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300 SW TENTH AVENUE ▪ SUITE 24-E ▪ TOPEKA, KS 66612 ▪ (785) 296-2321

# TRANSPORTATION WEIGHTING

To: Education Funding Task Force
From: Office of Revisor of Statutes
Date: June 3, 2025
Subject: Transportation Weighting – Overview and History

This memorandum provides an overview of the transportation weighting in the Kansas School Equity and Enhancement Act (KSEEA) and outlines how such weighting functions in the state's current school finance formula. Additionally, the memorandum provides a historical overview of the transportation weighting under previous school finance formulas. Last, the memorandum summarizes the statutory requirements and authority for the provision of transportation services by school districts.

## Current Transportation Weighting Under the KSEEA

The transportation weighting is established in the KSEEA at K.S.A. 72-5148. The weighting is determined by using a statutory formula that is based on a school district's density of transported students relative to the total area of the school district. The following steps are used to calculate a school district's transportation weighting:

*STEP 1: Determine a School District's Transportation Density*

The first step in calculating the transportation weighting is to determine the transportation density of the school district. To determine a school district's transportation density, the total area of the school district in square miles is divided by the number of transported students.

The term "transported students" is defined as the number of students included in the enrollment of the school district in the preceding year who resided 2½ miles or more from school via the usually traveled road and for whom transportation was made available.[1] Only those students

[1] K.S.A. 72-5148(d)(2).

who are residents of the school district are counted for purposes of a school district's transportation weighting.[2] Nonresident students are not counted.

*STEP 2: Determine a School District's Per Capita Allowance Amount*

Once a school district's transportation density is determined, the next step is to multiply the school district's number of "transported students" by the per capita allowance amount that corresponds to the school district's density figure established pursuant to the following statutory schedule:

| Density Figure Range | Per Capita Allowance |
|---|---|
| 0.000 - 0.059 | $1,620 |
| 0.060 - 0.069 | $1,580 |
| 0.070 - 0.079 | $1,540 |
| 0.080 - 0.089 | $1,500 |
| 0.090 - 0.099 | $1,480 |
| 0.100 - 0.109 | $1,450 |
| 0.110 - 0.119 | $1,430 |
| 0.120 - 0.129 | $1,410 |
| 0.130 - 0.139 | $1,390 |
| 0.140 - 0.149 | $1,370 |
| 0.150 - 0.159 | $1,350 |
| 0.160 - 0.169 | $1,340 |
| 0.170 - 0.179 | $1,320 |
| 0.180 - 0.199 | $1,300 |
| 0.200 - 0.209 | $1,290 |
| 0.210 - 0.219 | $1,270 |
| 0.220 - 0.239 | $1,250 |
| 0.240 - 0.269 | $1,230 |
| 0.270 - 0.289 | $1,210 |
| 0.290 - 0.319 | $1,190 |
| 0.320 - 0.349 | $1,170 |
| 0.350 - 0.389 | $1,150 |
| 0.390 - 0.429 | $1,130 |
| 0.430 - 0.469 | $1,110 |
| 0.470 - 0.519 | $1,090 |
| 0.520 - 0.579 | $1,070 |
| 0.580 - 0.639 | $1,050 |
| 0.640 - 0.709 | $1,030 |
| 0.710 - 0.789 | $1,010 |
| 0.790 - 0.879 | $990 |
| 0.880 - 0.989 | $970 |
| 0.990 - 1.109 | $950 |
| 1.110 - 1.249 | $930 |
| 1.250 - 1.399 | $910 |
| 1.400 - 1.589 | $890 |
| 1.590 - 1.799 | $870 |
| 1.800 - 2.039 | $850 |
| 2.040 - 2.319 | $830 |
| 2.320 - 2.659 | $810 |
| 2.660 - 3.049 | $790 |
| 3.050 - 3.509 | $770 |
| 3.510 - 4.049 | $750 |
| 4.050 - 4.699 | $730 |
| 4.700 - 5.469 | $710 |
| 5.470 - 6.399 | $690 |
| 6.400 - 7.519 | $670 |
| 7.520 - 8.879 | $650 |
| 8.880 - 10.549 | $630 |
| 10.550 - 12.589 | $610 |
| 12.590 - 15.129 | $590 |
| 15.130 - 18.289 | $570 |
| 18.290 + | $550 |

[2] K.S.A. 72-6494(c).

*STEP 3: Adjust for Inflation*

Once a school district's transportation funding amount is determined pursuant to the schedule, the next step is to multiply such amount by an inflationary adjustment to determine the district's total amount of transportation funding to be provided via the transportation weighting. Such inflationary adjustment is calculated by dividing the BASE aid amount for the current school year by the BASE aid amount for school year 2018-2019.[3]

*STEP 4: Determine the Transportation Weighting*

The final step is to calculate a school district's transportation weighting. To determine the transportation weighting, the school district's amount of transportation funding determined in step 3 is divided by the BASE aid amount for the current school year.

