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Written Testimony

Senate Education Committee
Sen. Molly Baumgardner, Chair
Student Counts, Weights and Expenditures December 2019

Submitted by Stephen Linkous, Chief of Staff, Kansas City, Kansas Public Schools

I am submitting testimony on behalf of the Kansas City, Kansas School District in regard to the findings in the Kansas Legislative Division Post-Audit in K-123 Education: Evaluating At-Risk Student Counts, Weights, and Expenditures December 2018.

Kansas City, Kansas Public Schools has a district population with 75% of the students identified as at risk. The district's At-Risk High-Density Funding allocation is roughly 8 Million dollars and is utilized in, but not limited to, the following areas:

- Teacher salaries to decrease class sizes
- Additional Reading Intervention Teachers
- Classroom support at the Juvenile Detention Center
- Professional Development for Staff
- Additional Counselors in high need buildings

As one of the districts in our state identified to receive this funding, we are strategically deploying the funds to directly impact teacher development and student achievement. The district has developed a robust professional development program for staff that is focused on instruction including the Evidence-Based Practices identified through the ESSA guidelines. Regular professional learning sessions occur during every Wednesday early release and monthly Principal Meetings to ensure the state standards are taught in every classroom and students at each campus have access to a Guaranteed Viable Curriculum (GVC) and high-quality instruction. This funding enables us to employ additional teachers to lower student to teacher ratios within our classrooms, resulting in more individualized instruction for our students. Specifically, we have increased the number of Literacy and Mathematics teachers, as well as the number of counselors at our campuses to support student academic and social-emotional needs.

The impact of this funding has been evident in the last 18 months under our current leadership. As we forge in a new direction for the district, we have seen significant gains in student proficiency levels in the areas of Language Arts, Mathematics and Science as measured by the **KAP**. Respectively, our Language Arts rose 4.3% points, Mathematics 6.2% and Science 3.9% points. As you work on legislation pertaining to at-risk funding, please consider the impact your decisions will have on the achievement of our students in KCKPS and across the state of Kansas, as all districts work to make every student in Kansas College and Career Ready.

INSPIRING **EXCELLENCE**: EVERY GROWN UP, EVERY CHILD, EVERY DAY