

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Clay Aurand at 9:00 a.m. on February 3, 2009, in Room 711 of the Docking State Office Building.

All members were present except:
Representative Melvin Neufeld- excused

Committee staff present:
Sharon Wenger, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Dale Dennis, Kansas State Department of Education
Janet Henning, Committee Assistant

Conferees appearing before the committee:
Representative Clay Aurand
Scott Frank, Legislative Post Audit
Tom Krebs, Kansas Association of School Boards
Val DeFever, Schools for Quality Education
Mark Desetti, Kansas National Education Association
Dr. Deborah Perbeck, Superintendent, Parsons, USD #503
Carl Helm, Superintendent, Chase-Raymond, USD #401
Jerry Cullen, Superintendent, Medicine Lodge, USD #254
Mark Tallman, Kansas Association of School Boards
Cheryl Semmel, Executive Director, United School Administrators of Kansas (written only)

Chairman Aurand recognized Scott Frank, Legislative Post Audit, who gave an overview of **HB 2104**, **HB 2103**, and **HB 2102** (Attachment 1)

Vice-Chairperson Horst was then delegated to preside as Chairperson of the Education Committee as Chairman Aurand was a conferee for the following bills.

HB 2104 - Schools; low enrollment weighting, limitation relating to high and medium density at-risk pupil weightings.

Representative Aurand spoke to Committee members as a proponent of **HB 2104**. Representative Aurand told Committee members the bill essentially states that a school district shall be eligible either for the low enrollment weighting or the high density at-risk pupil weighting, whichever is higher, but shall not be eligible for both.

Tom Krebs, Kansas Association of School Boards (KASB), spoke to Committee members in opposition of **HB 2104**. Mr. Krebs told Committee members that for both social and economic reasons, KASB members are committed to ensuring that all children are education to high standards and high skills. This goal has never been achieved, in part because the national economy did not require it. However, that has changed. He further stated that achieving this goal will take an increasing commitment of resources. Mr. Krebs told Committee members that **HB 2104** reduces the resources in the system. (Attachment 2)

Val DeFever, Schools for Quality Education, spoke to Committee members in opposition of **HB 2104**. Ms. DeFever told Committee members that this bill appears to be an "either or situation" for the schools districts she represents. She stated if a district gets low enrollment weighting, it would not be able to access high or medium density at-risk funding. She asked Committee members to consider that when all of the Kansas school districts are losing education funding through budgets cuts, is there a reason the small rural schools should be hit harder than the mid-sized and larger school districts. (Attachment 3)

Mark Desetti, Kansas National Education Association, spoke to Committee members in opposition of **HB 2104**. Mr. Desetti told Committee members that each school district will be faced this year and next with significant cuts in state aid. He advised that the school districts impacted by this bill face both issues of economy of scale and poverty. Mr. Desetti told Committee members that there may be a need to look at this bill and ask questions but it is the wrong time to take action. (Attachment 4)

Dr. Deborah Perbeck, Superintendent, Parsons District Schools, USD #503, spoke to Committee members in opposition of **HB 2104**. Dr. Perbeck stated the proposed elimination of the high-density at-risk weighting for low enrollment districts would impact sustainment of equal educational opportunities, while preserving the overall learning environment if alternative options were no longer available to support students with intense behavioral and academic needs. (Attachment 5)

Written testimony was received from Cheryl Semmel, United School Administrators of Kansas, and was in opposition of **HB 2104**. (Attachment 6)

A question and answer session followed the presentations.

Vice-Chairperson Horst stated the hearing was closed on **HB 2104**.

HB 2103 - School districts; low enrollment weighting; districts with less than 200 pupils.

Representative Aurand spoke to Committee members as a proponent of **HB 2103**. Representative Aurand told Committee members the bill states that in the school year 2011-2012 and each school year thereafter, the low enrollment weighting of districts which are less than 200 square miles and less than 200 students shall have a low enrollment weighting the same as a district with 200 students.

Tom Krebs, Kansas Association of School Boards, spoke to Committee members in opposition of **HB 2103**. Mr. Krebs told Committee members the position of KASB members was that they support incentives to encourage school

CONTINUATION SHEET

Minutes of the House Education Committee at 9:00 a.m. on February 3, 2009, in Room 711 of the Docking State Office Building.

districts to consider consolidation when it makes educational and financial sense and seek to remove barriers that discourage consolidation. However, KASB opposes measures that directly force districts to consolidate, or indirectly pressure districts to act through financial penalties. (Attachment 7)

Val DeFever, Schools for Quality Education, spoke to Committee members in opposition of **HB 2103** and stated this bill would result in as much as a 26 percent cut in funding to their smaller school districts should it be adopted. Ms. DeFever also stated that her organization opposed any legislation that overrides local control by means of limited funding, due to size or geographic location or severely limits the quality education for all students. (Attachment 8)

Carl Helm, Superintendent, Chase-Raymond USD #401, spoke to Committee members in opposition of **HB 2103**. Mr. Helm told Committee members that they will already be losing money due to the economic hardships currently being faced by the state, but this additional cut of approximately \$100,000 would be detrimental to their school system. (Attachment 9)

Jerry Cullen, Superintendent, Medicine Lodge USD #254, spoke to Committee members in opposition of **HB 2103**. Mr. Cullen told Committee members that **HB 2103** and **HB 2104** would have a major impact on low enrollment schools. (Attachment 10)

A question and answer session followed the presentation. Rep Crow requested Committee members be furnished a copy of the "boundary study" by Augenblick and Myers, Inc. .

Vice-Chairperson Horst stated the hearing on **HB 2103** was closed.

HB 2102 - School districts; pupil attending schools outside district of residence; transportation.

Representative Aurand spoke to Committee members as a proponent of **HB 2102**. Representative Aurand stated the bill essentially authorizes a pupil who is enrolled and in attendance at school in a receiving school district and who lives 2.5 or more miles from the attendance center, the pupil would attend in a sending school district.

Jerry Cullen, Superintendent, Medicine Lodge USD #254, spoke to Committee members in opposition to **HB 2102**. Mr. Cullen told Committee members he had a difficult time in understanding **HB 2102**. Mr. Cullen asked Committee members why legislation was needed which gives districts the responsibility of picking up students in another district if they live more than ten miles from their school in their home district? (Attachment 10)

Written testimony was received from Val DeFever, Schools for Quality Education, in opposition to **HB 2102** (Attachment 11)

Mark Tallman, Kansas Association of School Boards, spoke to Committee members as neutral to **HB 2102**. Mr. Tallman told Committee members this bill allows school districts some additional "local control" choices but urged careful consideration to those choices authorized and should not be critical if districts do make those choices. (Attachment 12)

A question and answer session followed the presentations.

Vice-Chairperson Horst stated the hearing was closed on **HB 2102**.

Chairman Aurand told Committee members that possible action would be considered on **HB 2002** during the next meeting scheduled for February 4, 2009.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:50 a.m. The next meeting is scheduled for February 4, 2009.