

North Central Kansas Special Education Cooperative

PO Box 369, 205 F Street, Suite 235
Phillipsburg KS, 67661

Interlocal #636

Phone: 785-543-2149
Fax: 785-543-6654

Member Districts

USD 110 EXUMER RIDGE, USD 211 MORTON, USD 212 NORTHERN VALLEY, USD 213 LENORA, USD 237 SMITH CENTER,
USD 269 PALCO, USD 270 PLAINVILLE, USD 271 STOCKTON, USD 324 EASTERN HEIGHTS, USD 325 PHILLIPSBURG,
USD 326 LOGAN, USD 392 OSBORNE, USD 399 NABOMA

Written Testimony related to SB 111

3/30/11

Testimony provided by Chris Hipp, Special Education Director

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony to explain my support for Senate Bill 111. I believe this bill rectifies some very significant consequences that would result from the late amendment added to SB 359 and passed into law during the 2010 legislative session. SB 111 should be adopted and the Min/Max provisions removed from the current laws for the following reasons. I would ask however that the bill be returned to its original state and made to eliminate permanently these problems rather than simply pushing these issues off for one year.

- Under the current law every district state-wide will experience a reduction in Special Education per Teacher Entitlement (Categorical Aid). If this portion of the law were in effect for fiscal year 2010, five agencies would have received an additional \$1,071,345 while four agencies would have had \$436,173 withheld. The difference of \$635,000 would come off the top of state special education funds resulting in a reduction in categorical aid provide to every school districts in the state.
- The current law wrongfully assumes an even distribution of the needs of students with disabilities. Small districts will have resources reduced simply due to the economies of scale. If districts have students with significant disabilities or high prevalence of students with disabilities they will undoubtedly have more special education staff per district headcount than larger districts.
- SB 111 would eliminate several challenges presented by design flaws in the current law.
 - Part C Infant and Toddler staff members are reported within the personnel report, however, children age birth to 3yrs are not included in the student count.
 - Special education staff providing services to private school students is included within personnel report, however, private school students are not included in the student count.
 - The Min/Max portion of the current law only considers categorical aid and does not take into account the amount of special education funding in the form of transportation aid, catastrophic aid or state Medicaid replacement aid.
 - The calculation cannot be completed after the May personnel submission.
 - The reduction in state aid for districts above the 150% threshold will require an increase in their local spending to insure that student needs as well as MOE requirements are met.
 - Districts receiving additional funds would most likely add staff. This would put them in jeopardy of not being eligible to receive the additional funds in the future.

Appropriations Committee

Date March 31, 2011

Attachment 9

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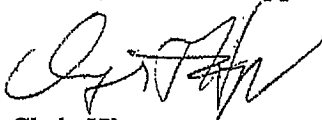
Member Districts

USD 110 Thunder Ridge, USD 211 Norton, USD 212 Northern Valley, USD 213 Lenora, USD 237 Smith Center,
USD 269 Palco, USD 270 Plainville, USD 271 Stockton, USD 324 Eastern Heights, USD 325 Phillipsburg,
USD 326 Logan, USD 392 Osborne, USD 399 Natoma

- The Min/Max amendment added to SB 359 is a first step toward a census based funding formula for special education.
 - The current special education funding formula has been studied on multiple occasions by multiple legislative and educational panels. Without exception the findings have been that the current formula is effective. A better funding mechanism has yet to be identified and prior to any change more study would need to be done.
 - In December 2007, the Legislative Division of Post Audit completed a study of special education excess cost. That study evaluated excess cost in a more thorough manner than simply comparing the amount of categorical aid a district received per student headcount and the findings of that study are very relevant. According to the LPA report "Regardless of the percent of excess costs covered, districts and cooperatives tend to receive about the same amount of primary funding per student". This fact alone should be enough to debunk the idea of a need for a census based minimum and maximum amount of categorical aid.

In summary, SB 111, if restored to its original form, would eliminate permanently the problems created by the late addition of the Min/Max calculation made to SB 359 during the 2010 legislative session. The issues corrected by SB 111 are important right now for the provision of special education services in the state of Kansas and will be just as important in 2013. It is my hope that this legislature use SB 111 to correct these issues permanently rather than simply pushing of the issue for one year.

Thank you for the opportunity to address this committee,



Chris Hipp
Special Education Director
NCKSEC.

Appropriations Committee

Date March 31, 2011

Attachment 9-2