



March 8, 2018

Testimony in Support of House Bill 2561

Chairman Patton and Members of the House K-12 Education Budget Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to speak in support of House Bill 2561. I am Rick Atha, Assistant Superintendent for Instructional Support, appearing on behalf of the Shawnee Mission School District. Shawnee Mission School District is the third largest district in Kansas with 27,521 students attending thirty-three elementary schools, five middle schools and five high schools. We have over 2,000 certified staff and approximately 1,350 classified employees.

House Bill 2561 will address the issue of the current transportation weighting in the Kansas School Equity and Enhancement Act. Modifying and codifying the current practice of determining the “curve of best fit” in the formula for high-density enrollment school districts will provide us transportation funding stability and ensure we can provide the services we are required by law to provide. Unlike House Bill 2697, House Bill 2561 will more directly address and distribute the authorized funds to districts that have incurred transportation expenses without funding.

Transportation funding and these bills to ensure formula accuracy and predictability are important to the Shawnee Mission School District. Based on these three years (16-17, 17-18, and 18-19), the actual and projected cost to the district of transporting students beyond the 2.5 miles has and will exceed the funding allocated through the transportation formula. The chart below shows the shortfall in state funding between the funded amount and the actual/projected cost increase from \$1.4 million to \$2.8 million over three years. These are funds that could be used in the classroom. Based on the transportation costs the district has to fund, any further reductions to correct the State’s internal calculation errors will only further divert funds for classroom activities.



Shawnee Mission School District Regular Education Transportation Costs Compared to Funding			
	16-17 <u>Actual</u>	17-18 <u>Projected</u>	18-19 <u>Budget</u>
Transportation Cost	4,413,391	5,699,342	5,870,300
State Funding	3,002,249	3,002,096	3,093,523
Weighted FTE	779.4	749.4	749.4
BSAAP	3,852	4,006	4,128
Difference	(1,411,142)	(2,697,246)	(2,776,777)
Percentage	-32%	-47%	-47%

In conclusion, state-level issues regarding transportation funding raised in the Legislative Post Audit can be addressed by this bill to ensure all school districts have the resources to provide transportation services. The funding in the formula is already insufficient and we support House Bill 2561 to correct the mathematical issues. I am happy to stand for questions at the appropriate time.

Rick Atha, Ph.D.
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Shawnee Mission School District