

## MINUTES OF THE HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Clay Aurand at 9:05 A.M. on February 13, 2008 in Room 313-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except:  
Marti Crow- excused

Committee staff present:  
Theresa Kiernan, Office of Revisor of Statutes  
Dianne Rosell, Office of Revisor of Statutes  
Dale Dennis, Kansas State Department of Education  
Martha Dorsey, Kansas Legislative Research Department  
Sharon Wenger, Kansas Legislative Research Department  
Janet Henning, Committee Assistant

Conferees appearing before the committee:  
Mark Tallman, Kansas Association of School Boards  
Mark Desetti, Kansas National Education Association  
Val DeFever, Schools for Quality Education  
Rex Bollinger, Superintendent, USD 433 and USD 425.

### **HB 2734: School districts; consolidation, state financial aid**

Mark Tallman, Kansas Association of School Boards, spoke to Committee members in support of **HB 2734** which provides financial incentives for consolidation by allowing the new district to maintain its budget for several years at the previous level. (Attachment #1)

Mark Desetti, Kansas National Education Association, spoke to Committee members in support of **HB 2734**, however, urged the Committee to use caution. He stated **HB 2734** does not force consolidation and it does not determine for a community what the right size of a school is. But it allows school districts to more seriously consider consolidation. The funding provisions of this bill allow districts to move ahead without radical staff cuts and provides districts the funding that will allow them to rework curriculum and programs for a large student population. (Attachment #2)

There were no opponents to the bill.

A question and answer session followed the presentations.

The Chairman closed the hearing on **HB 2734**.

### **HB 2760: School districts; consolidation; low enrollment weighting**

There were no proponents to the bill.

Mark Tallman, Kansas Association of School Boards (KASB), spoke to Committee members in opposition of **HB 2760** which would cap the low enrollment weighting of districts with fewer than 200 students and 200 square miles. Mr. Tallman further stated that if the Legislature is going to allow such districts to continue to operate, KASB believes it should reduce or limit their funding.

Val DeFever, Schools for Quality Education, spoke to Committee members in opposition of **HB 2760**. Ms. DeFever told Committee members that **HB 2760** targets seven of their organization's 124 low enrollment school districts and that it is potentially an economic and cultural distress for those communities. (Attachment #3)

Rex Bollinger, Superintendent, Midwest USD 433 and Highland USD 425, spoke to Committee members in opposition of **HB 2760** and told of the adverse effects the bill would have on the communities in his two districts. (Attachment #4)

A question and answer session followed the presentations.

The Chairman closed the hearing on **HB 2760**.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:35 A.M. The next meeting is scheduled for February 14, 2008.