



# Kansas City, Kansas Public Schools

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## HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

### HB 2718

February 16, 2012

The Kansas City, Kansas District believes that funding public education in Kansas is a state responsibility. We do support the current LOB percentage as an appropriate way for local USDs to enhance their base aid. We have, however, consistently opposed increases in this local funding authority because of our deeply held conviction that the quality of a Kansas child's education should not be predicated on the wealth (or lack thereof) of the child's school district. This principle is one of the cornerstones of the Kansas school funding formula.

This is the fundamental rationale for our opposition to HB 2718. We believe this bill is, *de facto*, an LOB increase! While the potential funding stream authorized in HB 2718 is limited to various 'activities' in the district, it would have the effect of freeing up an equal number of general fund dollars currently used to fund these activities.

Our second objection to HB 2718 is that this new local funding stream is not equalized. A high wealth district could pay for this increase with a fraction of the mills necessary for the same increase in an average or low wealth district. As you know, the state currently provides LOB equalization aid for average and low wealth districts.

I conclude my testimony with a cautionary note. We believe that an increase in local property taxes is the worst possible approach to addressing the very real shortfall in school funding. What is the basis of this belief? Kansas City taxpayers continually express to their elected officials their strongly held conviction that property taxes are their least favorite tax. I suspect that taxpayers across the State of Kansas hold similar views.

In 2011, the Kansas House killed a bill similar to HB 2718 on Final Action not once, but twice! (HB 2015) We believe a no vote is the appropriate action again this year.

Bill Reardon  
KCKPS Lobbyist