

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE HIGHER EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Terrie Huntington at 1:30 p.m. on February 12, 2009, in Room 786 of the Docking State Office Building.

All members were present.

Committee staff present:

Renaë Jefferies, Office of the Revisor of Statutes
Mary Galligan, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Jennifer Horchem, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Kay Scarlett, Committee Assistant

Conferees appearing before the committee:

Regent Gary Sherrer, Chair of the State University Admissions Task Force
Jacqueline Vietti, President of Butler Community College and Admissions Task Force member
David Brant, Senior Vice President, Central National Bank, Topeka, and Admissions Task Force member
Jonathan Krueger, Emporia State University Student, ESU Student Government Legislative Director, and Admissions Task Force member
Andy Tompkins, Dean, College of Education, Pittsburg State University, and Admissions Task Force member (written only)

Others attending:

See attached list.

Representative Mah moved to approve the minutes of February 2, 3 and 5. Seconded by Representative Palmer, the motion passed.

Hearing on HB 2197 - State educational institutions; admission standards

Chairman Huntington opened the hearing on **HB 2197** and asked Renaë Jefferies, Office of the Revisor of Statutes, to brief the committee on the bill. She explained that this legislation specifies that students from non-accredited private secondary schools could be admitted to a state university with an ACT score of 21 points or more. Also, up to 10.0 percent of admitted students who would transfer 24 credit hours to a state university would not have to meet the minimum admission standards. This would be the same policy that is currently applied to freshmen admissions to state universities. The Board of Regents would have to establish the criteria and guidelines for exemptions to be applied systemwide. The Board would have to present a report on the number and percentage of exceptions made by January 31 of each year to the Legislature. This and related reports would be submitted at one time to the Legislature.

Under this bill the standard pre-college curriculum would no longer require one unit of computer technology. In addition, for students who attend a school that does not have units of credits or grade point averages, the Board of Regents would determine the students' level of education and grade point average. **HB 2197** would give the Board of Regents the authority to adopt rules and regulations establishing standards for the admission of students to state universities. The standards could be different for each state university in accordance with each institution's educational mission. If the rules and regulations are more rigorous than those outlined in current law, they would not go into effect before the 2014-2015 academic year. (Attachment 1)

A copy of the State University Admissions Task Force Final Report is available from the Kansas Board of Regents.

Regent Gary Sherrer, Chair of the State University Admissions Task Force, testified in support of **HB 2197**, legislation that embodies the recommendations of the Admissions Task Force. In 1996, Kansas shifted from an open admission policy to a qualified admissions statutory framework. After a decade of operation under this framework, the Kansas Board of Regents established a State University Admissions Task Force to complete a review of the standards and to make recommendations for university admissions policies for the year 2010 and beyond.

Ultimately, the Task Force made 11 recommendations to the Board: 8 related to qualified admissions, 2

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related to transfer, and 1 related to concurrent enrollment. While some of the recommendations do not require statutory change, those requiring statutory change are included in **HB 2197**. Three major recommendations are:

1. A provision that students, both resident and non-resident, be allowed admission by earning a composite ACT score of 21 or higher.
2. Provisions for the creation of exception windows designed specifically for transfer students with at least 24 credit hours. A transfer exception window would be established for resident and non-resident students and mirror the current 10% exception window for incoming freshmen.
3. Remove the one unit in the field of computer technology requirement from the statutorily defined pre-college curriculum.

Regent Sherrer said the single largest change included in this bill is the provision that gives the Board the responsibility to establish admissions standards to state universities. This change puts the responsibility and accountability for admissions standards with the Board of Regents. ([Attachment 2](#))

Jacqueline Vietti, President of Butler Community College and member of the Admissions Task Force, appeared in support of **HB 2197**. She was especially pleased with the additional windows for transfer students and shifting the responsibility for setting admissions standards to the Board of Regents.

Jonathan Krueger, Emporia State University Student, ESU Student Government Legislative Director, and one of two student members on the Admissions Task Force, spoke in support of **HB 2197**. He felt removing the computer educational requirement and setting an ACT score of 21 for home schooled and non-accredited high school students were major improvements. He also supports granting authority to the Board of Regents to set admissions standards. ([Attachment 3](#))

David Brant, Senior Vice President, Central National Bank, Topeka, and member of the Admissions Task Force, expressed support for **HB 2197** encompassing many of the Task Force's recommendations. He was pleased to learn about the overall success of college admissions in Kansas. However, he was amazed as to how complicated our admissions requirements can be for certain groups of students, such as those that have been home schooled or from non-accredited schools, and for both resident and non-resident transfer students. He believes it's time for Kansas to update our admissions requirements and for the Legislature to encourage and empower the Board of Regents to make the admissions process both relevant and effective to serve our State and today's students. ([Attachment 4](#))

Andy Tompkins, Dean, College of Education, Pittsburg State University, and member of the Admissions Task Force, submitted written testimony in support of **HB 2197**. He believes that our first attempts at qualified admissions in Kansas have been helpful and formed a good foundation; now it is time to make some needed adjustments to make the system even better. ([Attachment 5](#))

The hearing on **HB 2197** was closed.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:05 p.m. The next meeting of the House Higher Education Committee is scheduled for February 16, 2009.