

# GOVERNOR'S SCHOOL EFFICIENCY

## TASK FORCE

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### FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Senate Ways and Means Committee  
Date: 01-29-2013  
Attachment #: 2

## Executive Summary

Providing a good education for our kids, the future leaders of Kansas, is one of the core functions of state government. Governor Sam Brownback formed the School Efficiency Task Force to ensure that we are effectively and efficiently carrying out this duty. This group analyzed education funding, examined how to spend it more efficiently, and researched best practices on using savings in the classroom.

The Governor's School Efficiency Task Force convened three meetings to study K-12 education spending and develop guidelines on how to get more funding into classrooms where teachers teach and students learn. Collectively, the task force listened to presentations on education spending from various stakeholders including Kansas State Department of Education officials, school board representatives, service center administrators, and superintendents. Individually, members of the task force conversed with teachers, district officials, and board members from many different parts of the state to further their comprehension of the issues at stake.

The recommendations suggested by the task force will get more money in the classroom and less in administration and overhead costs. These may be used by legislators, superintendents, teachers, and anyone else interested in distributing a greater share of education funding to instruction and more efficiently allocating taxpayer dollars.

## Members

Given the task force's focus on finance and budgeting, the Governor appointed members with expertise in those areas as well as experience in the education field. Task force members have conducted public accounting audits of school districts, served on the Kansas State Board of Education, led local school boards, and held administrative positions at the district level.

- Chairman Ken Willard, Hutchinson: Kansas State Board of Education member since 2003, USD 309 Nickerson School Board member (1997-2002); retired after 38-year career in insurance industry.
- Jim Churchman, Overland Park: USD 233 Olathe School Board member (2006 - 2010); 27 years of experience in business management including operations, purchasing, supply chain and strategic planning.
- DeAnn Hill, Baxter Springs: CPA, 32 years of experience in public accounting including closely held, family-owned businesses and outside controllerships.
- Theresa Dasenbrock, Garden City: CPA, 28 years of experience in public accounting including audits and budget development for public sector entities.
- Thomas D. Thomas, Emporia: CPA, 44 years of experience in public accounting including audits and budget preparation for counties, cities, unified school districts and colleges.
- James Dunning, Jr., Wichita: CPA, 31 years of experience in public accounting including planning and tax.
- Stephen Iliff, Topeka: CPA, 31 years of experience in public accounting including auditing and tax.
- Dave Jackson, Topeka: business owner, USD 345 Seaman School District school board member (1980-1992) and former state legislator.
- Tim Witsman, Wichita: 32 years of experience in public and private sector business management; Mid-Continent Research for Education and Learning board member for more than 20 years.
- Steve Anderson, Topeka: CPA and State Budget Director, 34 years of experience in public accounting including auditing and budget planning for public sector entities.
- Brian Pekarek: 16 years of experience in Kansas education; USD 257 Iola Superintendent, Kansas School Administrator since 2006, school counselor (2001-2006) and high school social studies teacher (1997-2001).

## Recommendations

The Governor's School Efficiency Task Force suggests changes that will get more money in the classroom and less in administration and overhead costs. These recommendations may be used by legislators, superintendents, teachers, and anyone else interested in distributing a greater share of education funding to instruction and more efficiently allocating taxpayer dollars.

#	Efficiency Recommendation	Reason for Recommendation
1	Establish a statutorily-required 2-year school funding cycle.	Providing districts with a multi-year definitive funding commitment will provide greater budgeting visibility and will reduce the inclination for districts to increase cash reserve accounts as a defensive measure.
2	Place a priority emphasis on the timely transfer of state payments to school districts in June and January.	Providing districts with the timely transfer of payments will decrease districts' inclination to attain higher Contingency Reserve levels. These transfers should be binding to the state unless waived by the Legislature or State Finance Council.
3	Conduct a study to reevaluate the state's open-ended obligation to equalization of school construction bond issues to provide the state with better visibility from a budgeting perspective (especially considering multi-year budgeting).	An evaluation of the current bond equalization formula is needed to determine which aspects remain beneficial and which aspects have become a deterrent to achieving a multi-year school funding cycle. Any changes should grandfather in existing bond issues. The intent is to retain the principle of equalization, but allow the legislature to place an annual/biannual cap on new equalization obligation to be incurred (perhaps involving a maximum amount per student). This change would most likely require a system of project prioritization that takes into

