

# House K-12 Education Budget Committee

on

## House Bill 2270

submitted by

**Jeff Travis, Superintendent of USD 273 - Beloit,**  
**a member of Schools for Quality Education**

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Chairman Campbell and members of the House K-12 Education Budget Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to express our written support for **House Bill 2270**, that makes provisions to adequately fund our public schools. The Foundation State Aid Per Pupil (FSAPP) incrementally increases over a four year period to provide the funds we need to better serve our students. It is also important that the FSAPP is tied to the Midwest consumer price index so that our educational funding will continue to keep up with inflation.

There are many quality components included in this bill. In particular, we applaud the funding of All-day kindergarten, the addition of more resources to assist four-year-old pre-school, and the phased in funding of Special Education at the statutory 92 percent rate. Early Childhood Education and Special Education are the greatest investments that we can make as a state for the long term betterment of our students. The many benefits of providing high quality early childhood education programs are well documented. According to the NEA, "early childhood education is one of the best investments our country can make." The HighScope Perry Preschool cost benefit analysis shows a return of \$12.90 for every \$1 invested in early childhood education. This study found that individuals who were enrolled in a quality preschool program earned up to \$2,000 more per month than those who were not. Children who were in preschool programs are more likely to graduate from high school, to own homes, and have longer marriages. Other studies have demonstrated that children in quality preschool programs are less likely to repeat grades, need special education, or get into future trouble with the law.

We do ask you to reconsider moving "at-risk" funding from the "free-lunch" student count proxy to the U. S. Bureau of Census poverty rate. Kansas has many times in the past reviewed its use of the "free-lunch" student count and decided to continue to use it, as do the vast majority of other states, for "at-risk" funding. It would seem appropriate for the legislature to again study the ramifications of this change before replacing it with a new methodology that only a few states use.

**House Bill 2270** appears to provide our Kansas schools with a constitutional finance formula that not only should provide equitable and adequate funding for our students, but also importantly allow us to expand the delivery of much needed early childhood education services.

Thank you for the opportunity to express our thoughts on this important legislation.