

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Kenny Wilk at 12:30 p.m. on March 28, 2001, in Room 514-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except: Representative Larry Campbell
Representative Phil Kline

Committee staff present: Alan Conroy, Legislative Research
Rae Anne Davis, Legislative Research
Amy Kramer, Legislative Research
Carolyn Rampey, Legislative Research
Ben Barrett, Legislative Research
Mike Corrigan, Revisor of Statutes
Nikki Feuerborn, Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee: Dale Dennis, Department of Education
Mark Tallman, Kansas Association of School Boards
Alan Shuler, Leavenworth School District

Others attending: See Attached Representative Shari Weber proxy for Representative Kline

Ben Barrett, Legislative Research Department, walked the Committee through data on how Kansas compares with the other states in spending on education, pupil-teacher ratio, teacher salaries, high school ACT scores, and high school completion rates (Attachment 1). Staff also distributed copies of a graph on selected school finance data (Attachment 2).

The Committee requested further information on how teacher salaries in the comparison data were figured i.e. experience, total years of service, add-ons, year-round teaching assignments; a comparison showing teacher salaries on a state-wide regional basis; and a nation-wide comparison of 18-19 year olds completing high school.

Dale Dennis, State Department of Education, provided copies of Kansas USD's Total Expenditures Per Pupil (Attachment 3), Cash Balances as of June 30-Special Education, Capital Outlay, Food Service, and Contingency Reserve Funds (Attachment 4), Percent of Cash Balances by Fund (Attachment 5), Capital Expenditures and Repair of Buildings (Attachment 6), and Expenditures (Attachment 7). Mr. Dennis explained the statutes concerning school expenditures and how the different funds can be spent and when. Also discussed by the Committee was the cause for the loss of teachers in Kansas and lack of persons staying in the profession: is it salary alone or are there other factors such as behavior of students, interference in teaching by state and federal mandates, location of schools in remote areas, benefit packages and lack of opportunity for advancement.

Mark Tallman, Kansas Association of School Boards, presented testimony on the position of the school finance coalition, the Governor's Task Force, and the State Board of Education regarding the need for additional school district funding and whether the base budget per pupil fallen behind inflation or has school funding increased more than inflation? (Attachment 8). It was noted that Kansas is 600 teaching positions short and that one-half of all teachers in the US will retire in the next 10 years. It was pointed out that there is a shortage of qualified personnel in the business sector also. The Committee questioned why the 30% increase in funding the schools have received has not been spent on teacher salaries. In response, Mr. Tallman explained that many times extra money is spent on technology rather than upgrading teacher salaries.

Alan Shuler, Deputy Superintendent of the Leavenworth School District, responded to questions from the Committee regarding capital outlay expenditures and school district's reluctance to spend this money for teacher salaries.

Representative Nichols moved for the introduction of legislation regarding the use of US census data in redistricting. Motion was seconded by Representative Klein. Motion carried.

Representative McCreary moved for the introduction of legislation which would allow law enforcement to use evidence gathered from breath analysis on minors in the courts. Motion was seconded by Representative Stone. Motion carried.

Representative Feuerborn moved for the approval of the minutes of March 8 and 19 as presented. Motion was seconded by Representative Minor. Motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:55 p.m.