#	Efficiency Recommendation	Reason for Recommendation
		account three levels of need: (1) emergency bond issues (involving a clear and present danger to students), (2) modernization and renovation, and (3) non-classroom upgrades.
4	Conduct a study on implementing a state data management and accounting system that is integrated with K-12 school systems and post-secondary institutions for streamlined educational reporting of data flow/administrative processes. (This needs to be reducible to the building level and applied to all required reporting processes, where possible, understanding that much reporting is required by USDE. This should address KEEP, licensure, KPERS record management, accounting records, etc...).	A lack of a standardized data management system across all districts is resulting in an inconsistent and bifurcated process that is inherently more costly as each district defines and utilizes its own process. There were numerous examples provided to the Task Force whereas state-required reporting obligations imposed upon districts are cumbersome, inefficient, and time-consuming with regard to data entry and file transfer. The method in which these reporting obligations are processed results in an inordinate amount of resource time being devoted to administrative reporting that could otherwise be devoted to classroom instruction. The study should look at how to implement a tiered system (data, software, hardware, etc.) that makes information on district/building demographics, finances, etc. more readily available for public access.
5	Restructure the operating parameters associated with the Capital Outlay Fund by:  A. Creating an annual transfer cap on the amount of money that may be transferred from a district's General Fund into its Capital Outlay Fund;	A. Determine a percentage of General Fund expenditures as a cap to limit transfers from the General Fund which could otherwise be used to meet the instructional needs/goals of the districts.

#	Efficiency Recommendation	Reason for Recommendation
	<p>B. Broadening the definition of allowable Capital Outlay Fund uses to be more consistent with generally accepted financial practices, e.g., include non-routine building maintenance, software procurement, professional services, software customization, etc.; and</p> <p>C. Requiring that each district establish and maintain a 5-year capital plan to include non-routine maintenance, capital equipment replacements, and capital additions.</p>	<p>B. The current definition of an allowable capital purchase is not consistent with industry standards, resulting in districts being then required to utilize General Fund monies in lieu.</p> <p>C. A publicized 5-year capital plan will serve as a basis to understand and substantiate causal factors for Capital Outlay Fund balance increases.</p>
6	<p>Revise/narrow the Professional Negotiations Act to prevent it from hindering operational flexibility/resource assignment.</p> <p>A. Review tenure, as suggested by superintendents in the KASB School District Efficiency Committee's Report.</p>	<p>The current topics/categories that are subject to negotiation limit the basic ability for a district superintendent to efficiently manage district resources.</p> <p>A. Administrators need flexibility in making hiring/firing decisions so that district resources can be allocated efficiently and effectively to teachers who generate positive learning outcomes and strengthen student achievement. As noted in the KASB School District Efficiency Committee's Report to the task force, districts must provide tenured teachers with an independent hearing process prior to termination; pay salaries, attorney fees, and hearing office fees until the issue is resolved; or negotiated settlements for resignation. As noted by superintendents, this hampers districts' efficiency</p>

