



KANSAS
SCHOOL
SUPERINTENDENTS'
ASSOCIATION

Written Testimony on HB 2085

House Commerce, Labor and Economic Development Committee

Dr. Randy Watson, Superintendent, McPherson USD 418 and
President, Kansas School Superintendents' Association

January 29, 2013

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony on behalf of the Kansas School Superintendents' Association (KSSA). We submit this testimony as a **neutral party on HB 2085** because it contains some provisions that our members support, specifically, those provisions related to evaluation procedures and the length and number of teaching periods.

However, HB 2085 also includes several provisions that KSSA believes require additional study. For this reason, we are not prepared to support this bill in its entirety.

The mission of the Kansas School Superintendents' Association (KSSA) is to serve the growth, development and general encouragement of the Kansas system of education. As educational leaders, superintendents must demonstrate accountability for increased student achievement – to parents and lawmakers – and maintain high expectations for each and every student.

Evaluation Procedures

Research shows that the most significant factor in student performance is the quality of the teacher in the classroom and we are mindful of that as we engage in discussions about evaluation and negotiations. KSSA supports strengthening teacher and administrator evaluation. As an organization, we have been actively involved in the development of the Kansas Educator Evaluation Protocol (KEEP) program with the State Department of Education and our other education colleagues.

Superintendents support removing evaluation procedures from the list of items included in collective bargaining with teachers. We believe that teachers and administrators should have input into the development of evaluation systems *outside* of the negotiations process.

Length and Number of Teaching Periods

The second major change in the bill is to clarify that only the hours and amounts of work outside of teaching periods are to be included in the terms and conditions of professional service (i.e. mandatorily negotiable). We support the provision of the bill stating that the length and number of teaching periods shall not be included within the meaning of terms and conditions of professional service and shall not be subject to professional negotiation. Superintendents believe this provision would give districts more flexibility in assigning staff and structuring the school day as we work to meet the ever-changing needs of our students.

The portions of the bill relating to the exclusive representation for individual teachers and optional negotiations are beyond the scope of our legislative positions and we are not prepared to speak in support of these provisions.

Superintendents want to reiterate our support for the good work that teachers are doing. Our goal in providing this testimony is not to strip teachers of all collective bargaining rights and “devalue” their contribution to student learning. Rather, we want to support the changes to how we negotiate regarding evaluation – especially in light of the collaborative work we have been doing.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony and we encourage you to call upon us, if necessary.