*STEP 5: Apply Funding Cap (If Necessary)*

If a school district's transportation weighting would cause the school district to receive an amount of funding from the transportation weighting that exceeds 110% of the school district's transportation expenditures for the preceding school year, the school district's transportation weighting shall be adjusted downward so that such funding amount does not exceed such threshold.[4]

*Examples:*

- School district 001 has 100 "transported students" and encompasses 500 square miles. Dividing such numbers results in a density figure of 0.2. Pursuant to the transportation weighting schedule, such density figure corresponds to a per capita allowance of $1,290 for each transported student which results in a total amount of $129,000. Such amount is then adjusted for inflation. For the 2024-25 school year, the inflationary adjustment factor was 1.29.[5] Therefore, the total amount of funding provided via the transportation weighting to such school district is $166,569.5. Last, to determine the district's transportation weighting, divide the district's total amount of funding provided via the transportation weighting by the BASE aid amount for the current school year. In this case, the district's transportation weighting is 30.97.

[3] School year 2018-19 was the first year that the density figure and per capita allowance schedule was implemented. The BASE aid amount for such school year was $4,165.
[4] School district transportation expenditures are reported to and audited by the state board of education.
[5] $5,378 ÷ $4,165 (2024-25 BASE ÷ 2018-19 BASE).

- School district 002 has 100 "transported students" and encompasses 50 square miles. Dividing such numbers results in a density figure of 2.0. Pursuant to the transportation weighting schedule, such density figure corresponds to a per capita allowance of $850 for each transported student which results in a total amount of $85,000. Such amount is then adjusted for inflation. For the 2024-25 school year, the inflationary adjustment factor was 1.29.[6] Therefore, the total amount of funding provided via the transportation weighting to such school district is $109,755.1. Last, to determine the district's transportation weighting, divide the district's total amount of funding provided via the transportation weighting by the BASE aid amount for the current school year. In this case, the district's transportation weighting is 20.41.

**Historical Overview of the Transportation Weighting**

The state's first transportation funding formula was enacted in 1965 and was used to determine transportation funding for over 50 years with a few amendments during such time.[7] In 2018, the legislature replaced such prior transportation funding formula with the current transportation funding formula.

The following steps were used to determine funding under the prior formula:

- First, determine each school district's actual transportation expenditures in the preceding school year.
- Second, using each school district's actual transportation expenditures, determine the per-student cost of transportation in each school district and assign such costs to the students who live 2½ miles or more from the school building via the usually traveled road.
- Third, determine each school district's transportation density figure by dividing the square milage of the district by the number of students who live 2½ miles or more from the school building.
- Fourth, plot each school district's transportation density figure and per-student cost of transportation on a graph and determine a curve of best fit for all such points. Such curve establishes the transportation funding amounts for each school district based on each district's transportation density.
- Fifth, determine the transportation weighting by dividing a school district's transportation funding formula amount by the applicable base state aid for the school year.

[6] $5,378 ÷ $4,165 (2024-25 BASE ÷ 2018-19 BASE).
[7] *See,* K.S.A. 72-7009, prior to its repeal; L. 1965, ch. 402, §9.

Subject to a few modifications over the years, generally, the transportation funding formula has determined transportation funding based on each school district's transportation expenditures versus the number and density of resident students who live 2½ miles or more from the school building via the usually traveled road.

The current transportation formula is a derivative of the methodology used for the prior transportation funding formula. When the legislature enacted the current formula in 2018, the legislature used the same curve of best fit methodology from the prior formula and applied it to school district transportation expenditures for the 2017-2018 school year. Such curve of best fit was then used to create the density and per capita allowance statutory schedule shown above. In other words, instead of determining transportation expenditures and applying a line of best fit to a density and cost graph to determine transportation funding in each school year, the current schedule utilizes the curve of best fit from the 2017-2018 school year and adjusts for inflation. The primary differences between the prior formula and the current formula are that the current formula uses a stepped approach to determine funding using density ranges rather than using a continuous line of best fit and the current formula establishes a minimum funding amount for school districts with the highest transportation densities.

**School District Transportation Requirements and Authority**

State law requires each school district to provide transportation to certain students who reside in the school district. A school district shall provide transportation to a resident student under any of the following conditions:

- The student resides 2 ½ miles or more from the student's school building located outside the corporate limits of a city.
- The student resides outside the corporate limits of a city and is 2 ½ miles or more from the student's school building located inside the corporate limits of the city.
- The student resides in one city, attends a school building in another city, and is 2 ½ miles or more from the student's school building.[8]

State law also requires school districts to provide transportation to students who reside in the district and who attend an accredited nonpublic school. Such transportation shall be provided to nonpublic school students when the students reside in or along the highway or street that is used as the regular route of the school bus or when the students go to a bus stop along such regular route.[9]

School districts are authorized to provide transportation to any nonresident student attending such school district.[10]

[8] K.S.A. 72-6487
[9] K.S.A. 72-6491.
[10] K.S.A. 72-6494; K.S.A. 72-3124.