

MINUTES OF THE SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Jean Schodorf at 1:30 p.m. on March 14, 2011, in Room 152-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except:

Senator John Vratil – excused  
Senator Dwayne Umbarger - excused

Committee staff present:

Sharon Wenger, Kansas Legislative Research Department  
Laura Younker, Kansas Legislative Research Department  
Jason Long, Office of the Revisor of Statutes  
Eunice Peters, Office of the Revisor of Statutes  
Dale Dennis, Deputy Commissioner, Kansas Department of Education  
Dorothy Gerhardt, Committee Assistant

Conferees appearing before the Committee:

Glennis Zimmerman, President, South Haven USD #509 Board of Education  
Jeff Cather, Anthony, KS, Kansas Future Farmers of America  
Mark Desetti, Kansas National Education Association  
Diane Gjerstad, USD #259, Wichita

Others attending:

See attached list.

Continued Hearing on **SB 202-School districts; purpose of state aid to public schools**

The committee hearing on **SB 202** was continued from Thursday, March 10, 2011, with testimony in opposition to the legislation from Glennis Zimmerman, President, South Haven USD #509 Board of Education (Attachment 1). She began testimony by stating she was a former teacher, curriculum director, and assistant superintendent of a 4A and a 5A school district. Statements in her testimony regarding **SB 202** included her belief that the bill is an attempt to define suitable provision in terms of instructional costs and the definition of what these instructional costs are.

She stated that by excluding co-curricular activities and extracurricular activities, this definition leaves out the life experiences for students that are what solidifies the learning that occurs in the classroom. It is her belief that we must consider the needs of all Kansas students, and not assume that each and every Kansas student has access to the same opportunities in his or her community. We must make sure that all Kansas students have the education that prepares them to be productive citizens of our state. Education is an economic engine for Kansas, and quality of education is important no matter where a student lives.

Jeff Cather, Anthony, Kansas, State Sentinel, Kansas Future Farmers of America, and a student at Kansas State University, provided testimony in opposition to **SB 202** (Attachment 2) also. In stating his opposition to the bill he relayed his experiences as a member of the Future Farmers of America (FFA). He stated that students all over the state are involved in FFA. All of the activities of the FFA are defined as co-curricular. Not allowing funding of these activities would mean that many students would not be afforded the opportunities for personal and leadership growth that he has been given. Rural Kansas and agriculture are vital to the future of the state. FFA is vital to the future of rural Kansas. Funding for FFA, a co-curricular activity, is vital to the future of the agriculture education program.

Mark Desetti, Kansas National Education Association, also spoke in regard to **SB 202** (Attachment 3). His testimony included a look at his own family from his perspective as a parent and that definition of “suitability”. He stated that education is not all about money, but is about our vision of what we want schools to do and be for the next generation; what is suitable for others' children and his children ought to be suitable for every child living in this state.

Diane Gjerstad, USD #259, Wichita, also appeared with testimony regarding **SB 202** (Attachment 4). She stated that operating an effective school where teaching and learning occurs is broader than simply “direct instruction”. In her testimony she included the results of a survey done by the Wichita superintendent of a select group of students, SuperSAC, last fall. The results of this survey represented the interests of

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students, their desire to learn, to interact with students outside of their classroom or social groups, and ideas to keep students interested and motivated in school. Many of these goals are only realized through co-curricular and extra-curricular activities.

Co-curricular and extra-curricular activities enhance a student's preparation for life, their ability to work in groups, grow leadership experiences, to learn all those "soft" skills employers desire for an effective workforce. Those skills are reinforced through the games we play, the clubs we join, the opportunity to experiment. She asked the Chair that as we seek to define what enhances the K-12 educational experience that we not be so narrow as to lose the components which help our students grow.

Ms. Gjerstad also provided information regarding a survey completed by Angela Lumpkin, University of Kansas, and Judy Favor, Baker University, regarding the comparison of academic performance of high school athletes and non-athletes in Kansas ([Attachment 5](#)). The research generally indicated that students involved in athletics earned higher grades, graduated at a higher rate, dropped out of school less frequently, and scored higher on state assessments than non-athletes. Results on ACT tests were mixed.

The hearing on **SB 202** was closed.

The next meeting is scheduled for March 15, 2011.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:30 p.m.