

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Clay Aurand at 9:05 A.M. on February 19, 2008 in Room 313-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except:

Marti Crow- excused
Ed Trimmer- excused

Committee staff present:

Theresa Kiernan, Office of Revisor of Statutes
Dianne Rosell, Office of Revisor of Statutes
Dale Dennis, Kansas State Department of Education
Martha Dorsey, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Sharon Wenger, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Janet Henning, Committee Assistant

Conferees appearing before the committee:

Representative Kevin Yoder
Stuart Little, Shawnee Mission School District
Sherri Yourdon, Vice-President, Kansas National Education Association
Bob Vancrum, Blue Valley USD 229
Mark Tallman, Kansas Association of School Boards
Bill Reardon, Kansas City, Kansas Public Schools
Susan Helbert, Kansas State Department of Education

HB 2885: School districts; cost of living weighting; use of moneys for teachers' salaries

Representative Yoder spoke to Committee members in support of HB 2885. Representative Yoder advised that during the 2005 regular and special session of the Legislature, a new provision called a Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) was taken up and considered and it applied to districts with very high property values. Representative Yoder stated the idea behind this provision of the school finance formula is that there are some districts where the cost of living is much higher than other areas. He further stated this legislation will allow for a 3% additional COLA, for those districts that qualify, to expand their local contribution to the school finance formula to help resolve the cost of living gap. (Attachment #1)

Stuart Little, Shawnee Mission School District, addressed the Committee members in support of **HB 2885**. Mr. Little told Committee members the cost of living weighting is important to Shawnee Mission school district because other parts of the school finance formula keep the district as one of the lowest per pupil funded districts in the state, 266 out of 296 while the demands of salaries in their community, leading to the highest average salaries in the state, put added strain on resources. (Attachment #2)

Sherri Yourdon, Vice-President, Kansas National Education Association, spoke to Committee members in support of **HB 2885** and encouraged the Committee to adopt the requirement that the cost of living weighting be expended on salaries and further that the Committee consider requiring a public reporting - perhaps a report to the LEPC - on how this money was expended. (Attachment #3)

Bob Vancrum, Blue Valley USD 229, spoke to Committee members in support of the concept of increasing the COLA from 5% to 8% of the general fund budget for those districts that have an average housing price in excess of 125% of the statewide average. Mr. Vancrum urged support of **HB 2885**. (Attachment #4)

Mark Tallman, Assistant Executive Director/Advocacy, Kansas Association of School Boards, spoke to Committee members in opposition of **HB 2885** because this weighting is financed by an unequalized local mill levy. (Attachment #5)

Bill Reardon, Kansas City, Kansas Public Schools, spoke to Committee members in opposition of HB 2885 and encouraged the Committee to adopt the Post Audit's recommendations regarding Regional Cost Adjustments before increasing the COLA weight by 60% as prescribed in **HB 2885**. (Attachment #6)

A question and answer session followed the presentations.

The Chairman closed the hearing on **HB 2885**.

Susan Helbert, Assistant Director, Education and Licensure, Kansas State Department of Education, gave an overview of teacher licensure regulations and issues to Committee members. (Attachment #7, #8, and #9)

The meeting was adjourned at 10:25 A.M. The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, February 20, 2008.