

KANSAS
ASSOCIATION



OF
SCHOOL
BOARDS



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Testimony before the
House Committee on Education
on
HB 2620 – Excellence in Career Tech Ed Act

by
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Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to offer comments on **HB 2620**. The following positions were developed in response to Governor Brownback's entire Excellence in Education Act. This is the section on Career Technical Education.

Positions include citation to resolutions adopted by the KASB Delegate Assembly, December 3, 2011; the KASB Committee on Funding Public Education, December 2010; and standing KASB policies.

Part 2: Career and Technical Education

<i>Vocational Weighting.</i> The current 0.5 vocational weighting factor will end this year, and the same dollar amount will be placed in a vocational and technical education fund and distributed to school districts based on enrollment in technical programs next year.	KASB does not oppose this provision if the same level of funding is provided. <i>Finance Resolution #8</i>
<i>Postsecondary Tuition.</i> An additional amount of funding will be provided to the Kansas Board of Regents to pay tuition for all high school students enrolled in a career and technical education course or program offered by a community college or technical college. Funding will also be provided to the Regents for state tiered technical aid for these programs. All credit hours for secondary students enrolled in postsecondary technical education programs are eligible for tiered state aid.	KASB supports. <i>First In Education Resolution: Broader curriculum</i>
<i>High School Transportation.</i> Funding will be provided for the additional cost of transporting high school students to postsecondary programs.	KASB supports. <i>First In Education Resolution: Broader curriculum</i>

<p><i>Concurrent Enrollment.</i> Students enrolled in postsecondary programs can count those courses on both their high school and postsecondary transcripts when credit is earned.</p>	<p>KASB supports. <i>First In Education Resolution: Broader curriculum</i></p>
<p><i>Geographic Limits.</i> Districts will no longer receive career technical education aid for a program that is also offered by a postsecondary institution located within 30 miles. The Kansas State Board of Education will determine if programs are, in fact, duplicative, and may waive this provision if the postsecondary institution does not have capacity for the district's students.</p> <p>If a postsecondary institution does not offer a needed course or program in its area, the Regents may authorize another institution to provide the course or program.</p>	<p>KASB believes the 30 mile limit should be removed, modified or delayed to ensure all current program opportunities for students can be continued, and school districts do not have funding losses. <i>First In Education Resolution: Broader curriculum; At-risk students.</i></p>
<p><i>Program Promotion.</i> Both the State Board and Board of Regents will receive funding to promote the career and technical education initiative.</p>	<p>KASB supports. <i>First In Education Resolution: Broader curriculum</i></p>
<p><i>Incentives.</i> High schools will receive an award of \$1,000 for each student who earns an industry-recognized credential in key occupations identified by the Kansas Department of Labor. A special focus is given to certification in agriculture fields.</p>	<p>KASB supports in concept. <i>Finance Resolution #8</i></p>
<p><i>Career Plans.</i> The State Board is directed to conduct a study of implementing a requirement for individual career education plans for students in grades 8-12, and reporting to the Legislature whether it intends to adopt such a requirement.</p>	<p>KASB supports. <i>First in Education Resolution: Individual student focus; Broader curriculum</i></p>

Thank you for your consideration.

2012 Public Policy Resolutions

Kansas Association of School Boards

Adopted by the Delegate Assembly, December 3, 2011

Resolution 1: First in Education, the Kansas Way

The people of Kansas through their constitution seek to continually improve education by establishing public schools led by local school boards elected from their community, under the general supervision of an elected State Board, with suitable finance provided by the Legislature. Under this system, Kansas ranks seventh in the nation on 11 key educational outcomes. KASB proposes that Kansas strive to be first in the nation in education by strengthening our Kansas system as follows:

Improving Education. Continue to improve the high-ranking achievement levels of Kansas students.