#	Efficiency Recommendation	Reason for Recommendation
	<p>B. Replace the salary schedule with a salary range based upon various criteria (e.g., experience, education, area of expertise, etc.).</p> <p>C. Narrow the number of mandatory negotiable items. These items (e.g., work hours, amount of work, insurance benefits, force reductions, professional evaluation procedures, etc.) should be changed from mandatory to permissible items for negotiation.</p>	<p>efforts.</p> <p>B. Administrators need the ability to negotiate individual teacher contracts and compensate them on the basis of their assignment and performance. Districts must have flexibility and discretion to differentiate salaries based upon various criteria (e.g., experience, education, area of expertise, etc.).</p> <p>C. Changing certain negotiable items from mandatory to permissible allows school boards to determine what works best locally to drive efficiencies and best serve students, teachers, and the community.</p>
7	<p>Legislatively eliminate, reduce, and consolidate the statutory cash reserve accounts and separate fund accounts that currently exist, thereby ending the "use-it-or-lose-it" policy and allowing the funding contained in each fund category to be more broadly spent across the full variety of educational requirements. Accounts that remain, including the General Fund, should be allowed a modest amount of carryover from year to year.</p>	<p>The current cash reserve accounts inhibit and restrict a district's ability to more broadly and effectively utilize taxpayer provided funding for K-12 education across the allowable uses defined within the General Fund. As a result, taxpayer provided funding for education remains segregated, further impeding a district's ability to maximize local control and advance classroom instruction. The legislature should examine how to remove funds, limit cash in the funds that are not removable (whether due to federal/state requirements or otherwise), and send amounts over the limit to a "catch fund." If this is done, greater control will be afforded to the local boards of education in overseeing the use of funding earmarked for K-12</p>



#	Efficiency Recommendation	Reason for Recommendation
		<p>educational purposes; the number of inflexible restricted funds will be greatly reduced, thereby removing the inefficient restrictions placed on the efforts of boards of education in working to utilize provided funding for the purpose of funding K-12 educational needs of the community; and excess cash balances that are currently being reserved as a result of statute-based account restrictions will be reduced, thereby decreasing the overall funding requirements for K-12 education and incorporating the flexibility to more broadly utilize taxpayer provided funding.</p>
8	<p>Authorize a study of school district administration personnel structures and positions. Develop a state plan for district-level administrative reorganization and alignment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Investigate the regionalization of administration structures; and</li> <li>B. Realign district geographical boundaries in order to facilitate administrative efficiencies.</li> </ul>	<p>Administrative resource models exist in a non-standardized manner, resulting in staffing levels that are discretionary, unregulated and costly. The intended purpose of this recommendation is not for determining which schools students should attend, but rather is intended to cultivate efforts to combine/streamline administrative office functions and advance shared services (e.g., food service, counseling, etc.) in a more cost effective manner. Decisions about what buildings to utilize should be made at the administrative level based upon the educational needs of students, rather than at the state level.</p>
9	<p>Require that a university level finance/accounting/budget management course be included in the district leadership licensing requirements, if not already included.</p>	<p>A need expressed by superintendents to ensure that district leaders have the training necessary to make quality spending decisions in an increasingly complex fiscal environment.</p>



#	Efficiency Recommendation	Reason for Recommendation
10	Form a task force of education, finance, and legislative members to establish a commonly-accepted definition of "instruction" spending and review the 65% public policy goal figure.	As reported to the Kansas Department of Education by the school districts, only 54% of total funding goes into the classroom for instruction. There currently does not exist a consistent understanding and uniform level of acceptance as to the definition of what functions constitute instructional spending in support of the 65% classroom spending goal. In addition, an optional goal will, at best, elicit discretionary compliance, whereas a statutorily defined obligation will ensure consistency across all districts and will support the advancement of benchmarking and best practices.
11	Place a limitation on duration of due process proceedings for special education hearings (i.e. 3 days).	Currently, due process hearings for special education are prolonged in nature and have no limitation on their duration. As a result, all parties involved incur extended legal fees and other personnel-related costs. The absence of hearing limits does not provide incentive for agreed upon closure.
12	Conduct an efficiency study/audit of the Kansas State Department of Education.	The study is intended to uncover and eliminate any unnecessary limitations on district operations. Districts and schools need flexibility to be efficient. They should have access to streamlined/client-friendly KSDE applications that allow them to negotiate lower cost contracts for services (e.g, food service), hire qualified employees (e.g, highly evaluated teachers licensed in other states), etc.

