

Dear Special Education Task Force,

Here you will find my written testimony in support of fully funding special education to the 92% as mandated. As a public school speech language therapist and a parent of a child in special education, I am directly impacted by special education funding. I see on a daily basis how special education school staff are shorted on resources, which unfortunately trickles down to how well students are served. Fully funding special education will not only allow special education students to get what they deserve, but it will stop pulling necessary funds from general education. I see both special and general education teachers using their own money and resources to ensure their classes have enriching learning experiences, which as we know is a burden to their already tight personal budgets. Throughout the past three years, school districts have been experiencing an increase in special education needs, as we continue to feel the impacts of post covid life and the effects of mental health on youth. Putting the money necessary into special education could allow for specialized professional development, specific curriculum, equipment for individual student needs, increased staffing, reduced caseloads, and more opportunities for all kids in Kansas to grow in their own strengths. I know myself and other Kansans want our next generations to not only just survive through the public school system, but also to thrive and shine into the unique, contributing citizens they were meant to be.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Hurley, M.A., CCC-SLP
Overland Park, KS