- **New Accreditation and accountability.** Expand the current narrow focus on annual reading and math tests to more meaningful assessment of student growth and 21st Century Skills.
- **Broader curriculum.** Maintain the current breadth of courses and activities and expand focus to include college preparation, career education, fine arts and development of essential life skills.
- **Individual student focus.** Strengthen support programs based on individual student needs, beginning with early childhood and continuing through preparation of all students for success beyond high school.
- **Effective educators.** Improve educator training, licensure, and retention policies using performance-based evaluation and continuing professional development while providing appropriate protections and benefits, including the state retirement system.
- **Public engagement.** Increase public understanding of educational issues and support for improvement.

Suitable Finance. Provide constitutionally suitable funding for continuing educational improvement.

- **State educational interests.** Fund as state responsibility all educational interests as defined by requirements of the Legislature, State Board of Education and Federal Government, including educational outcomes.
- **Funding Equity.** Balance increased local funding options with increased state equalization aid.
- **At-Risk Students.** Provide funding that recognizes the impact of economic disadvantage and other factors in student success, and does not punish students and schools for improving outcomes.

- **Tax Policy.** Improve understanding of the impact of narrowing the state tax base, and support a tax system that balances effective and accountable economic development with constitutionally suitable education funding.

Local Leadership. Strengthen the role of parents and communities to promote flexibility and innovation in school management and improvement through their locally elected school boards.

- **Local decision-making.** Support local choices in education policy and use of funding unless the school persistently fails to demonstrate improvement.
- **State mandates.** Review and identify state mandates for possible repeal; oppose new requirements without clear evidence of effectiveness and funding for additional costs.
- **Innovation.** Promote flexibility under supervision of local boards, rather than outside of local accountability.
- **State Supervision.** Maintain an independent State Board of Education, directly accountable to voters, with authority over the Commissioner and Department of Education for general supervision of schools.
- **Public funding and non-public education.** No public funding should be provided to private institutions without accountability under local school boards.

Resolution 3 – School Finance Proposals

Recognizing there will be multiple proposals for changing the Kansas school finance system, KASB believes the following concepts to be a paramount importance:

1. The guiding principle for any system must be to continue improving Kansas educational outcomes for all students.
2. The Kansas constitution provides for the **Legislature**, not local districts, to make suitable provision for finance so that all students and schools can meet **state** educational standards, with local elected boards determining how to best manage funding to reach those standards.
3. Any new system must provide more, not less, state funding for students to meet the constitutional requirement for improvement. The six states with higher overall educational outcomes than Kansas each spend more per pupil than Kansas.
4. Any new system must provide a “hold harmless” mechanism for its implementation.
5. Full-time kindergarten students should be funded as full-time students, and support for early childhood education programs should be strengthened.
6. Before considering a change from a weighting system, the change must be justified by (1) providing at least the same level of state funding unless costs are also reduced, (2) providing more stable funding over time, and (3) increasing flexibility in the use of those funds. No new requirements on the use of funds should be imposed unless a district is failing to meet state accreditation standards.

7. "Competitive" grants should be not used to fund required programs such as at-risk and bilingual. (Districts are required to meet adequately yearly progress standards for low income and bilingual.) At-risk funding should be based primarily on low income students, but other risk factors should also be included.
8. The use of block grants or other incentives to promote expanded programs (such as career and technical education), reward performance or encourage innovation could be a positive step, provided such efforts are not mandated without funding or funded by diverting resources from other required programs.
9. If expanded local funding authority is necessary due to limited state resources, it must be accompanied by expanded state equalization aid. The range in local tax effort should be reduced, not increased.
10. Because local boards are responsible for meeting state standards, the authorization of additional local funding must be made by the board and not subject to vote.
11. Expanding the authority to use local sales tax authority raises many concerns. At a minimum, it must be significantly equalized.
12. State aid should be continued for capital improvement (bond and interest) and restored for capital outlay.
13. KASB supports the development of a multi-year budget process, recognizing this may require changes in state and local ending balances to anticipate fluctuations in state revenue. Such a policy should allow districts more time to plan for changes in revenues.
14. Changes in school finance policies should be coordinated with school district accreditation and improvement initiatives.