

MINUTES OF THE SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Jean Schodorf at 1:30 p.m. on February 10, 2009, in Room 545-N of the Capitol.

All members were present except:

Senator Dwayne Umbarger- excused

Committee staff present:

Theresa Kiernan, Office of the Revisor of Statutes

Matt Sterling, Office of the Revisor of Statutes

Sharon Wenger, Kansas Legislative Research Department

Dorothy Gerhardt, Committee Assistant

Conferees appearing before the committee:

Theresa Kiernan, Office of the Revisor of Statutes

Senator James Barnett

Representative J. Robert Brookens

Bill Halvorsen, Board of Education, USD #284

Greg Markowitz, Superintendent & Chief Financial Officer, USD #284

John Torline, Associate Director, Central Kansas Community Foundation

Sandi Fruit, Executive Director, Central Kansas Community Foundation

Mark Tallman, Kansas Association of School Boards

Others attending:

See attached list.

Approval of Minutes

Senator Teichman moved to approve the minutes of January 22, 2009, January 27, 2009, February 2, 2009, February 3, 2009, and February 4, 2009 as written. The motion was seconded by Senator Marshall. Motion carried on a voice vote.

Hearing on SB 149 - School districts; supplemental general state aid for certain districts

Theresa Kiernan, Office of the Revisor of Statutes, appeared before the committee and provided a brief explanation of **SB 149**. This bill would amend distribution that establishes the formula for supplemental general state aid and would apply to certain school districts that have a large geographic area of at least 670 square miles and an assessed valuation of less than \$120,000 per pupil in the preceding school year. Those school districts would be guaranteed an amount of supplemental general state aid in an amount equal to 12% of state financial aid of the district or, an amount they would have gotten under the old formula.

Senator James Barnett, (Attachment 1), presented brief testimony in support of **SB 149**. He stated the bill, as presented, dealt with some inequity particularly with districts identified as high wealth that truly were not wealthy. Upon questioning, he stated the bill, as written, would apply to the following districts: Hoxie, USD #412; Wallace, USD #241; Cheylin, USD #103; WaKeeney, USD #208; Graham County, USD #281; Scott County, USD #466; and Chase County, USD #284.

Senator Teichman asked for the recommendation of the Legislative Educational Planning Committee. Sharon Wenger reported that the LEPC took no action but recommended it be brought back to the Session and be looked at with Senator Barnett.

Bill Halvorsen, Board of Education member, USD #284, Chase County, (Attachment 2) also presented testimony in support of **SB 149**. He pointed out that Chase County is considered a "wealthy district" under the "wealth formula" used by the state in determining state aid; the formula being a function of land area, or assessed valuation, divided by the actual number of students. His testimony included the fact that the school district is large in land area, and thus assessed valuation, but is well below average in number of students. He stated the formula rewards school districts that are small in land area but large in student density.

Greg Markowitz, Superintendent and Chief Financial Officer, USD #284, (Attachment 3), also presented

CONTINUATION SHEET

Minutes of the Senate Education Committee at 1:30 p.m. on February 10, 2009, in Room 545-N of the Capitol.

testimony in support of **SB 149**. He provided a list of budget factors being enacted by the school district to combat the effect of the local option budget wealth formula on the school district.

Representative J. Robert Brookens, (Attachment 4), representative from Marion, KS, presented testimony also in support of **SB 149**. He pointed out **SB 627** from the 2008 session was referred to the Joint Committee on Educational Planning for summer discussion. After deliberations, that committee recommended the issue of low enrollment and seemingly high assessed property valuation be reviewed by the standing education committees during the 2009 session and that legislative staff work with Senator Barnett to more fully develop a recommendation. **SB 149** is the result of that committee's work with the Department of Education which would assist all schools similarly situated with Chase County.

The hearing on **SB 149** was closed.

Hearing on SB 175 - School districts; transfer of moneys to community foundations

Theresa Kiernan, Office of the Revisor of Statutes, appeared before the committee and provided a brief explanation of **SB 175**. In summary, the bill would authorize school districts to transfer moneys, defined as any moneys derived from gifts or donations to the school district which are not immediately required for the purposes for which the moneys were received, to a community foundation. These moneys are to be deposited into a restricted fund by the foundation and remain subject to any restrictions imposed by the original donee of such moneys.

John Torline, Associate Director, Central Kansas Community Foundation, and City Administrator of North Newton, (Attachment 5) testified in support of **SB 175**. He stated this bill would allow districts to place funds donated to the local schools as gifts, donations and bequests with community foundations for investment and management. Any donated funds moved to the foundation from a school district would remain subject to any restrictions that were originally imposed by the donors and may only be used for the benefit of the school district.

Sandi Fruit, Executive Director, Central Kansas Community Foundation; Mark Tallman, Kansas Association of School Boards (Attachment 6); Dr. John R. Morton, Superintendent, Newton Public Schools, USD #373, (Attachment 7) (written only), and Becky Goss, KACF Chairperson, (Attachment 8) (written only) also provided testimony in support of **SB 175**.

The hearing on **SB 175** was closed.

The next meeting is scheduled for February 11, 2009.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:20 p.m.