

School Counselor Legislative Report

Prepared for the Kansas Counseling Association and its members

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By Bernie Koch, Lobbyist

House kills constitutional amendment on Supreme Court Widely seen as linked to school finance lawsuits

After a lengthy debate Wednesday, the Kansas House of Representatives could not muster to votes to pass a constitutional amendment that changes the way Supreme Court justices are selected. Supported by Governor Brownback and legislative leadership, the bill needed 84 votes (or 2/3 of the House) for passage. The vote was 68 to 54.

The vote was widely seen as a reaction to school finance lawsuit rulings that have forced the state into more education spending.

The current process for Supreme Court Justices involves a nominating commission made up of five lawyers selected by the bar association and four people selected by the Governor. The commission nominates three lawyers. The governor selects one of the three to fill the vacant Kansas Supreme Court position.

The constitutional amendment would have eliminated the commission. The governor would nominate a person to fill the vacancy. That person would have to be confirmed by the Kansas Senate.

Here's a link to how the representatives voted:

http://www.kslegislature.org/li/b2015_16/measures/vote_view/je_20160204113656_279789/

The issue now appears dead for the session.

It was widely opposed by education groups, including the Kansas Association of School Boards and the Kansas-National Education Association.

Hearings held on education bills

Last week I told you about hearings on three controversial education bills in the House Education Committee. Those hearings have been held and discussion and possible action will take place Monday afternoon on two of them.

HB 2486 sets up a state review board if school districts want state aid for construction. The bill drastically reduces how that state aid can be used.

HB 2457 expands the tax credit for the low income students scholarship program.

The bill expands the definition of eligible student from an at-risk student who attends a public school to any child whose family household income does not exceed 250% of the federal poverty level.

Removed from the law is a requirement that the student be enrolled at a public school the previous year to be eligible. That means students already in a private school would qualify for the aid.

The bill expands the availability of a tax credit to all taxpayers, not just corporations.

The third and most controversial bill is **HB 2504**, which forces the State Board of Education to realign school districts. The affect is to force consolidation.

Every county with fewer than 10,000 students would be a single district. Counties with over 10,000 students must have at least 1,500 students in each district.

After lengthy testimony, most of it in opposition, the committee chairman announced he had no plans to bring the bill up for further discussion.

House budget passes committee; debate next week

The House Appropriations Committee passed out a bill Thursday afternoon that makes changes to the current fiscal year budget (FY 2016) to make lower than expected revenues fit spending. The bill is expected to be debated on the House floor Tuesday or Wednesday.

The bill essentially keeps Governor Sam Brownback's recommendation for education spending, which is pretty much flat.

It includes some changes that are seen as a slap at Brownback, who is drawing increasing ire across the political spectrum.

For example, the Governor's proposal to move \$50 million in tobacco settlement money from the Children's Initiative Fund to the State General Fund was stopped. Representative Mark Hutton (R-Wichita) proposed the change, which was adopted on a strong voice vote.

Trying to shorten the session

As the 2016 Kansas Legislature ends its fourth week, there are a lot of rumblings about changing the schedule to make the number of session days shorter. Most of the behind-the-scenes talk revolves around moving up the halfway point, known as the "turnaround," and moving up the 1st Adjournment. That's when lawmakers go home for a period and return for the veto session.

Both changes would save some days of meetings.

The veto session starting date would remain April 27. That would mean a longer break than normal for lawmakers.

As of this writing there is no official change, but some committee chairs are telling their committees they have to get their work done faster than expected, citing an imminent announcement.

Find your legislator

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Enter your full address, click on the magnifying glass icon. A map of your legislative district and the names and pictures of your state senator and representative will appear.

Click on their name to get contact information.

Bill tracker

Below is a listing of the bills we are tracking for the educator members of the Kansas Counseling Association. You can click on the bill number for more information. It will take you to the Kansas Legislature's web site, where you can read information on the bill.

Many bills will have a Supplemental Note or Fiscal Note. Click on SN or FN to get information in layman's terms.

Many of the bills are carried over from the 2015 Kansas Legislature.