## Best Practices

The Governor's School Efficiency Task Force considered and analyzed a number of best practices for reductions in administrative overhead and efficient school spending. Some of these policies are "low-hanging fruit" that can be easily implemented by school districts under current law. Others are perhaps more difficult to attain. All should have a positive impact on school districts or buildings that venture to undertake them. A number of these best practices are recounted here for use in improving the efficiency of the Kansas K-12 educational system:

Best Practices
Negotiation of statewide corporate discounts with approved vendors of school/office supplies, building materials, maintenance supplies, etc. should be a priority for districts. Some of this is already taking place through service centers, e.g. However, a centralized/streamlined procurement for all school districts would greatly increase the K-12 system's efficiency. A centralized procurement organization with responsibility for all school districts would meet this need (e.g., the Department of Administration). Flexibility is important. A centralized procurement organization/process that factors in district-specific needs and inputs will trump any individual district's current discount based on economies of scale. Prices must be continuously compared. In the absence of a centralized procurement organization, school districts should take part in the purchasing discounts available through the regional service centers around the state and cost-sharing agreements for items like office/classroom supplies, paper, custodial equipment, curriculum, software, hardware, copiers, insurance, utilities, professional services, etc. Interlocal agreements with special education cooperatives and distance learning networks can also be utilized for efficiencies. Use competitive purchasing, requests for proposals (RFPs), and perhaps the state bid list.
All school districts should participate in an efficiency audit every couple of years (e.g., self-audit, Legislative Post Audit, Emporia State University audit, etc.). An example of a self-audit would be involving community members and local district staff at the departmental level in performing an internal program efficiency review at the local level.
School districts, schools, teachers, and students should take advantage of the State Library of Kansas' shared statewide database subscription to access learning resources, curriculum, e-books, research materials, tutorials, journals, professional development materials, and online courses for no additional charge. This is an underutilized resource.

## Best Practices

Districts should use program budgeting involving input from boards, district staff, and community members.

Contract out food services to a multi-state vendor. This offers enough savings in most cases to fund one or more teachers who would otherwise not be hired. Many school districts that have done this also report higher quality food and less waste. As much as possible, food is purchased from local vendors. However, with the buying power of millions of meals over hundreds of districts and multiple states, the cost is significantly reduced. This could also be done with lawn care, custodial services, etc.

Consider privatizing, outsourcing, or at least digitizing various human resource functions and records such as payroll, unemployment, COBRA, time clocks, employee data archives, KPERS administration, retirement, healthcare, licensing, evaluations, etc.

Districts should develop incentive pay programs for staff/teachers for significant improvements in student achievement, high test scores, reduced back-office costs, greater efficiency, increased involvement, etc.

Find ways to make processes and functions measurable. If it cannot be measured, then "improvement" is ambiguous and unattainable.

Put together a helpful white paper so that school board members can begin "training" prior to any meetings or professional development days.

Service centers and interlocals should work to increase awareness of programs that help districts, schools, and classrooms achieve cost savings and greater efficiency.

Look for savings on utilities. Perhaps start by doing an energy audit. Some schools have realized efficiencies by equipping buildings with automated thermostat controls, entering natural gas purchasing consortiums, and installing motion sensors/automatic light controls.

## Public Recommendations

Inefficient spending impacts Kansas taxpayers at every level, from the State General Fund to local property taxes. Kansans deserve to know that taxpayer dollars are used as efficiently and effectively as possible to educate our state's future leaders.

In order to facilitate a broader discussion on school efficiency than could otherwise be accommodated, the Governor's School Efficiency Task Force launched an online portal where students, parents, involved citizens, teachers and administrators could submit information anonymously regarding inefficiencies in the state's K-12 educational system. Interested parties could go online at <https://governor.ks.gov/efficiency> to share their firsthand experiences and efficiency suggestions with the Governor's School Efficiency Task Force. A representative sampling of input received through the online portal is available in a condensed form here for the benefit of stakeholders and decision-makers:

