

January 23, 2012

TO: Senate Ways and Means Committee

FROM: Smoky Valley Public Schools, USD #400

SUBJECT: Senate Bill 259  
KPERs; Employment After Retirement for Certain School Employees.

My name is Glen Suppes, Superintendent of Schools of USD #400, Smoky Valley in Lindsborg. I sincerely appreciate the opportunity to appear before this Committee on behalf of the Smoky Valley Public Schools.

USD #400 supports Senate Bill 259, which allows retired licensed employees the opportunity to continue working within the same district without salary limitations. Payment to the system of the actuarially determined employer contribution plus 8% seems to be a fair tradeoff and is a definite benefit to the KPERs fund.

The bill allows school districts the opportunity to retain the highest quality professionals and keep them working within the local system. By providing this option, boards of education can maintain consistency within successful programs by taking advantage of keeping our greatest resources in the classrooms or in the buildings. Tenure rights have been severed so districts continue to have the freedom to make employment decisions based upon what is best for our children at the local level.

Many of our most experienced educators are extremely difficult to replace. Some areas of study provide a very limited selection of candidates and quality may be sacrificed. Certified employees who wish to take advantage of the retirement option may be of the greatest benefit to students by continuing to educate within their current districts. If local districts choose not to take advantage of this employment alternative, they are certainly within their rights to explore a broader range of opportunities to best meet the needs of the students.

The recent downsizing and shifting of personnel has forced districts to become very creative in staffing a building. Many of our retired individuals are often more likely to work one-half or three-quarters of a day to fill a specific need, while bringing in new individuals usually requires a full-time vacancy in order to attract qualified candidates. Passage of the bill provides a broader range of flexibility in contracting the best educators for our students.

Thank you for your consideration in supporting Senate Bill 259.

Senate Ways and Means  
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