

MINUTES OF THE SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Jean Schodorf at 1:30 p.m. on March 3, 2011, in Room 152-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except:

Senator Jeff King - excused

Committee staff present:

Sharon Wenger, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Laura Younker, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Jason Long, Office of the Revisor of Statutes
Eunice Peters, Office of the Revisor of Statutes
Dorothy Gerhardt, Committee Assistant

Conferees appearing before the Committee:

Katherine Kersenbrock-Ostmeyer, Director, Special Education NW KS Educational Service Center
Dr. Linda Aldridge, Kansas Association of Special Education Administrators & USD #501
Mike Lewis, Director, High Plains Educational Cooperative #611
Terry Collins, Doniphan County Educational Cooperative #616
Doug Bowman, Coordinating Council on Early Childhood Developmental Services
Bert Moore, Director, Chautauqua & Elk County Special Educational Services
Robert Coleman, Director, ANW Special Education Cooperative #603 (written only)
Chris Hipp, Director, North Central Kansas Special Education Cooperative #636 (written only)
Mark Hauptman, Asst. Supt., Hays West Central KS Special Education Coop (written only)
Dr. Ronald Sarnacki, Ph.D., Director, Special Education, Cowley County Special Services Cooperative (written only)

Others attending:

See attached list.

Chair Schodorf began the meeting by announcing that Mr. Dale Dennis, Deputy Commissioner, Kansas Department of Education, who regularly attends meetings of the Education Committee, was being honored today at Pittsburg State University. He was one of two alumni receiving the Dr. Ralf J. Thomas Distinguished Service Award during the Apple Day Convocation. The award honors alumni who have demonstrated significant volunteer service to the PSU community.

Hearing on **SB 111-Eliminating minimum and maximum calculation of special education state aid**

Jason Long, Office of the Revisor of Statutes, provided a summary of the provisions of **SB 111**. Current law regarding special education state aid contains a funding formula that would begin during school year 2011-2012 that would determine the minimum and maximum amount of special education state aid a school district may receive, based on a per-teacher basis. **SB 111** would repeal this section of the special education school finance formula which places an upper limit at \$1,028, and a lower limit at \$514.

According to the Kansas Department of Education, enactment of **SB 111** would have the potential to redistribute special education state aid payments among school districts, but would not change overall special education state aid to districts in total.

Katherine Kersenbrock-Ostmeyer, Director, Special Education NW KS Educational Service Center, appeared before the committee in support of the proposed legislation (Attachment 1). She stated the cost calculations are based on state funding for special education teacher equivalents at the local education agency and then factored with an overall student count. The student numbers calculated are for all students in the local education program and not just for students receiving special education services. She stated this places rural areas at a disadvantage.

Dr. Linda Aldridge, Kansas Association of Special Education Administrators and USD #501, also appeared before the committee in support of **SB 111** (Attachment 2). She stated that, unless amended,

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most districts, cooperatives, and interlocals will lose an estimated \$50/teacher in special education categorical aid. Those districts that gain additional funds are likely to see a decrease the following year when their average cost per special education student rises. The amendment proposed in **SB 111** restores the process for disbursement of special education state aid to its previous formula, thus eliminating funding shifts that are difficult to predict and unlikely to be sustained over time.

Mike Lewis, Director, High Plains Educational Cooperative #611 ([Attachment 3](#)), Terry Collins, Director, Doniphan County Educational Cooperative #616 ([Attachment 4](#)), Doug Bowman, Coordinating Council on Early Childhood Developmental Services ([Attachment 5](#)), and Bert Moore, Director, Chautauqua & Elk County Special Educational Services ([Attachment 6](#)), all appeared before the committee in support of **SB 111**.

Robert Coleman, Director, ANW Special Education Cooperative #603, ([Attachment 7](#)), Chris Hipp, Director, North Central Kansas Special Education Cooperative #636 ([Attachment 8](#)), Mark Hauptman, Assistant Superintendent, Hays West Central Kansas Special Education Coop ([Attachment 9](#)), and Dr. Ronald Sarnacki, Ph.D., Director, Special Education, Cowley County Special Services Cooperative, ([Attachment 10](#)), all provided written testimony in support of **SB 111**.

After committee discussion, the hearing on **SB 111** was closed.

The next meeting is scheduled for March 7, 2011.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:30 p.m.