

Oral Proponent Testimony before the House Education Committee
To
HB 2223 Removing the sunset for the high-density at-risk weighting under the Kansas
School equality and enhancement act.

Presented to the House Committee on Education
Monday, February 20, 2023
1:30 P.M. Room 218-N
By Jim Karleskint, United School Administrators of Kansas

Chairman Thomas, Member of the House Education Committee

I appreciate the opportunity to speak with the committee today. The United School Administrators of Kansas supports the intent of HB 2223 in removing the sunset for the high-density at-risk weighting in the school equality and enhancement act. The state's at-risk funding is to provide additional services to students who are not performing adequately in school and are at-risk of academic failure. At-risk funding is provided by the state to offer additional programs or services to these students to help them succeed.

A Kansas Legislative Post Audit found that costs to districts to educate at-risk students goes up when there are larger portions of poverty in a school district. Currently there are nearly 75% of the school districts in Kansas that receive high-density at-risk funding. Unfortunately, the Covid pandemic created additional poverty in Kansas, that along with the learning loss that was experienced as a result of Covid school districts need the high-density at-risk weighting continued.

Many districts in Kansas spend more on at-risk students than they receive in high-density at-risk funding. In a 2019 Post Legislative Audit it was discovered that of the 20 districts sampled the districts spend nearly 33% more than the funds received in at-risk funding.

United School Administrators of Kansas members, along with teachers, non-licensed staff, and parents work hard to assist at-risk students to help them improve academically. We urge the committee to favorably consider removing the sunset on high-density at-risk funding.

Respectfully,

Jim Karleskint
United School Administrators of Kansas