

MINUTES OF THE SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE.

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Senator Dwayne Umbarger at 1:35 p.m. on February 6, 2003 in Room 123-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except: Senator Hensley (excused)

Committee staff present: Carolyn Rampey, Legislative Research
Theresa Kiernan, Revisor of Statutes
Judy Steinlicht, Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee: Dr. Sharol Little, Superintendent, Manhattan/Ogden USD 383
Kenneth Kennedy, Superintendent, Pratt USD 382
Dr. Gary Norris, Superintendent, Salina USD 305
Dr. Morris Reeves, Retired Associate Superintendent for
Business Services

Others attending: See attached list

Regionalization Concept for Reorganization of Kansas School Districts

Chairman Umbarger introduced Dr. Sharol Little. Dr. Little informed the Committee about a concept that she and Mr. Kennedy began to develop after attending a workshop in 2000, followed by other discussions, presentations and related workshops. Dr. Norris and Dr. Reeves joined them in 2002 in the final development and cost analysis of the plan which is subject to ongoing revisions as additional research and community input are considered.

The purpose of the study was to apply sound business theories and educational research to appropriate and efficient reorganization of Kansas school districts. The study shows that the 303 districts have unaffordable and duplicated instructional, policy, administrative and support service costs. The idea is to reduce the number of school districts in Kansas from the present 303 districts to 40 Regional Education Districts (RED's) across the state. Each of the 40 RED's would have about 11,000 students. The purpose is to determine an education structure which is more cost effective and that would continue to provide appropriate and equitable education to all Kansas students and to restructure districts, possibly allowing many small communities to retain their schools, if enrollment and other factors are adequate to make this practical. Savings could be channeled to classrooms and teacher's salaries. They believe this plan will transform and improve the educational delivery system in Kansas while providing equal opportunities to all students of this state.

The conferees detailed their recommendations, implementation procedures and financial advantage to reorganization. (Attachment 1)

Written testimony was distributed from Larry Geil, Superintendent USD 488, Axtell opposing the idea of

CONTINUATION SHEET

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reorganization presented today. (Attachment 2)

Senator Teichman made a motion to approve the minutes for January 28, 29 and 30. Seconded by Senator Lee. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned 2:30 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for February 10, 2003 at 1:30 p.m. in Room 123S.