organization built on an abiding belief in Kansas public schools. We have put the needs of students and K-12 leaders first since 1917.

Kansas Association of School Boards

1420 SW Arrowhead Rd, Topeka, KS 66604 • 785-273-3600 • www.kasb.org