



FRIENDS UNIVERSITY

February 5, 2020

PROPONENT Testimony to the Senate Education Committee
Senate Bill 335

Chair Baumgardner and members of the Senate Education Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony in support of Senate Bill 335. Friends University, in partnership with Unified School District 259, Wichita Public Schools, supports SB 335 because it advances educational partnerships to benefit student learning.

Friends University and USD 259 launched the Early College Academy in the fall of 2019. This partnership provides students the opportunity to obtain approximately 50 credit hours towards their college degree by the time they complete high school. Friends University provides staff resources for curricular planning, college preparation skills, and educational opportunities for students and families. With increased enrollment, Friends University can provide lower pricing to benefit the high school students and school district.

The average first-year student beginning at Friends University has completed approximately seven credit hours. Over the past three years, we have noticed that entering students who have completed college credits prior to their full-time college enrollment have enrolled for their second year at a noticeably higher rate. These students will have the opportunity to double major, participate in experiential learning opportunities such as studying abroad, or graduate early to save on the total cost of a college education. Friends University is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission, making these credits transferable to any other college or university as accepted by their school.

We appreciate your support of diverse educational experiences and innovative models to promote degree completion. We take seriously our role in providing access to local students who face challenges in pursuing a higher education. We pay close attention to total costs of a college education and our role in educating students prepared for the workforce to benefit Kansas employers.

Thank you for considering SB 335 and we request that the bill be recommended favorably for passage.

Sincerely,

Dr. Amy Bragg Carey
President
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