



KANSAS NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION / 715 SW 10TH AVENUE / TOPEKA, KANSAS 66612-1686

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Director of Government Relations & Legislative Affairs
Written Testimony
House Committee on K-12 Education Budget
January 29, 2025

Chairperson Goetz, members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to offer public comments on the budget.

Kansas NEA is a member-driven organization that represents all 40,000 educators in the state of Kansas. We have nearly 22,000 members. The positions we advocate for have been proposed, debated, and adopted by several hundred members that were selected by their peers to attend our annual Representative Assembly.

KNEA's resolution covering school funding states:

F-1-2. STATE PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL FUNDING

Kansas NEA believes the State of Kansas must ensure that Kansas public schools are equitably and adequately funded. To that end, Kansas NEA supports the following:

- a. An automatic escalator in the base state aid per pupil that reflects the annual increases in school district expenses;*
- b. Transportation reimbursement for all students more than one mile from school;*
- c. Funding for at-risk students, as defined in Kansas statute, at a rate of 0.484 of the base budget per pupil;*
- d. Full state funding of special education excess costs;*
- e. Money set aside for school based programs to promote a safe environment; and*

KNEA believes that every student should have the opportunity to receive a world-class education. KNEA further believes that school districts must have the funds to offer competitive salaries and benefits. To meet these needs, KNEA believes that the state of Kansas must ensure that Kansas public schools are equitably and adequately funded by maintaining current levels of funding as established in the Gannon ruling. This should include an annual CPI adjustment as stipulated by the Kansas Supreme Court.

KNEA also strongly advocates for the full statutory funding of special education. We ask that the legislature appropriate the second year of a multi-year plan to reach 92% funding of the excess costs of special education by fiscal year 2029. This enhancement should equal about \$75 million in new funding.

Additionally, KNEA supports Governor Kelly's recommendation to add \$5.5 million in enhancements to the budget to eliminate co-payments for students on reduced lunch programs.

Thank you for your time.