

KACCT

Kansas Association of Community College Trustees

Kansas Community College Testimony in Support of SB 335

Thank you for the opportunity today to testify in support of SB 335. Kansas Community Colleges support the K-12 system being able to both pay for students taking college classes and to transport students to properly accredited institutions of higher education such as Kansas Community Colleges. There are situations where students desire to take community college classes, but their parents lack of ability to afford tuition, fees, books, and transportation prohibit their enrollment.

This bill provides a critical access path to these students enabling them to take college classes while still in high school. The Unified School District (USD) is best equipped to understand the student's individual financial situation, and make decisions based on those needs, about whether the student needs assistance in funding enrollment in college classes. The USD also knows what resources they may have at their disposal which would be appropriate to fund such expenses. Allowing USD's to fund dual/concurrent classes for students ensures all students, regardless of their family's ability to pay, will have access to college classes while still in high school.

Additionally, transportation to the college is also often a barrier for students to accessing classes. Having the ability for the school to transport the student ensures all students have access to higher education options regardless of any transportation barriers which may exist.

While supportive of the bill, Kansas Community Colleges would request one technical amendment to ensure that there are no unintended consequences. The definition of concurrent enrollment is where the high school student takes college courses in the high school, during the school day, and taught by the high school instructor using the colleges course materials who meets Higher Learning Commission (HLC) education standards to teach the college course. Dual credit means any college course taken by a high school student while still in high school that does not meet the definition of concurrent as outlined above. Concurrent and dual enrollment both need to be covered in the provisions of this bill. We have experienced schools handling concurrent or dual courses differently depending on individual situations, staff qualifications, and unique facility situations. Therefore, we request a technical amendment to retain the concurrent language and add dual enrollment to the bill as well.

We stand ready to work with the appropriate individuals to prepare an amendment to ensure both concurrent and dual enrollment students are covered by the provisions of this bill.

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