

USD 294-Oberlin



131 East Commercial
Oberlin, KS 67749
Dr. Troy Pitsch - Superintendent
Ph: (785) 475-3805 Fax: (785) 475-3076
www.usd294.org



February 2nd, 2019

Re: School Finance SB-44

To the Honorable Members of the Select Committee:

I am writing to request your support of Senate Bill 44 on behalf of the northwest Kansas community served by the USD 294 school district. Although this is only my second year serving in public education in this state, I have spent nearly two decades at both the elementary and secondary levels of public education. My experience here correlates very tightly with the results of the efficiency audit performed by Dr. Taylor and her team last year. School districts in the rural sector of our state operate within extremely tight margins and frequently defer hiring staff, setting base pay at competitive levels, and performing needed maintenance and upgrades to facilities to simply keep the lights on. In spite of these financial challenges, this district still manages to provide a solid educational experience for its children.

Senate Bill 44 is of vital interest to our region because it will help to provide the funding necessary to increase base pay of our certified staff, as well as to hire additional support staff who have direct contact with students in the delivery of academic and social-emotional interventions and services. As we strive to lift our education system up to the highest of standards, we cannot ignore the empirical link between adequate levels of school funding and the success of students who are served by public education. Further, economists forecast a continued decline in the need for unskilled labor, and it is imperative that we fully prepare our students to be successful in the post-secondary academic setting. Additional funding for public education is integral if we hope to remain economically competitive with neighboring states.

Thank you for your consideration of my viewpoint on this matter. I believe it is an important issue and would ask you to support SB 44 to ensure that we can provide a successful educational experience for the children of Kansas, both in the present term and for future years running.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Troy Pitsch", written over a white background.

Dr. Troy Pitsch
Superintendent of Schools
USD 294-Oberlin
(785) 475-3805
tpitsch@usd294.org