

Written Testimony on HB 2738
submitted to the
Committee on K-12 Education Budget
by
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Topeka Public Schools – USD 501
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We appreciate the opportunity to provide this written testimony in opposition to HB 2738, which will drastically impact the funding of special education, and how the excess costs are raised locally through property taxes.

Kansas public schools are mandated to provide special education services to qualifying students. Local school districts, such as Topeka Public Schools – USD 501 have, and will continue to educate special needs students because it is the right thing to do. We believe that it is time for the Kansas Legislature to become a true partner in these efforts rather than changing a formula to have it **appear** that the state is actual surpassing its goal of funding 92% of excess costs. I say appear because there would be no additional state expenditures over current levels, simply a modification of the formula.

While we have included this information to various Committees and local legislators in the past, it is worth repeating.

Following is a synopsis of special education expenditures for the Topeka Public Schools to provide those mandated special education services in the 2022-2023 school year.

Total expenditures	\$42,340,712
Amount of total expenditures used for salaries	\$38,550,660
Amount of total expenditures coming from General Fund	\$24,984,871
Amount of total expenditures coming from Local Option Budget (LOB)	\$12,112,164
General Fund expenditures coming from State Categorical Aid	\$17,286,226
Additional General Fund Expenditures to make up the difference	\$7,698,000
Total transfers of the LOB and General Fund (above Categorical Aid received) to Special Education are	\$19,810,164

The district receives Federal VI-B funds of approximately \$3,837,000 annually and additional money through Medicaid reimbursement.

(Over Please)

I provide these numbers to emphasize the point that Topeka Public Schools – USD 501 is spending almost \$20,000,000 in excess costs to meet the mandates for educating students with special needs. The changes that would be brought about by HB 2738 would undoubtedly require additional property tax increases just to meet those mandates.

The education of these students with special needs, not only in Topeka Public Schools – USD 501 but across the state, need true participation by the Legislature, not just a change in the formula.

We thank you for your consideration.