

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION.

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Lisa Benlon at 3 p.m. on February 5, 2001 in Room 231-N of the Capitol.

All members were present except: Tom Sloan (E)

Committee staff present: Carol Rampey, Kansas Legislative Research Department  
Paul West, Kansas Legislative Research Department  
Avis Swartzman, Office of the Revisor of Statutes  
Dee Woodson, Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee: Robert N. Kelly, Executive Director  
Kansas Independent College Association

Others attending:  
See attached list.

Chairperson Benlon introduced Robert Kelly, Executive Director of Kansas Independent College Association, who gave an overview and presentation on the independent colleges in Kansas. He testified there are now 18 members in their association which are accredited colleges. He said that most of the colleges are located in the middle of the state and around the Kansas City area. He stated that they are proud of the positive impact they have on the state, and have about a billion dollar economic impact on the state. Mr. Kelly added that they provide a lot of regional cultural events. He shared with the Committee that the main emphasis for their colleges is degree completion, and the main reason for this is because students have to pay a lot higher tuition. He explained the main differences between the independent colleges and the public universities, but also pointed out some similarities.

Mr. Kelly testified that they depend heavily on tuition to cover 65-75% of the costs, and because of price consciousness, the independent colleges graduate more students within four years; offer more credit for work or other experiences; and tend to more often adjust program to individual student needs. He told the Committee that all of the Kansas independent colleges were founded by a religious community, and each college serves a unique constituency. He said that the independent colleges offer over 100 diverse degree programs, and confer 17% of the degrees earned in Kansas. He stated that their colleges award a higher percentage of Baccalaureate degrees to working adults than do the public universities. Mr. Kelly gave a brief summary of cost v. price between the private and public colleges.

Mr. Kelly explained the financial aid situation with the independent colleges wherein they are very dependent on federal, state, and institutional grants. He testified that at the present time they receive roughly \$7 million in state aid, and the major federal grant is the Pell Grant. He also went over the federal student loan program, which is the largest source of student aid at both independent colleges and public universities. He pointed out that for the academic year 1999-2000, the number awarded to Kansas students was 39,363 which was for a total of \$66,973,759. He said the dollar amounts for the various types of loans were included in his handout information. (Attachment 1)

Mr. Kelly shared with the Committee copies of The National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education publication "Measuring up 2000", the state-by-state report card for higher education. He stated that this publication had been getting a lot of publicity and that Kansas was one of only three states with no grade less than "B". Mr. Kelly said that this report was developed on six components which were: preparation, participation, affordability, completion, benefits, and learning.

General questions and discussion followed regarding: clarification of "affordability" of students, Pell Grants, distinguishment between teaching faculty or research faculty, low turnover in faculty, advantages of smaller campuses and teacher ratio to students, the trend of moving away from Liberal Arts towards more course specific preparation, the two fields of music and fine arts that are the most expensive to fund will pose problems for the larger colleges as compared to the small independent colleges, 17-18% of Masters degree recipients come from smaller institutions and the Kansas Tuition Grant Program.



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The Chair thanked Mr. Kelly for his informative presentation. She called the Committee's attention to **HB 2018**, and opened the floor for discussion. The Chair had an explanatory sheet handed out to each member covering information requested by Representative Storm from the Board of Regents regarding GED test scores and qualified admission requirements to colleges and universities. (Attachment 2)

Representative Tanner stated that in reviewing the handout from the Board of Regents it was evident to him that an error had been made in developing the original recommendations, and that the score of 50 referred to in the original bill, **SB 345**, was not what they had intended. He said there was an indication that several legislators would like to see that changed. He told the Committee members there were two possibilities in rectifying this situation are offered: (1) we move to the top 30% which according to the chart in the handout would be a 275 total or a 55 GED average standard score; or (2) we simply delete any reference to the GED with regards to admissions to the Regents' universities and rely on the current admission of those who do not have a high school diploma as being 21 years of age or older.

Representative Storm referred to the statute and said that there were several "ors" in **HB 2018**, and the way the bill read it did not look like having a good SAT score would qualify a student for admission, and asked for clarification from the Board of Regents regarding the 10% of enrolling college freshmen that don't have to meet these requirements. Amanda Goldbeck, Director of Academic Affairs for the Kansas Board of Regents, explained that any student who could not be admitted under the rules that are written into this legislation would be eligible to be admitted within this 10% exception window. She said it was a very wide open range.

Representative Wells asked if the state university sets up the criteria for the administrative decisions as to who would fall within this 10% or would it be on a first come first serve basis. Ms. Goldbeck responded that each individual institution would have their own implementation for the 10% window.

Committee discussion included concerns expressed about the difference between NCAA standards for admissions and the requirements set forth in **SB 345** for admissions. Inquiry was made as to what was the results of the LEPC's summer study. Representative Horst, who served on the LEPC this past summer, stated that there had been a lot of discussion, but did not make the last meeting in December due to a snow storm, and was unable to give the Committee a full review of LEPC's findings.

The Revisor, Avis Swartzman, said there was extensive discussion on the GED subject and required test scores. She went on to explain that the Board of Regents had requested this bill and they wanted to put in a 250 overall with at least a 50 on each component, the standard score. She said that testimony came out that to pass the GED it required only a 225, and what the Regents were asking was to raise the bar. She stated that LEPC had realized the previous bill, **SB 345**, had made an error, and they wanted to rectify the mistake, but they flatly rejected the request from the Regents to raise the bar to 250, and said that it was their understanding when this law was passed, that the Legislature wanted persons who had passed the GED test to be able to get in. The Revisor said the LEPC decided they would not put a score in the proposed bill at all, and that if the person had earned the GED, to them that was satisfactory. Representative Wells, who also served on the LEPC, agreed with the Revisor's explanation. He added that on a national basis, 68% of all 16 year olds who take the GED test fail it. Ms. Goldbeck explained the GED test scores required to pass, and that each year the required score could change. Representative Wells told the Committee that he had check on the GED test, and they are going to revise the test completely in 2002.

Discussion followed involving the confusion of the required scores. Representative Tanner made a motion to remove the term "GED" be struck from the list of criteria for admission into the Regents' universities. The motion was seconded by Representative Pottorf. Discussion continued by the Committee members regarding the various requirements needed to be admitted to the Regents' universities.

Representative Wells made a substitute motion that they specify GED should be 275. Representative Storm seconded the motion for purposes of discussion.

Committee discussion included concerns expressed about the concept of elitism and of disenfranchising certain people who through no fault of their own are in environments that are not conducive by age 18 to

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have their act together. Additional discussion was held regarding the two safety valves of the 10% and the GED, raising the bar too high that would only apply to a few who take the GED test, options for GED students to attend community colleges, and section of the bill that had a provision where after attaining 24 credit hours of transferrable course work out of a community college then the students are entitled to move on up to a university.

Representative Tanner explained the intent of the original bill in that it was for Kansas to get something set out as criteria and on the books in order to know that the students could do the work before they got to the university level. Clarification was made that the 10% window only applies to Kansas residents.

Due to the latest of the hour, the Chair agreed to continue this discussion on this bill at a later committee meeting. The Chair adjourned the meeting at 5:05 p.m. The next meeting of the House Higher Education Committee is scheduled for Wednesday, February 7, at 3:30 p.m., in Room 231-N of the Capitol.