

# Testimony in Opposition to HB2270 REPEATING THE 1992 FORMULA WILL NOT IMPROVE STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

by  
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HB2270 is just the 1992 formula with all of its flaws and weights which have little to do with the actual cost of teaching Kansas K-12 students. The Legislative purpose of the Block Grant was to provide time to develop a new formula. So why repeat previous funding mistakes and expect that student achievement will improve?

- 1) Since 1998, Kansas school districts have doubled the amount spent. The **total of local, state and federal tax dollars has steadily increased from \$3 billion to \$6.4 billion per year** in 2015 to teach the same number of students.
- 2) **The 51% of the SGF which the Kansas legislature already appropriates is the 4<sup>th</sup> highest in America.**
- 3) The **\$900 million more requested by the State Board** of Education in its July 12<sup>th</sup>, 2016 meeting would **raise that amount to 80% of the SGF**. The Board knows this would require a major tax increase. ([Click HERE](#) to see that it only took them 32 minutes to vote 7 to 3 to ask for nearly a billion more. They admit that they have no cost data to show that more money will improve learning. Start watching the YouTube video at 1:38:20.)
- 4) After the Montoy decision, districts used the \$1 billion they received from the state legislature to **hire 9,000 new employees**. However, **only 40% of those new hires were certified teachers**. The amount of money spent has nearly doubled but still, only 1-in-3 students is proficient or has an ACT score high enough to succeed in college. **KBOR reports that 38% of Kansas high school graduates require remediation.**
- 5) Instead of paying teachers' higher salaries or putting more money into our classrooms, districts currently pay 34,030 administrators and non-instructional staff but only employ 29,719 teachers. **HB2270 does nothing to improve learning, increase graduation rates or lower operating costs through greater efficiency.**
- 6) Clearly, neither the old formula nor the greatly inflated "foundation state aid per student" demands on Page 18, Lines 6-9 of HB2270 are based on the actual cost of educating Kansas students. **Without documenting instructional costs, neither the Legislature nor the Courts will know if adequate funding has been appropriated** to teach our students employable skills or make sure they are prepared to succeed in college.
- 7) If passed, **HB2270 would require raising taxes by \$1 billion dollars**. Which legislator or tax payer is ready for that massive tax increase—especially since the \$3.4 billion more spent per year did not improve student achievement during the last 20 years??
- 8) On Page 38, Lines 35-39 it states: "*Any unencumbered balance of moneys remaining in the at-risk education fund of a school district on June 30 of the current school year, may be expended in the school year that immediately succeeds such date by the school district for general operating expenses of the school district as approved by the board.*" Notice throughout the bill that **state law already allows districts to use unspent money in various fund accounts to pay their operating expenses.**
- 9) Since the Montoy decision in 2005, school districts have increased their unencumbered cash balances by 95%. **The \$911 million dollars they currently have accumulated can easily be used this Session to offset the FY2017, \$350 million shortfall in the SGF.** If \$450 million in unspent cash was sufficient in 2005, it is not necessary for districts with more than 7.5% set aside to horde these extra tax dollars. These excess funds are unspent legislative appropriations. **This money is legally available for districts to pay their bills without forcing the Legislature to cut other State programs or liquidate investment accounts.**

Respectfully submitted,

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