

**KANSAS ASSOCIATION
OF
SPECIAL EDUCATION ADMINISTRATORS**

www.ka-sea.org

Date: March 18, 2013

From: Kansas Association of Special Education Administrators

To: Honorable Representative Kelley and Members of the House Ed. Committee

Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today as an opponent to HB 2400 representing the opinion of the Kansas Association of Special Education Administrators. First of all, we concur with the testimony of Tom Krebs and KASB.

The Kansas Association of Special Education Administrators (KASEA), the United School Administrators/Kansas (USA/Kansas), and the Kansas Association of School Boards (KASB), believe that the Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE) is making great progress in assuring that all students with disabilities receive a free and appropriate public education.

- All Kansas public school districts are required to conduct ongoing public notice, screening, general education interventions, evaluation to ensure that Kansas children birth to age 5 with disabilities, and children from kindergarten through age 21 with exceptionalities are identified and served appropriately.
- All Kansas public schools are accountable with respect to student achievement through the Kansas State Assessment process that currently reflects the performance of 99.8% of the students in Kansas.
- In all public school districts in the State of Kansas disabled children are referred to the appropriate building team such as the Student Intervention Team (SIT), Problem Solving Team, 504 team, The Multi-Tier System of Supports (MTSS) and/or the Individual Education Planning (IEP) team.
- The standard in Kansas for **all** students is: Know how to read, providing a solid and rigorous foundation; and how to comprehend and understand the conceptual aspects of reading.

As a result Kansas students with disabilities graduate at one of the highest rates in the Nation as noted on the accompanying chart published by the US. Department of Education.

Should HB 2400 become law, then Kansas students with disabilities who participate would not only waive their right to these special education services but would also be placed in programs that do not establish rules for monitoring and ensuring their progress.

Kansas students with disabilities would then be subjected to situations similar to those of some students participating in Florida's McKay voucher program.

Here is one example of the types of fraud that result from a lack of monitoring where students with disabilities are served from [McKay scholarship program sparks a cottage ... - Miami New Times](#)

From June 2006 through November 2010, the Florida Department of Education (DOE) gave over \$2 million to [Julius Brown](#), former middle school basketball coach. Under his leadership in the South Florida Preparatory Christian Academy, the Oakland Park K-12 private school two hundred students were crammed into ever-changing school locations, including a dingy strip-mall space above a liquor store and down the hall from an Asian massage parlor. Eventually, fire marshals and sheriffs condemned the "campus" as unfit for habitation, pushing the student body into transience in church foyers and public parks. **South Florida Prep also received at least \$236,000 from a state-run tax-credit scholarship for low-income kids.**

We had no materials," says [Nicolas Norris](#), who taught music despite the lack of a single instrument. "There were no teacher edition books. There was no curriculum."

From [McKay Scholarship exposé prompts reform of a billion-dollar ...](#)

Administrators and teachers at schools given millions by the program have rap sheets that include cocaine dealing, kidnapping, witness tampering, and burglary. Kids in these schools are even sometimes paddled, a tactic outlawed in Florida. **Over the past 12-plus school years, the state has lost more than a billion dollars** to fraud.

We believe that spending taxpayer's money in private non-profit organizations that are not held to the same standards for students with disabilities is a major mistake. We believe that Kansas is a leader in the Nation in regards to providing a free and appropriate public education to our students with disabilities. Only three states have a higher graduation rate for students with disabilities than Kansas. Therefore, the Kansas Association of Special Education Administrators urges you not to move forward with HB 2400. Thank you again for the opportunity to speak here today.

Terry Collins, Ed.S.
Legislative Chair, KASEA
Director DCEC #616