

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The meeting was called to order by Acting Chairman Melvin Neufeld at 9:00 a.m. on February 26, 2009, in Room 711 of the Docking State Office Building.

All members were present except:

- Representative Don Hill- excused
- Representative Bill Otto- excused
- Representative Valdenia Winn- excused

Committee staff present:

- Sharon Wenger, Kansas Legislative Research Department
- Dale Dennis, Kansas State Department of Education
- Janet Henning, Committee Assistant

Conferees appearing before the committee:

- Dr. Edward Hammond, President, Fort Hays State University
- Ron Keller, Director, Kansas Academy of Math and Science
- Tyler Clark, KAMS applicant and sophomore student, St. John, Kansas
- Rabbi Michael and Kay Davis, parents, Wichita, Kansas (written testimony)

Chairman Aurand told Committee members he was trying to schedule various committee members to "Chair" the Education Committee similar to the "Committee of the Whole" in the House chambers. Chairman Aurand stated if any committee member is interested in chairing the committee, Chairman Aurand should be contacted. He stated this would be done on a seniority basis, beginning with Representative Melvin Neufeld.

Update of Kansas Academy of Math and Science

Dr. Edward Hammond, President, Fort Hays State University, spoke briefly to Committee members about the Kansas Academy of Math and Science (KAMS) program. Dr. Hammond then introduced Ron Keller, Director of the Kansas Academy of Math and Science.

Ron Keller gave an overview of the KAMS program to Committee members. Mr. Keller advised this is a premier academic early-entry-to-college program for academically talented and motivated high school students. Committee members were told the students spend their 11th and 12th grade years in a residential academy on the Fort Hays State University college campus and take an advanced curriculum in which they will also earn 68 hours of college credit. Mr. Keller stated the course work is heavy in mathematics and science - biology, chemistry, physics, mathematics, and computer science. Mr. Keller told Committee members that the students who will attend the Academy and participate in key research endeavors are the answer to what is needed as a state to ensure that Kansas can keep its new leaders in their important fields within the state and will have a positive impact on the state's future economy. ([Attachment 1](#))

Tyler Clark, KAMS applicant and sophomore student, St. John, spoke to Committee members as a proponent of Kansas Academy of Math and Science (KAMS). Mr. Clark told Committee members that the high school he attends, a 1A school, does not offer advanced placement classes and only one dual credit course. He told Committee members he had applied to KAMS as he felt this would help him achieve his long term goals through a variety of learning experiences and peer interaction. ([Attachment 2](#))

Rabbi Michael and Kay Davis, parents of a KAMS applicant, gave written testimony as a proponent of the Kansas Academy of Math and Science program. ([Attachment 3](#))

Dr. Hammond gave an overview of the 'KAMS Lite' budget cutting process. Committee members were told that because of the economic situation, cost reductions had been made in staffing, general equipment purchases, staff travel and training, and development of alternative program options. Dr. Hammond told Committee members the Legislature had previously pre-approved \$713,000 for the KAMS program, however, with the budget reductions, they would be able to operate the KAMS program for approximately \$350,000.00. The number of KAMS students would be reduced from 40 to 30. ([Attachment 4](#))

A question and answer session followed the presentations.

The next meeting is scheduled for March 3, 2009. The meeting was adjourned at 10:00 a.m.