



USD 330 Mission Valley School District

Home of the Vikings

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Proponent Testimony of SB 465
For the Senate Education Committee
Hearing Date: February 15, 2024
William Clark
Superintendent--USD 330 Mission Valley

Chair Baumgardner and Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide proponent testimony in support of Senate Bill 465 on behalf of USD 330 Mission Valley.

Unfortunately, we continue to hear reports of violence in schools across this great nation, including Kansas. Overall, the basic responsibility of schools is to provide a high-quality education that empowers students to achieve their full potential academically, socially, and emotionally, at the same time fostering a lifelong love of learning. To achieve this schools also must provide a safe environment for students, staff, and patrons while also ensuring that the capital investments of the district are secure and protected.

Senate Bill 465 would help provide USD 330 Mission Valley and districts across the state the opportunity to have access to additional capital outlay funds without having to decrease current funds. USD 330 Mission Valley budgets \$20,000 a year to help cover expenses related to SRO and law enforcement services. Additional funds are spent annually on repairing, replacing, and adding surveillance cameras, as well as other needs such as, replacement of batteries for AED machines, First Aid/CPR/AED Training for staff, emergency medical supplies, etc.. Three years ago the district installed a secure entrance at the K-6 building using capital outlay funds and this summer a secure entrance will be added at the 7-12 entrance using funds from our current bond project.

For USD 330 Mission Valley, school safety and security is a topic of priority as our K-12 building sets approximately 10 miles from the nearest town and it is estimated that on any given day, the emergency response time is a minimum of 15 minutes. The school district and staff members are the first line responders when it comes to addressing school safety and security quickly. We are fortunate to have an excellent relationship with the Wabaunsee County Sheriff's Office and for the past 4 years have partnered to use the COPS Grant to help alleviate the cost for a SRO. If

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we were able to use funds to assist with the funding of an SRO, similar to what is currently allowed for paying salaries for custodians, then that would be an added bonus of what SB 465 is already proposing to allow.

As a proponent of SB 465, I believe that successfully passing this bill gives districts the opportunity to use the additional designated capital funds to cover expenses that they are already paying for out of other funds, which then allows that money to be directed back into the classroom. SB 465 not only provides the opportunity to increase school safety and security funds, but by increasing safety and security at schools it promotes community confidence as parents and patrons expect schools to provide a safe learning environment for students. Adequate funding for safety and security measures demonstrates a commitment to this priority, enhancing trust and confidence in the school system.

As superintendent of USD 330 Mission Valley, I support SB 465 as it will provide the district with the opportunity to increase funding that will directly impact the safety and security of all of our students, staff, and patrons.

Respectfully Submitted

William J. Clark
USD 330 Mission Valley