

February 15, 2017

Re: HB 2270, support
House K-12 Education Budget Committee

Chairman Campbell and members of the House K-12 Education Budget Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to HB 2270, which proposes a new formula for funding public Pre-K-12 education in Kansas. Our five Shawnee County school districts have collaborated over the past few years to develop Legislative Positions to communicate our collective priorities when it comes to Shawnee County students and families. With one united voice, we support the concepts that have been laid out in SB 2270 and draw your attention to the following positions on school funding, which were mutually created with the belief that Shawnee County students are our top priority, there are significant societal benefits gained by supporting exemplary public education, and all Kansas students deserve an adequate and equitable public education.

Standards and Accountability

- We support implementation and assessment of standards adopted by the Kansas State Board of Education.

We must raise education standards to help produce successful students who are prepared for life, citizenship, careers, and able to compete in a global economy.

- We oppose the use of public dollars and tax credits to fund private schools.

Any school that receives public funds must meet state and federal accountability standards and provide programs/services required of public schools.

School Funding

We support:

- A school finance formula that supports the implementation and assessment of standards adopted by the Kansas State Board of Education and is designed to address the needs of students and ensure each student and school have the capacity to meet the Rose Standards.

A formula must account for changing student needs, higher student expectations, and increasing costs. Given the significant statistical relationship between socio-economic status and students found to be at-risk of academic failure, reliable measures for poverty, such as Free-Lunch status, must be the indicator for allocating funds intended to address the needs of at-risk students, especially where there is a high density of poverty.

- A school finance formula that provides adequate and equitable funding for public schools is one that:

- *is based on a per pupil amount for each district*
- *fully funds early childhood education*
- *fully funds all-day kindergarten*
- *fully funds special education*
- *considers high and low enrollment*
- *supports at-risk needs*
- *provides equalization aid for Capital Outlay*

- *continues Local Option Budget and*
 - *funds Bond and Interest at the full percentage required by law.*
-
- *Allowing districts increased flexibility in allocating funds to support student learning and oppose arbitrary requirements to direct funds into certain functions, including instruction.*
- Allocation of Kansas K-12 public education spending in 2015 (percent of spending going directly to students/classrooms, percent of spending indirectly supporting students):*
- *Teachers, paraprofessionals, books and classroom materials (51%)*
 - *Building administration and support staff (5%)*
 - *Transportation (4%)*
 - *Student Services – counselors, psychologists, speech pathologists, nurses, social workers (4%)*
 - *Instructional Support – librarians, technology support, professional development (3%)*
 - *Food Services (4%)*
 - *Capital Expenses – construction, building repair, payments for bonds & interest (17%)*
 - *Maintenance and Operations – utilities, custodial, insurance, security (8%)*
 - *District administration and contracted services (4%)*
-
- *Each of these areas provide meaningful support directly to students to ensure every student is safe, engaged, learning and prepared for success.*

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Frank Henderson, Topeka Seaman School District #345
Gene Edwards, Shawnee Heights School District #450
David Hines, Auburn-Washburn School District #437
Randy Matzke, Silver Lake School District #372
Patrick Woods, Topeka Public Schools #501