



Oral neutral testimony on HB 2594

Establishing the school funding task force; abolishing the special education task force

By

Angie Stallbaumer,

Deputy Director and General Counsel

Kansas Association of School Boards

Astallbaumer@kasb.org

In

House K12 Education Budget Committee

January 29, 2024

Madam Chair and members of the committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to appear as neutral today on HB 2594.

KASB supports the concept of a School Funding Task Force that would meet prior to the sunset of the current general education school formula in 2027. This is a prudent move, and we applaud Chair Williams for being proactive on this important issue.

We're concerned, however, about the composition of the Task Force in the bill as currently written. It appears to have few experts on the topic of general education school finance. We acknowledge the presence on the proposed Task Force of two superintendents and a representative of the division of the budget, but none of those positions can be presumed to have the breadth and depth of knowledge required by the scope of work envisioned for the task force.

Sec. 2 of the bill repeals the state statute establishing the Special Education and Related Services Funding Task Force. KASB opposes this provision for the following reasons:

Kansas Association of School Boards

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

We direct the committee's attention to the section of the statute reference below:

- (d) The special education and related services funding task force shall:
- (1) Study and make recommendations for changes in the existing formula for funding of special education and related services;
 - (2) conduct hearings and receive and consider suggestions from teachers, parents, the department of education, the state board of education, other governmental officers and agencies and the general public concerning funding for special education and related services; and
 - (3) make and submit reports to the legislature on the work of the task force concerning recommendations of the task force. Such reports shall include recommendations for legislative changes and be submitted to the legislature on or before January 14 of each year.

Section (d)(3) above appears to envision annual meetings of the Special Education Task Force in its reference to the submission of reports "on or before January 14 of each year." The Task Force has met only once, for three hours, in early January 2024.

Given the complexity of the Special Education funding formula and its importance to the wellbeing of Kansas children, we believe that the Task Force should continue to meet in locations across the state to hear testimony and develop recommendations for legislative action. We respectfully suggest that the Special Education Task Force continue to meet quarterly until the general education school funding formula sunsets in 2027.

Thank you.