

**March 11, 2020**

**Re: HB 2540, support**

Senate Education Committee

Chairwoman Baumgardner and Members of the Senate Education Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to HB 2540, which would extend the sunset on high density at risk. The 28,166 students of Shawnee County, Kansas, are served by five public school districts. Leadership from all five Shawnee County public school districts worked collaboratively to create our 2019-20 Shawnee County Legislative Positions. These legislative positions were mutually created with the belief that Shawnee County students are our top priority. Significant societal benefits are gained by supporting exemplary public education, and all Kansas students deserve an adequate and equitable public education.

With one united voice, we support the extension of the high density at-risk weighting and are neutral to the other provisions in the bill. Failure to extend the sunset would result in a \$4 million loss to Topeka Public Schools.

We draw your attention to the following positions on school funding, which were mutually created with the beliefs that Shawnee County students are our top priority, there are significant societal benefits gained by supporting exemplary public education, and all Kansas students deserve an adequate and equitable public education.

#### **Standards and Accountability**

- We support implementation and assessment of standards adopted by the Kansas State Board of Education.
- We support the State Board of Education's Mission to be the first in the world in education.
- We support the State Board of Education's measure of post-secondary success.
- We oppose the use of public dollars and tax credits to fund private schools.
- Any school that receives public funds must meet state and federal accountability standards and provide programs and services required of public schools.

#### **School Funding**

We support funding that is timely, adequate, equitable, and sustainable. School funding should:

- **Address the needs of at-risk populations and extend high density at-risk weighting.**
- Account for changing student needs, higher expectations, and increasing costs, including the significant statistical relationship between socio-economic status and students found to be at-risk of academic failure.
- Fully fund early childhood education.
- Fully fund special education.
- Fully fund professional development.
- Fully fund CTE credential reimbursement.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide our support for HB 2540.

Dr. Tiffany Anderson, Superintendent, Topeka Public Schools, USD 501

Dr. Scott Mickelsen, School Board President, Topeka Public Schools, USD 501