

**USD 218 Elkhart**  
**Kansas Connections Academy**  
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Testimony to the  
House Committee on K-12 Education Budget  
House Bill 2410

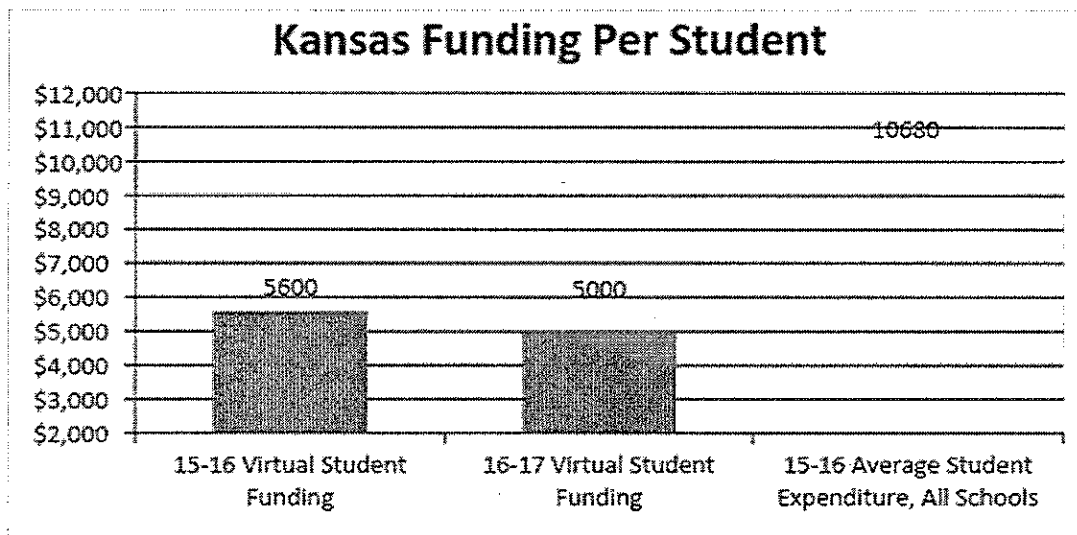
Zeke Rash,  
Principal, Kansas Connections Academy  
March 22, 2017

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, I am Zeke Rash, Principal of Kansas Connections Academy (KCA), a virtual school in partnership with USD 218 Elkhart. Thank you for allowing me to enter written testimony in support of the funding provisions for virtual education in HB 2410.

KCA is a statewide virtual public school that currently serves 550 students. Students come to us with unique and often challenging educational needs, which is why their families chose an online environment. Approximately 14% of KCA students have an IEP or 504 plan.

KCA's state funding, set at \$5,000 per student, is primarily used to provide the teaching staff, curriculum, and school services that our students require. When virtual school funding is cut, these are the areas most likely to suffer.

HB 2410, which keeps funding at the current levels, will also keep KCA's services for students at current levels.



Although this bill maintains the cuts of the 2016 Special Session, we believe HB 2410's funding level for virtual will allow KCA to continue to serve those Kansas students who need a different learning environment to meet their unique educational needs.

Thank you again for the opportunity to offer written testimony on this important issue.