Category	Stakeholder Input
<p><b>Athletics</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The last priority in our district is educating kids. It's all about sports and fun. Our scores are some of the worst in the state. When it comes to educating the kids, it's nickel and dime. When it comes to sports, money is no object.</li> <li>• Focus the money on education and not on sports! Cut back on the types of sports. Leave most of the sports programs to the communities! Have intramural sports as part of Physical Education and improve those programs. The kids that need to move and exercise are not going out for sports.</li> <li>• No study of our school system's inefficiencies can be complete without a top-to-bottom analysis of how sports programs have come to dominate our curriculum and spending priorities. Sports are the curriculum and school work is the extra-curricular activity. Last week in our school involved about 30 hours devoted to traveling or attending sporting events. In small schools, this effectively shuts down the school for up to half of the day on any day involving away games. This needs to be addressed at the state level so as to mandate limits on the number of games per week, per year, etc. A cost-benefit analysis should be completed regarding what is being spent on sports versus what our "payoff" is toward educating students.</li> </ul>

Category	Stakeholder Input
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When new funds became available after the lawsuit settlement some years ago, the local district spent a large amount of money to totally renew athletic facilities. The next two years, they added more sports programs. When funds were reduced the following year, the district discussed reducing spending on arts and music. No mention was ever made of cutting any of the new sports.</li> </ul>
<b>Contracting / Purchasing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contrary to state law, our district does not seek competitive bids for capital projects. They have a standing agreement with professional firms that design facilities (such as libraries and schools). The district contends that these services do not require competitive bidding since the work is not part of a "capital project" but is instead a "professional service." The district has on multiple occasions entered into lease-purchase agreements with a private developer absent competitive bidding. These contracts include construction of new buildings and a multi-school contract for expansions.</li> <li>Roofing projects in Kansas should be open for alternate materials. In several districts, administrations use single source material suppliers masquerading as roofing consultants.</li> <li>Our district remodeled a school for a large sum of money. The district now heats/cools the entire building for a single police officer because there are no students there anymore.</li> <li>The district in my area conducts a mandatory spend-down every year on routine supplies (markers, erasers, pens, pencils, etc.). The justification? "if we don't spend it, we will lose the money."</li> </ul>
<b>Organization / Logistics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We have too many school districts with overlapping functions. This is partly due to having so many jurisdictions. Especially where school districts are close to each other, services and administration can be consolidated. This does not have to mean closing the schools—just sharing things like specialists, principles, and other administrative staff.</li> </ul>



Category	Stakeholder Input
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I feel that there are too many counties that have a number of small school districts. I feel that a county "central office" with a superintendent and district-level support personnel could save money. The various towns could still have their buildings with building-level personnel, but each district would not be top heavy with central office personnel. My small county is a perfect example of this inefficiency. There are too many school districts here! I was a teacher for 30 years teaching in 6 different districts, and I saw the same inefficiency in other counties.</li> <li>• Our school district has been very efficient with spending. When the cuts first began we had community meetings to lay out all the spending within the district. The public had the opportunity to prioritize areas of wasteful spending. Things that were cut/reduced/postponed from the budget were staff (teachers, aides, cooks, coaches, administrative assistants, etc.); supplemental contracts; purchasing of school vehicles, buses, and curriculum; salaries; 5 days from the school calendar; summer school weeks; after school at-risk programs; field trips; classroom supply spending; educational spending that wasn't benefiting all students; building maintenance projects; utility costs; sports programs (changed to a pay-to-play activity where parents had to foot the total bill).</li> <li>• KSDE should consider a single statewide student information management system. Now, every district must submit data annually for funding. Those districts each are spending between \$4.50 and \$12.50+ annually for these SIS systems. Plus, KSDE is using another large database to collect all of the information sent by the districts. Several districts have employees dedicated all year or a large part of the year to accomplish the checking and uploading of information. Other states have proven that a single system provides the districts with a way to save by having the state pay for a single system and take that money out of the per student amount assigned to the district. Plus, KSDE could get information much more frequently than once a year. Statewide systems have proven to save money. The argument that the districts would not approve is no longer true as every district is looking to be more efficient and save money.</li> </ul>

