

Approved: _____
Date

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION.

The meeting was called to order by Vice-Chairperson Representative Cindy Empson at 9:00 a.m. on February 18, 2000 in Room 313-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except: A quorum was present.

Committee staff present: Avis Swartzman, Revisor of Statutes
Ben Barrett, Legislative Research Department
Carolyn Rampey, Legislative Research Department
Renaë Jefferies, Revisor of Statutes
Linda Taylor, Committee Secretary+

Conferees appearing before the committee: Representative Kent Glasscock
Representative Brenda Landwehr
Angela Ferguson, Private School Student
Diane Gjerstaad, Wichita Public Schools
Mark Tallman, KASB
Brilla Scott, United School Administrators
Craig Grant, KNEA

Others attending: See Attached List

Hearings on **HB 2913 - Kansas opportunity scholarship research experiment** were opened.

Representative Kent Glasscock appeared before the committee as a proponent. (Attachment 1) Representative Glasscock gave a brief explanation of the bill and stated that it was his belief that, rather than re-visit the voucher issue each year, the Legislature should fund an in-depth study, determine the impact, and then proceed.

Representative Brenda Landwehr appeared before the committee as a proponent of the bill. She stated that a voucher system will not produce a mass exodus from public school, instead it will simply provide parents with a choice. She believes that this project is about children and what is best for them. She urged the committee to pass the bill out favorably.

Amy Ferguson, a private school student, appeared before the committee as a proponent of **HB 2913**. (Attachment 2) She related her experiences in both public and private schools and urged the committee to consider the bill favorably.

Diane Gjerstaad appeared before the committee as an opponent of the bill. (Attachment 3) She stated that the Wichita Public Schools strongly oppose a voucher system. She further stated that implications that poor or disadvantaged youngsters do not receive a quality education from public schools is a fallacy. She would like to see the funds that would be spent on such a research study used instead to fund pilot programs in smaller class sizes and curriculum enrichment programs.

Mark Tallman appeared before the committee in opposition to the bill. (Attachment 4) He stated that the KASB opposes on principle any system that uses public funding for private schools because these schools do not have to serve all children or follow the same rules as public schools; they are also not accountable to public governance.

Brilla Scott appeared before the committee in opposition to the bill. (Attachment 5) She stated that USA's position is that by supporting this bill, public funds will be diverted away from public schools at a time when Kansas schools are receiving minimal funding.

Craig Grant appeared before the committee as an opponent to the bill. (Attachment 6) He stated that the KNEA position on attempts to take public taxpayer dollars to support private schools in either the form of vouchers or tax credits undermine support for public schools. They also believe that such programs could

lead to racial, economic, and social isolation of children and weaken or destroy the public school system. He urged the committee to fund the public schools adequately and defeat bills such as **HB 2913** which would take public school funds for private schools.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:55 a.m.