

Appropriations has briefing on HB 2774

The House Appropriations Committee had a briefing on the new school finance bill, HB 2774. Revisor of Statutes Eunice Peters went over the various components of the bill and Legislative Post Audit Director Scott Frank briefed them on the proposed changes to transportation weighting.

Under the transportation proposal, all school districts would lose some transportation funding. The proposal is in response to a 2006 LPA study that found a "mathematical error" in the formula. When that error is adjusted, funding goes down overall by about \$16 million. There was some wonder about why, if the legislature knew this in 2006, they chose not to change it. Finally staff was asked to determine whether or not there were districts "making money" on transportation.

There was very little time for questions as the House convened at 10:00 am.

Hearings will be held on the bill on Monday and Tuesday of next week.

KNEA continues to argue that policy changes should not be in a budget bill. The best approach for the legislature to take is to simply address the equity issue identified by the Supreme Court by funding capital outlay and LOB state aid and passing a clean finance bill with no policy changes.

Take action!

You can join the chorus of Kansas calling for a clean school funding bill! Add your name to the online petition at <http://changekansas.org/action/petition/pass-a-clean-education-budget-bill-now>^[1].

Contact your legislators today and urge them to drop policy from HB 2774 and pass a clean school finance bill. Use the KNEA legislative contact portal by clicking here^[2].

Senate school funding plans emerging

We have seen some details released about possible finance plans from the Senate.

One is a leadership plan that we understand is from Senators Wagle, Bruce, and King. This plan fully funds the LOB and Capital Outlay provisions and does not add any controversial policy changes. The funding for equity however is partially taken from changes in other parts of the formula:

- A large decrease in virtual school weighting saves \$14.4 million,
- The Elimination of non-proficient at-risk weighting saves \$14.9 million,
- A change in high-density at-risk weighting such that it begins at 45% poverty saves \$7.2 million,
- The same transportation weighting change that is in HB 2774 saves \$16.5 million.

This bill also allows the LOB to go up to 33% with a mandatory election for any amount over 31%.

Word is there is also a plan by Sen. Masterson that funds the equity through reductions primarily in at-risk weighting. This proposal may also seek to change at-risk funding from free lunch eligibility to U.S. Census Data which would reduce at-risk funding overall.

We have yet to see these proposals fully spelled out and will review them as they become available.

Student data privacy bill passes

Senate Bill 367, the student data privacy protection bill, was passed by the full House today but not without some attempts to add controversial amendments.

Both amendments were offered by Rep. Allen Rothlisberg (R-Junction City). The first would require school districts to count and report the number of children of undocumented workers being educated. The amendment generated strong opposition until Rep. Amanda Grosserode challenged whether the amendment was germane to the underlying bill. Amendments must be closely aligned with the subject of the bill in order to go on. Rules Chairman Lance Kinzer (R-Olathe) declared the amendment not germane and it was withdrawn.

Rothlisberg's second amendment would simply have defunded and ended the KIDS data system at the State Department of Education. Rothlisberg argued that we "did not need

to gather dossiers on the kids." This amendment too drew sharp opposition especially from Grosserode and Rep. Ed Trimmer (D-Winfield). It was overwhelmingly voted down.

The bill was then advanced and later passed on final action.

Out for two days

Neither chamber will be in session tomorrow with time reserved for conference committee meetings. They will all return on Monday with the intent of adjourning on Friday, April 4.

1. <http://click.email.nea.org/?qs=326b0973ebe64522e75ddb8886e91ca815f76cdec818c4ff0bad356202c6d0c76650da4469bdefdb>
2. <http://click.email.nea.org/?qs=326b0973ebe64522140777a4d44a3d45b23b1d37e27e03d9a775e5855287cfe9a7a22eae2eeaa78d>