Bill Number and Sponsor	Bill Subject	Current Status	Last Action
SB 2 Jacob LaTurner, R-13th	Authorizing school districts to offer multi-year contracts to teachers	In Senate Education	01/28/2015 - Senate Possible Action in Education: Tuesday, 2/3/2015, 1:30 PM, Rm 144-S
Sub for SB 60 Senate Federal and State Affairs Committee	Authorizing participation by less than full-time students in activities regulated by Kansas state high school activities association	In House Education	03/13/2015 - House Scheduled Hearing in Education: Tuesday, 3/17, 1:30 PM, Rm 112-N
SB 67	Development and establishment of K-12 curriculum standards	In Senate Education	01/23/2015 - Senate Referred to Education

Senate Federal and State Affairs Committee			
SB 136 Senate Education Committee	Amending the professional negotiations act	In House Education	03/05/2015 - House Referred to Education
SB 137 Senate Education Committee	Education; amendments to the school district finance and quality performance act; the virtual school act; the student data privacy act; and the tax credit for low income student scholarship program act	In Senate Ways and Means	02/04/2015 - Senate Referred to Ways and Means
SB 168 Senate Select Committee on KPERS	Issuing a \$1 billion of pension obligation bonds to finance a portion of the unfunded actuarial liability of KPERS	In House Pensions and Benefits	03/05/2015 - House Referred to Pensions and Benefits
Sub for SB 171 Senate Ethics and Elections Committee	Municipal elections; nonpartisan; fall odd-numbered years	In House Taxation	03/25/2015 - House Withdrawn from calendar; referred to Taxation
SB 175 Senate Ways and Means Committee	Exercise of religious freedom by postsecondary education student associations	On General Orders in House	04/02/2015 - House Committee Report recommending bill be passed by Federal and State Affairs
SB 176 Senate Ways and Means Committee	Limiting negotiations under the professional negotiations act	In Senate Education	02/18/2015 - Senate Scheduled Hearing in Education: Monday, 2/23, 1:30 PM, Rm 144-S

SB 179 Senate Ways and Means Committee	Limiting negotiations under the public employer-employee relations act	In Senate Commerce	03/18/2015 - Senate Scheduled Final Action in Commerce: Thursday, 3/19, 8:30 AM, Rm 548-S
SB 193 Senate Ways and Means Committee	Requiring a degree prospectus for postsecondary degree programs	In House Education	05/06/2015 - House Scheduled Discussion and Possible Action in Education: Thursday, 5/7, 12:30 PM, Rm 112-N
SB 194 Senate Corrections and Juvenile Justice Committee	Creating the Kansas public school security act	In Senate Corrections and Juvenile Justice	02/18/2015 - Senate Scheduled Hearing in Corrections and Juvenile Justice: Monday, 2/23, 9:30 AM, Rm 118-N
SB 273 Senate Ways and Means Committee	Creating the classroom learning assuring student success act; making and concerning appropriations for fiscal years ending June 30, 2015, June 30, 2016, and June 30, 2017, for the department of education	In Senate Ways and Means	03/06/2015 - Senate Scheduled Hearing in Ways and Means: Tuesday, 3/10, 9:00 AM, Rm 582-N
SB 294 Senate Assessment and Taxation Committee	Creating the education finance act of 2015; making and concerning appropriations for fiscal year ending June 30, 2016, for the department of education	In Senate Education In Senate Ways and Means	03/24/2015 - Senate Scheduled Hearing (cont.) in Education: Wednesday, 3/25, 12:00 PM, Rm 582-N
SB 299 Senate Assessment and Taxation Committee	Providing working after retirement requirements for certain KPERS retirants who return to work with covered employers including benefit and contribution provisions while extending current sunset for teachers to July 1, 2016	In Senate Select Committee on KPERS	04/21/2015 - Senate Scheduled Action in Select Committee on KPERS: Wednesday, 4/29, 1:00 PM, Rm 118-N