Category	Stakeholder Input
<p><b>Personnel / Human Resources</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We now have two teacher leaders and one assessment manager. This used to be one job! Our district is very administrative-heavy, with little teacher support. Teachers have too many administrators that require extra reporting, email-answering, and additional duties! Cut these positions before cutting any classroom teachers. Some administrators leave at 3:30 or before every day. Most teachers have so much to do that they have to come in early and stay late just to stay afloat. Even the principal rarely works an 8-hour day! This lack of leadership (do as I say, but not as I do) hurts our school and causes a hostile environment for all. Our district is way too top-heavy. For example, we have an administrative employee of the district who stops in at our school to check in on his son, sit in with teachers, and offer advice. There are so many hard-working employees, but our principal (and teacher leader) do not lead by example, which is sad.</li> <li>• Our district has maximized efficiency. We extended the school day by 30 minutes and shortened the school year by 14 days. We moved from two building-level media specialists to one district media specialist. We eliminated a maintenance staff position, a custodial staff position, and a food service staff position. We eliminated a rural bus route and after-school activity routes. We eliminated the in-town bus route. We reduced three counselor positions to two counselor positions. We moved from a block schedule to a traditional schedule. We blended middle school and high school. We have changed staffing, done fuel contracting (for our SPED cooperative), used TEEN video teaching network, changed SPED, reduced transportation, and optimized HVAC controls. We used EPM for business operations like payroll, leave, overtime, mandatory direct deposit, transportation, etc. We did an ESG feasibility study. We use ESSDACK for health insurance, PD, state bid list, etc. We also use paperless board meetings (via Blackboard).</li> <li>• We are strongly encouraged to send our paperwork to the central office to be copied. This costs us time and we pay this person a full time wage to do something that most teachers would rather do ourselves. Vocational money is also not spent on classroom/supplies/field trips but is</li> </ul>



Category	Stakeholder Input
	<p>mostly spent on salaries.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Administrators do not make teachers modify, take attendance, do their jobs, etc. Then they turn around and put more students in the good teacher's class, therefore making her job harder. Let's start having the same expectations for all teachers. Administrators need to speak up and start holding all teachers to the same standard. I'm also tired of coaches coming in for sports—they should be teachers first, coaches second.</li></ul>

## Appendix A: Press Releases

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Sam Brownback, Governor

**IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
September 28, 2012

### **Governor Brownback Forms School Efficiency Task Force**

Topeka – Kansas Governor Sam Brownback announced Friday the formation of the **Governor's School Efficiency Task Force** to examine education spending and to develop guidelines on how to get more funding into classrooms where teachers teach and students learn. Currently only 15 of the 286 school districts in Kansas adhere to state law that requires at least 65% of funds provided by the state to school districts are to be spent in the classroom or for instruction.

"Providing a quality education to the children of Kansas is one of the core functions of state government and will remain a top funding priority for my administration," Governor Brownback said.

"It is critically important for state policy makers to be confident that state resources for education are spent as efficiently and effectively as possible. We must ensure that classroom teachers have the resources they need to educate effectively. We need more money in the classroom and less in administration and overhead costs."

More than half of total state spending is directed towards K-12 education. Since 2000, Kansas has increased K-12 education spending by nearly \$1 billion dollars while the number of K-12 students has remained almost the same.

"The task force also will identify best practices for cutting administration cost, reducing overhead, and providing a greater percentage of state resources to support instruction," Brownback said.

A Kansas State Board of Education member since 2003, Ken Willard of Hutchinson will chair the task force. Willard served on the USD 309 Nickerson School Board from 1997-2002 and retired last year after a 38-year career in the insurance industry.

"I look forward to working with this outstanding group of Kansans who have varied private and public sector experiences and expertise – especially in accounting and budget planning. They will bring a lot of good ideas to the table to assist Governor Brownback in meeting his goals to improve our state's education system," Chairman Willard said.

In Governor Brownback's Road Map for Kansas, two of his five goals are directly impacted by quality of our education system:

- Increase the percentage of high school graduates who are career or college ready.
- Increase the percentage of 4<sup>th</sup> graders who can read at grade level.

