



Time to reach out to your Kansas House Member

As we understand, the House will hear House sub for SB 83. This is the first of multiple budget and anti-public education legislation bills being released this session.

This weekend is a great opportunity to catch up with your Republican Representatives and encourage them to **vote NO** on the bill and any bill that mixes policy and budgets.

Please reach out to your house member and encourage them to vote no on this bill and encourage them to only vote yes on a clean budget bill that hopefully would include the governor's recommendation of a \$72.3 million increase over the five years for Special Education.

Items in this bill

1. HB 2218 - The voucher or Educational Saving Account Bill

Issues that will challenge successful student growth:

- Public funds for private schools with no expectations, oversight, or checks and balances- students will get lost in the system because many parents don't understand the entire picture.
- Limited evidence moving students from public schools to private schools has helped any students improve academically. A major educational bill such as this makes no sense when the impact will likely be only a few students.
- Documented research shows a large percentage of students who move from public to private schools often return to the public schools less than two years academically behind from when they left the public school.
- Despite what legislators are told in a caucus meeting by individuals who are not in a school or have ever had anything to do with vouchers, the ESA (vouchers) will only add to the education spending in the state budget, not save the state any money, with zero checks and balances on the students or parents receiving the public funds.

EXAMPLE In one of the focal states (Arizona), spending on public education declined by 5.7 percent as voucher spending grew by 270 percent. In another (Florida), public school spending declined by an even greater amount (12 percent), and voucher spending grew even more (313 percent). Neither state experienced an economic downturn, with GDP growing 3.2 percent in Arizona and 3.4 percent in Florida. The same research can be found in 5 other states with vouchers. [More research](#)

- \$5100 will not cover the full cost of many private schools. Parents will still be responsible for the additional tuition, books, athletics, transportation, and more.
- Additional unintended consequences! When Iowa recently passed similar ESA legislation, it didn't take but a few weeks after the bill was passed for Moody's to drop the bond rating for public schools in Iowa. Link to [Moody's report](#)

The evidence is clear. Passing this bill will hurt more than it will help, and research is clear it will have a larger negative impact on smaller communities that make up 75% of Kansas.

2. \$72.3 million for SPED funding, this is the amount recommended by the governor per year.

This is great, but it should be included in the K12 budget with no policies. Policies should be moved through on their own merits, not held hostage with budgets. This alone is not enough to pass this bill!

3. The legislation will require giving teachers an approximate raise of \$ 2,000 plus, on top of any other guaranteed or promised raise the district has already negotiated. **For school districts with declining enrollment, this would force the districts to spend negatively or be forced to cut staff to provide the rest of the staff the required raise.** This raise would not include non-certified staff or even additional staff districts might need to hire. It does not include the growing health care costs or fringe benefits cost. **For those who have never worked in a school district or with budgets, this raise sounds easy and wonderful, but it would force districts to make decisions that would harm students and teachers.**

This would be the same as giving every Kansan a \$2000 tax rebate, then requiring them to purchase a service for \$1000 a year. Everyone should be able to afford the service because we gave them \$1,000, Right? If I'm already behind on my bills or just breaking even, the required \$500 service only puts me deeper into debt, especially if I can't raise more money.

With the current estimates of a 5.3% increase in base aid for the 24-25 school year, 18 school districts will break even or lose money from the 23-24 budget. This is before any required or negotiated raises for teachers. Click on Printout [SF23-011](#) and Review column AI.

Don't allow your House rep to tell you they are voting on this bill because it's good for teacher's pay, it's not. This will create more problems than it will solve.

You can go to <https://www.usakansas.org/page/usa-kansas-advocacy> and scroll to Find Official to locate your representative in the Kansas House.