SB 300 Senate Ways and Means Committee	Education; amendments regarding virtual school state aid, supplemental general state aid, capital outlay state aid and capital improvement state aid	In Senate Ways and Means	05/04/2015 - Senate Scheduled Hearing in Ways and Means: Wednesday, 5/6, 1:30 PM, Rm 548-S
SB 302 Senate Assessment and Taxation Committee	Statewide excise tax levy of \$3 per acre on the ownership of real property for the purpose of school finance	In Senate Assessment and Taxation	05/01/2015 - Senate Referred to Assessment and Taxation
SB 323 Senate Corrections and Juvenile Justice Committee	Creating the Jason Flatt act; requiring suicide prevention training for school district personnel	In Senate Education	02/04/2016 - Senate Scheduled Possible Action in Education: Thursday, 2/11, 1:30 PM, Rm 144-S
SB 342 Senate Education Committee	Creating the student online personal protection act	In Senate Education	02/03/2016 - Senate Scheduled Hearing (cont.) in Education: Monday, 2/8, 1:30 PM, Rm 144-S
SB 348 Tom Hawk, D-22nd	Prohibitions on carrying concealed handguns in postsecondary educational institution buildings	In Senate Federal and State Affairs	01/22/2016 - Senate Referred to Federal and State Affairs
SB 356 Senate Education Committee	Creating the school district bond project review board	In Senate Education	02/03/2016 - Senate Scheduled Hearing in Education: Wednesday, 2/10, 1:30 PM, Rm 144-S
SB 388 Senate Assessment and Taxation Committee	Requiring the state board of regents to adopt a policy on awarding credit hours based on CLEP test results	In Senate Education	02/03/2016 - Senate Scheduled Hearing in Education: Tuesday, 2/9, 1:30 PM, Rm 144-S

HB 2027	Requiring school district and state department of education audits; creating the efficient operation of schools task force	In House Education	01/16/2015 - House Referred to Education
House Education Committee			
HB 2028	Creating the Kansas education standards study commission	In House Education	02/06/2015 - House Scheduled Discussion and Possible Action in Education: Tuesday, 2/10/2015, 1:30 PM, Rm 112-N
House Education Committee			
HB 2034	School district; reducing negotiable terms and conditions in the professional negotiations act	Stricken from House calendar	03/04/2015 - House Stricken from Calendar, House Rule 1507
House Education Committee			
HB 2035	Amending the tax credit for low income students scholarship program act	In House Education	01/20/2015 - House Referred to Education
House Education Committee			
HB 2078	Requiring school districts to adopt school safety and security policies and plans	In House Education	02/11/2015 - House Scheduled Discussion and Possible Action in Education: Monday, 2/16, 1:30 PM, Rm 112-N
House Veterans, Military and Homeland Security Committee			
HB 2099	Authorizing school districts to administer certain surveys and questionnaires under the student data privacy act	In House Education	02/06/2015 - House Scheduled Hearing in Education: Friday, 2/13/2015, 1:30 PM, Rm 112-N
House Education Committee			
HB 2199	School districts; human sexuality education; policies and procedures	In House Education	01/21/2016 - House Withdrawn from
House Education			


Committee			Appropriations; rereferred to Education
HB 2207	Development and implementation of ethnic studies in schools	In House Appropriations	02/26/2015 - House Withdrawn from Education; referred to Appropriations
House Education Committee			
HB 2220	Teachers' contracts; due process	In House Education	02/04/2015 - House Referred to Education
Brandon Whipple, D-96th			
HB 2232	Personal financial literacy course as a requirement for high school graduation	In House Education	02/11/2015 - House Scheduled Discussion and Possible Action in Education: Monday, 2/16, 1:30 PM, Rm 112-N
House Federal and State Affairs Committee			
HB 2253	Extending special employment after retirement provisions under KPERS for certain retirants who are teachers	On General Orders in House	03/24/2015 - House Committee Report recommending bill be passed as amended by Pensions and Benefits
House Pensions and Benefits Committee			
HB 2262	Providing a compliance deadline and penalties for non-compliance with the student data privacy act	In House Education	03/04/2015 - House Scheduled Discussion and Possible Action in Education: Thursday, 3/12, 1:30 PM, Rm 112-N
House Federal and State Affairs Committee			
HB 2266	Requiring postsecondary education institutions to adopt a policy on sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence and stalking	In House Education	03/04/2015 - House Scheduled Discussion and Possible Action in Education: Monday, 3/9, 1:30 PM, Rm 112-
House Appropriations Committee			

