



LEGISLATIVE TESTIMONY

FROM BLUE VALLEY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT 229

TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 2561
HOUSE K-12 EDUCATION BUDGET COMMITTEE
March 8, 2018
Presented by: Dr. Todd White, Superintendent

On behalf of Blue Valley USD 229, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony **in support of House Bill 2561**. Our district maintains a strong commitment to the educational and safety needs of our students. Because we are a densely populated and growing metropolitan district, we regularly assess the transportation needs of the students we serve.

HB 2561 amends the transportation funding calculation in statute to conform to the “curve of best fit” practice that is currently used for disbursing transportation aid by the Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE) – a practice used for decades by the department. According to the December 2017 Legislative Post Audit Transportation Audit, transportation aid is derived by: 1) allocating expenditures between students who live at least 2.5 miles from their school and all other students; 2) plotting the per-student expenditures for each district on a chart and determining the curve of best fit; and 3) calculating the transportation FTE for each district. As we understand it, the curve of best fit was employed to more equitably allocate transportation funding between the most sparsely- and the most densely- populated districts.

Currently, the Blue Valley School District transports 7,320 registered riders. Over 4,700 of these students live 2.5 miles or further from school. Our buses will be the only way to school for many children. Our transportation costs exceed our transportation revenue by more than \$850,000 per year. That excess cost is paid out of our general operating fund. If the current curve of best fit practice is removed, our district would incur an additional \$597,197 in unfunded transportation cost.

To be clear, every dollar transferred out of our general operating budget for unfunded costs is a dollar that we cannot put into the classroom. We, therefore, urge this committee to support HB 2561 to offset yet another deduction to our general operating fund.

We want to thank this committee for seeking to be good partners with parents and educators, as we seek together solutions that best meet the educational and safety needs of all our students. I’m happy to stand for questions at the appropriate time.