

MINUTES OF THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION.

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Senator Dwayne Umbarger at 1:35 p.m. on February 12, 2001 in Room 123-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except: Senator Jean Schodorf, (excused)

Committee staff present: Ben Barrett, Legislative Research  
Avis Swartzman, Revisor of Statutes  
Judy Steinlicht, Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee: Cynthia Leniton, KS State Coordinator for Stop Violence  
Mark Tallman, KASB  
Ben Barrett, Legislative Research Department

Others attending: See attached list

Cynthia Leniton, state coordinator for a new national program that is facilitated through Kansas Family, Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA), which is a student career technology education organization, visited the Committee to make Legislators aware of what they are doing. They train high school students from across the state that have FCCLA chapters in their schools. They are taught to address and assess what the violence issues are in their schools and communities and are given the attitudes, resources and skills to go back into the community to help in whatever ways needed based on the statistics that they find in their communities. Their main focus is violence prevention. They help students to recognize, reduce and then report any violent behavior that they see.

Chairman Umbarger reminded the Committee that they are running out of time to get bills passed. The Committee was provided with a copy of the new agenda for the week. Thursday's meeting to hear from the Milken Foundation may be a joint meeting with the House Education Committee to free up time to work on bills. Further information will follow on Thursday's Agenda. It was stressed to be on time for the meeting.

**SB202--School district finance, definitions, base state aid per pupil, program and at-risk pupil weighting, school district ad valorem tax.**

Mark Tallman gave testimony on **SB202**, Governor's School Finance Proposals. (Attachment 1) Mark stated that they support the Governor's proposal, however, they believe that the increases recommended fall far short of the need. They know that a tax increase may not pass this year, but if a plan is not proposed, it will not receive a fair hearing and public debate.

During discussion it was stated that if a family felt that a child was not receiving the services they should in special education, a lawsuit could be filed by the family or the state. Children getting a regular education could certainly make a claim under the state constitution if they are not getting a suitable education, but there would be a much higher threshold to prove that, than in the case of special education where the rights are so clearly spelled out. Also during discussion, Mark stated that the coalition does not favor a change in the distribution formula to a weighting system, but they do favor 100% of excess costs. Mark clarified that the coalition agreed this summer to oppose the idea of a census based plan such as was presented by the State Board of Education. When the Governor's Task Force made it's recommendations, the coalition discussed it extensively and those discussions are still going on to some extent. Some members of the coalition agreed they would consider changing the system if the Legislature said they had the money and had identified the funding that could provide 100% of excess costs, and the only way to get it was to change the system. This bill is a change to the system without the dollars to get there and

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they are afraid they would never get the dollars to get to that point if the system were changed now. The coalition feels that only when they can comprehensively look and fund the whole system would it be the appropriate time to make a change in the formula.

Ben Barrett, Legislative Research Department, gave a summary of the school finance bills that are in the committee. (Attachment 2) **(NOTE: Corrections were made to the information in the original Attachment 2, dated 2-12-01. The information was revised on February 13, 2001. The revised copy is attached as Attachment 2)** During discussion, it was determined that catastrophic aid left out of the Governor's plan was unintentionally.

Chairman Umbarger let the members of the Committee know that they need to get a school finance bill passed out of the Committee, hopefully by Thursday.

Additional information was requested by the Committee to be able to study and consider a school finance plan, such as what the base state aid per pupil would be if it was not low-enrollment or correlation weighted. If it were outside the formula, how much would it be per student? Also requested was how much revenue a quarter percent sales tax & a half percent sales tax would raise, what one mill is statewide and the current income tax rate, etc. The Committee feels the information is needed to look at the options to fund education. Senator Corbin has some of the information available and Dale Dennis can get the rest of the information. Both will get the information put together in a report and give it to Committee members within one or two days.

Meeting was adjourned. The next meeting is scheduled for 1:00 p.m. on February 13, 2001.