

**HOUSE K-12 EDUCATION BUDGET COMMITTEE
CONFEREE SUBMISSION FORM**

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Contact Debbie by phone at: **785-296-3971**

Date of Meeting 2/10/2020

Bill #: HB 2540	OR	Presentation on:
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Print Name and phone number of person who will be testifying:

Terry Forsyth	(785)232-8271 ext. 8126
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Print Name and phone number of contact person if different:

Andrea Mick	(785)232-8271 ext. 8122
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Agency Represented:

Kansas National Education Association

Check all that apply:

Proponent	Opponent X	Neutral
Oral Testimony (Speaking) X	Written Only (Not Speaking)	

We appreciate your attention to these important details which enable better service for all.



Terry Forsyth
Testimony on HB 2540
February 10, 2020

Madame Chair, members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to express our concerns about House Bill 2540.

I'd like to start by differentiating between "programs" and "practices."

Programs tend to be packages. We can buy, for example, a program like the Lexia reading program or the Open Court Reading Program. Teachers can implement these programs in their classrooms. The money goes to buying the materials and some might go to providing a day or two of in-service in using them. These are often evidence-based and likely to appear on lists of approved programs on which funds may be spent.

Practices are entirely different. Practices is 'the how' of teaching – how to change one's teaching practice to meet the needs of diverse learners. Cooperative learning is an evidence-based practice. So are sheltered English or total physical response for teachers of English language learners. Project-based learning is a practice. While some companies may try to create materials or even programs to support cooperative learning or project-based learning, they are rather 'approaches to instruction' that differ from what we normally imagine when we think of our own school experience.

Practices are implemented not through the purchase of a program but through professional learning, mentoring, observation and guidance. The cost of changing practices in order to differentiate learning will not be reflected in a list of approved programs.

The list currently on the KSDE website contains programs. It also contains practices. And beyond that, it contains resources. It is, in the best sense, a resource guide for school district teachers and administrators to use in their efforts to craft plans to meet the diverse needs of their students.

They might find an intriguing practice like project-based learning on there and decided to include professional development in that practice as part of their at-risk plan. They might also find a program like Lexia to buy and put in a lab supporting reading instruction. They might find another website that discusses efforts in other districts to guide their planning.

From those findings, a local plan is then created, and that plan might include practices not yet listed on the KSDE site. KSDE, in reviewing the local plan, might question some part or parts of it. If the school district can demonstrate that what they want to do has evidence to support it, the KSDE will approve the plan.

JAG is just such a plan. Until this year, JAG was not on the KSDE list. But the Wichita School District learning of it, looked at the evidence presented, and put it in their at-risk plan. It was approved by KSDE and then implemented by USD 259. Now it is on the KSDE list. Under this bill, JAG could not have been approved for USD 259.

I believe Kansas has a good system right now. But what appears to be lacking is confidence in our teachers and administrators. We seem to believe that they aren't particularly concerned about struggling students or don't really want to put in the effort to help them. It would be a lot easier just to pick some packages off a list of programs. Instead administrators and teachers spend hours and hours working on learning teams, curriculum teams, and building improvement and planning teams to build plans that meet the many different needs of their diverse student populations. We should honor their work and let them get on with it.