The Road Map also lists the focusing of resources on the classroom and transparency in education spending as priorities.

The Kansas Department of Education recently announced a task force that will identify strategies for increasing student achievement generally, and more specifically, narrowing the achievement gap.

###

### **Governor's School Efficiency Task Force**

- **Ken Willard, Hutchinson**, Kansas State Board of Education member since 2003, USD 309 Nickerson School Board member (1997-2002); Retired after 38-year career in insurance industry.
- **Jim Churchman, Overland Park**, 27 years of experience in business management including operations, purchasing, supply chain and strategic planning.
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- **Steve Anderson, Topeka, CPA and State Budget Director, 34 years of experience in public accounting including auditing and budget planning for public sector entities.**

**IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

October 17, 2012

For more information:  
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**Online portal allows anonymous reporting of school funding efficiencies**

*Task force adds member, announces next meeting to focus on district level spending decisions*

**Topeka** – Kansans who interact with the state’s K-12 educational system and have examples of inefficiencies that they have witnessed or experienced now can go online to share their firsthand experiences with the Governor’s School Efficiency Task Force. The task force launched an online portal Wednesday where students, parents, involved citizens, teachers and administrators can submit information anonymously.

Recently, Governor Sam Brownback announced the formation of the task force to examine school spending and to develop guidelines on how to get more funding into the classroom where teachers teach and students learn. As reported to the Kansas Department of Education by the school districts, only 54% of total funding goes into the classroom and for instruction.

“While task force members are researching and analyzing where inefficiencies are occurring in our educational system, we also want to hear directly from Kansans who have their own ideas and suggestions on how to make our schools more efficient. We hope to hear from a lot of Kansans who take a few minutes to go online and share their thoughts with us,” Task Force Chairman Ken Willard said

Kansans can submit their suggestions at <https://governor.ks.gov/efficiency>.

Willard also announced the group’s next meeting scheduled for 10:00 am on November 9<sup>th</sup> will focus on spending decisions made at the district level. He said the task force will

receive a report from a representative of the Kansas Association of School Boards Efficiency Task Force and presentations from other district level education officials. Presenters will be asked to identify best practices for reductions in administrative overhead and shed light on policies that limit their efforts to spend taxpayer money as efficiently as possible.

Governor Brownback said it was important for the task force to have a clear understanding of how state decisions impact local decisions.

"Inefficient spending impacts Kansas taxpayers at every level, from the State General Fund to local property taxes. The state has increased total spending on education by almost \$1 billion since 2000. Many school districts have raised taxes on local property owners during that same time period. Moving forward, we owe it to Kansas taxpayers to ensure those resources are used as efficiently and effectively as possible," Brownback said.

Governor Brownback also announced Iola/USD 257 Superintendent Brian Pekarek will join the task force. Governor Brownback said, "Brian is well known as a Superintendent who is open to new ideas. He will make a great addition to the task force as they narrow their focus to the local level."

Pekarek joins a number of current task forces members who have district level budgeting experience, including Chairman Willard, Dave Jackson and Jim Churchman who all served on local school boards.

####

**MEDIA NOTE:** Location of the November 9<sup>th</sup> meeting is still being finalized.

## Appendix B: Sample Agenda

### Governor's Task Force on School Efficiency Agenda

Date: November 9, 2012  
Time: 10:00 AM – 5:00 PM  
Location: Statehouse, Room 346-S

- 10:00-10:15 Welcome and opening remarks by Chairman Ken Willard
- 10:15-10:30 Introduction and remarks by Brian Pekarek, Iola Superintendent
- 10:30-11:30 District Officials
- 11:30-12:30 Break for lunch
- 12:30-1:00 Scott Frank LPA
- 1:00-2:00 Service Centers
- 2:00-3:00 KASB Task Force
- 3:00-4:00 Jo Budler, Kansas State Librarian
- 4:00-5:00 Task Force discussion