

LEGISLATIVE TESTIMONY



FROM BLUE VALLEY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT 229

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION BUDGET WRITTEN TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 2248

Mr. Cassidy and members of the House Committee on Education Budget, thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony regarding House Bill 2248 (HB 2248).

The Blue Valley Unified School District #229 supports HB 2248 for a variety of reasons. HB 2248 allows school districts which are below the statewide average amount in terms of per pupil spending to adopt a local activities budget that would be supported by school district patrons. Mechanisms for additional local funding of education have been a plank of the Blue Valley School District's legislative platform for many years. Our district's Board of Education would see HB 2248 as a much needed step in that direction. While the state appears to be on a road to some degree of economic recovery, the road back to normal will likely be a long one. That is why measures such as HB 2248 are needed so that local districts, specifically ones that are below the statewide average in terms of per pupil spending, can leverage resources to partially meet the challenges posed by recent budget reductions.

There are a few changes we would ask the Committee to consider:

1. Change the language from Statewide Average Amount Per Pupil (Line 18, page 1) to Statewide Median Amount Per Pupil, with the corresponding changes in the definition that follows. The reason for this suggestion is that from a statistical viewpoint, a median calculation is more representative of a population than an average calculation, and we feel the intent behind the legislation on this bill is to capture a median level cost, not an average level.
2. We would ask for the ceiling on the amount that could be adopted to be 3% of the statewide median amount per pupil, and not 2% (line 25, page 1).
3. We would like to see that further adoptions of the provisions of HB 2248 after the initial approval by voters be done by a protest petition instead of a new election (line 20-26, page 2).
4. The Committee may wish to consider adding some type of equalization component to assist those districts who have a lower property tax base. Though the Blue Valley School District would not benefit directly from this, we feel that such an addition would be of benefit to other districts.

Once again, thank you for the opportunity to provide this written testimony.

Dr. Tom Trigg
Superintendent of Schools