

House Education Committee

HB2504

Jeff Travis, Superintendent of USD 273 – Beloit

February 1, 2016

Chairman Highland and committee members please consider opposing HB 2504, and understand that I oppose HB 2504.

It is no secret that the state revenues are down and the legislators are scrambling to find ways to make the budget work. Re-aligning the current 286 school districts down to 132 school districts is what this particular bill is looking at. I question what kind of actually savings this bill would bring, and what kind of damage to very successful schools this bill would cause.

This bill takes away local control from the current Boards of Education and the current tax payers/voters from these affected districts. Each district has policies and practices that are unique to their own district because that is what works for them and their students. We offer different electives in our high schools; we offer different extracurricular offerings from district to district. Neighboring districts students may have different needs. The decision to realign districts should be the choice of the local Boards of Education and the patrons of those districts. This type of action should not come from legislative action in Topeka.

This bill will add to transportation costs in the future, and it will mean that students will ride on buses for longer periods of time. Neither of these scenarios are good for the children attending school. Our students should not be hindered by where they live compared to students whom live in more populated areas.

We should look at our students as the “Customer”. We have great young Kansans doing amazing and awesome things in all aspects of life. Our students and young people are the most valuable resource that we have. We need to take care of them, in just that manner.

Please know that teachers and staff work tireless hours to provide a quality education for our Kansas students. They go home and grade papers at night, they come to school and work during the evenings and on the weekends. We truly have great educational system in Kansas with dedicated educators.

Please do not allow this bill to move out of committee. I encourage all legislators to keep in mind the students and how this bill would affect their future.