

MINUTES OF THE SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Jean Schodorf at 1:40 p.m. on January 30, 2008, in Room 123-S of the Capitol.

Committee members absent:

Committee staff present: Sharon Wenger, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Carol Toland, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Theresa Kiernan, Revisor of Statutes Office
Matt Todd, Revisor of Statutes Office
Shirley Higgins, Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee: Kathyrne Mueller, Director of Academic Initiatives, Kansas Board of Regents
Dr. Edward H. Hammond, President, Fort Hays State University
Todd Powell, General Counsel, Ft. Hays State University

Introduction of bill

Senator Schodorf moved to introduce a bill which would create a mathematics, engineering technology, and science (METS) education innovation counsel, seconded by Senator Steineger. The motion carried.

SB 404 – Kansas Academy of Mathematics and Science (KAMS); admission of nonresidents; fees and tuition; attendance and qualified admissions, exceptions

Theresa Kiernan, Revisor of Statutes Office, explained that **SB 404**, which was introduced at the request of the Legislative Educational Planning Committee (LEPC), would make several changes to statutes concerning KAMS. A change in Section 1 exempts students who are enrolled in the Academy from the requirements of the compulsory attendance law. An amendment in Section 2 allows the admittance of nonresidents and international students. The bill also exempts KAMS students from the requirements of the qualified admission statutes. KAMS would be allowed to charge fees and tuition. In the case of residents, the school district in which the student is enrolled would pay the tuition. Nonresident students would be responsible for their own tuition and fees. Section 3 includes a provision which requires that at least two-thirds of the total number of students enrolled in KAMS be Kansas residents. Section 4 provides that academically talented pupils shall be admitted to KAMS without charge for tuition, fees, and books except those fees regularly charged to public high school students.

Kathyrne Mueller, Director of Academic Initiatives, Kansas Board of Regents, testified in support of **SB 404**. At the outset, she presented general background information about KAMS. She also explained that a 2007 steering committee realized that several statutory changes would be required for the KAMS to reach its full potential, and the Board of Regents agreed with the committee's suggestions. She noted that the Board recently selected Fort Hays State University to be the home of the new academy. Ms. Mueller then discussed the proposed amendments under the following headings in her written testimony: (1) Exclusion from Compulsory Attendance Law, (2) Exclusion from Qualified Admission Requirements, (3) Admission of Nonresident Students, (4) Procedure for Selecting KAMS Students, and (5) Clarification of Tuition and Fees for Resident Students Not Enrolled in the Public School System. (Attachment 1)

Senator Vratil questioned the intent of the amendment on page 5, lines 5 and 6, regarding exemption from qualified admissions. He also questioned the need for the amendment regarding tuition fees in Section 4 (page 6) as the subject is addressed in K.S.A 72-9712.

Dr. Edward H. Hammond, President, Fort Hays State University, commented that KAMS was established by the passage of **SB 139** in 2006. He went on to say that the proposal that FHSU submitted to the Board of Regents states that KAMS will have 40 Kansan students in accordance with legislative intent, and non-Kansans selected will not exceed 10 students. He then distributed copies of an informational brochure regarding KAMS prepared by FHSU. He pointed out that the brochure outlined the junior and senior year curriculum (18 credit hours per semester.) At the end of the two years, the students will have completed all

CONTINUATION SHEET

MINUTES OF THE Senate Education Committee at 1:40 p.m. on January 30, 2008, in Room 123-S of the Capitol.

of the requirements for a high school degree and at the same time will have completed approximately two years of college credit. In addition to the curriculum, the students will be involved in research in collaboration with faculty not only at Fort Hays but also at the University of Kansas, Kansas State University, and Wichita State University, and other institutions in an effort to establish a research initiative that will keep the students in Kansas. KAMS also will develop the “whole student” by balancing academics with extracurricular activities involving community service.

In conclusion, Dr. Hammond then addressed the questions from the Committee regarding the proposed amendments. He called upon Todd Powell, general counsel for FHSU, to respond to Senator Vratil’s question concerning the need for the amendments in Section 4. Mr. Powell explained that the existing language in Section 4 specifies that students admitted to KAMS will not be charged tuition fees and books. The amendment adds, “except those fees regularly charged to high school students.” He explained further that the change referred back to Section 3, subsection (5), of the bill which states, “For students who are enrolled in a Kansas district, such tuition and fees shall be paid by the school district.” He noted that the tuition is limited to the base state aid per pupil. He stated, “The only thing this change does is to authorize KAMS to charge the out-of-Kansas students tuition fees.” Senator Vratil pointed out that the amendment on lines 14-16 in subsection (5) states that students not enrolled in a Kansas district must pay tuition and fees; therefore the additional amendment was not needed in Section 4. Mr. Powell noted that the amendment in Section 4 was prepared by the Office of the Revisor of Statutes.

There being no others wishing to testify, the hearing on **SB 404** was closed.

Senator Vratil announced the subcommittee on virtual schools will meet on February 4 at 1:30 p.m. in Room 123-S.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:25 p.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for January 31, 2008.