

Approved: 2-21-2000
Date

MINUTES OF THE SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE.

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Senator Barbara Lawrence at 9:00 a.m. on February 10, 2000 in Room 313-S and 123-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except: Senators Hensley, Kerr and Oleen - Excused

Committee staff present: Avis Swartzman, Revisor of Statutes
Ben Barrett, Legislative Research Department
Carolyn Rampey, Legislative Research Department
Jackie Breymeyer, Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee: Milkin Foundation Recipients:
Kevin E. Burr, Garden City USD 457
R. Bruce Courtney, Basehor-Linwood USD 458
Marshall Cruce, Louisburg USD 416
Bruce Graham, Twin Valley USD 240
Senator Vratil
David G. Sim, KBI
Dr. Gene Johnson, Shawnee Mission School District

Others attending: See Attached List

The Senate met jointly with the House to hear from the Milkin Foundation Recipients. Chairman Tanner called the meeting to order and called on Dale Dennis, Deputy Education Commissioner, to introduce the recipients.

Mr. Dennis commented on the pleasure the students and others experienced on learning of their principal or teacher winning the award. He asked each recipient to give a few brief remarks.

The recipients gave a short biography of their lives and careers and gave a philosophy about their view of their profession. They were pleased and honored to be recipients and, with one voice, asked the legislators to always place kids first.

The House Education Committee paused to give the Senate time to adjourn to its standing committee room on the first floor to continue with the day's agenda.

SB 432 - school districts; employment of personnel

Chairperson Lawrence called on Senator Vratil, bill sponsor, to begin testimony.

Senator Vratil stated that Dr. Gene Johnson, Shawnee Mission Public Schools and Patricia Baker, Kansas Association of School Boards, were present to speak to the bill. He defined the bill as criminal background checks for prospective school district employees. The purpose of the bill is to require a school district to conduct a statewide and nationwide criminal history check on each new employee. Current law does not contain language necessary to authorize a nationwide criminal history check.

Senator Vratil gave background on the bill and stated that the bill needs an amendment to authorize a school district to hire a new employee subject to a background check. He ended his testimony by stating that the bill should result in a safer environment for the children. ([Attachment 1](#))

David G. Sim, KBI, distributed testimony that covered three points on the bill. The first point was the definition of the criminal history record check. The second was how **SB 432** would accomplish criminal history record checks as currently written. The third point were recommended amendments to the bill. ([Attachment 2](#)) He ended the testimony with support for the bill which, with amendments, would provide substantial and consistent protection to the children and schools.

Dr. Gene Johnson, Shawnee Mission School District, addressed the bill and stated the bill, with proposed amendments, is supported because there is currently no formal required process in Kansas that requires a background check for classified and certified employees in Kansas school districts. ([Attachment 3](#))

Dr. Johnson's proposed amendment was contained in page 2 of his testimony and he ended his testimony

by stating the amendment is critical in ensuring the safety of school communities.

The Chairperson stated the hearing would continue Monday and adjourned the meeting.