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HB 2292	Development and establishment of K-12 curriculum standards	In House Education	03/18/2015 - House Scheduled Discussion and Possible Action in Education: Friday, 3/20, 10:30 AM, Rm 112-N
House Federal and State Affairs Committee			
HB 2325	Enacting the public employee bargaining transparency act	In House Commerce, Labor and Economic Development	02/04/2016 - House Scheduled Discussion and Possible Action in Commerce, Labor and Economic Development: Tuesday, 2/9, 1:30 PM, Rm 346-S
House Commerce, Labor and Economic Development Committee			
HB 2345	Prohibiting school board members from having a conflict of interest	In House Appropriations	02/26/2015 - House Withdrawn from Education; referred to Appropriations
House Judiciary Committee			
HB 2394	Career technical education incentive draw down	On General Orders in House	03/09/2015 - House Committee Report recommending bill be passed as amended by Education Budget
House Appropriations Committee			
HB 2403	Creating the classroom learning assuring student success act; making and concerning appropriations for fiscal years ending June 30, 2015, June 30, 2016, and June 30, 2017, for the department of education	In House Appropriations	03/09/2015 - House Scheduled Discussion (cont.) in Appropriations: Tuesday, 3/10, 9:00 AM, Rm 112-N
House Appropriations Committee			
HB 2409	Eliminating property tax exemption from statewide school levy for property used for residential purposes to the extent of \$20,000 of its appraised value	In House Taxation	03/17/2015 - House Scheduled Hearing in Taxation: Thursday, 3/19, 3:30 PM, Rm 582-N
House Taxation Committee			

HB 2426	KPERS; definition of compensation for purposes of computing final average salary	In House Appropriations	01/11/2016 - House Withdrawn from Commerce, Labor and Economic Development; referred to Appropriations
HB 2457	Amending the tax credit for low income students scholarship program act	In House Education	02/03/2016 - House Scheduled Discussion and Possible Action in Education: Monday, 2/8, 1:30 PM, Rm 112-N
HB 2486	Creating the school district bond project review board	In House Education	02/03/2016 - House Scheduled Discussion and Possible Action in Education: Monday, 2/8, 1:30 PM, Rm 112-N
HB 2504	School district realignment	In House Education	01/27/2016 - House Scheduled Hearing in Education: Wednesday, 2/3, 1:30 PM, Rm 112-N
HB 2526	Prohibitions on carrying concealed handguns in postsecondary educational institution buildings	In House Federal and State Affairs	01/26/2016 - House Referred to Federal and State Affairs
HB 2531	Eliminating due process for certain postsecondary teachers	In House Education	02/03/2016 - House Scheduled Hearing in Education: Tuesday, 2/9, 1:30 PM, Rm 112-N

HB 2532	Including financial literacy as an educational capacity	In House Education	02/03/2016 - House Scheduled Hearing in Education: Thursday, 2/11, 1:30 PM, Rm 112-N
HB 2533	Creating the student online personal protection act	In House Education	02/03/2016 - House Scheduled Hearing in Education: Wednesday, 2/10, 1:30 PM, Rm 112-N
HB 2534	Amendments to the freedom from unsafe restraint and seclusion act	In House Children and Seniors	02/04/2016 - House Scheduled Discussion and Possible Action in Children and Seniors: Thursday, 2/11, 9:30 AM, Rm 218-N

Bill Number and Sponsor	Bill Subject	Current Status	Last Action
HB 2588 House Education Committee	Requiring encryption of student data	In House Education	02/03/2016 - House Referred to Education
HB 2596 House Education Budget Committee	Creating the classroom-based funding act	In House Education	02/03/2016 - House Referred to Education
HB 2622 House Education Committee	Board of regents; updating fees and making amendments to the Kansas private and out-of-state postsecondary educational institution act	In House Education	02/05/2016 - House Referred to Education



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