



United School Administrators of Kansas  
515 S. Kansas Avenue Suite 201  
Topeka, Kansas 66603  
Phone: 785.232.6566  
Fax: 785.232.9776  
Web: [www.usakansas.org](http://www.usakansas.org)

## **Testimony on HB 2280**

### **House Education Budget Committee**

January 25, 2010

Submitted by: Cheryl L. Semmel, executive director

The mission of United School Administrators of Kansas (USA|Kansas\*), through collaboration of member associations, is to serve, support, and develop educational leaders and to establish USA|Kansas as a significant force to improve education.

Education administrators remain committed to ensuring that each and every child in Kansas receives a quality education that will help them reach their potential and become successful, productive adults. There are 465,000 students in our public schools that we strive to impact positively every single day. As you know, Kansas students are making unprecedented academic achievement and we are on a path of continuous improvement.

This testimony is provided in opposition to HB 2280, which would terminate state aid for future capital improvements and capital outlay levies. Historically, the bond and interest state aid has provided districts with financial assistance to ensure communities and school districts could upgrade facilities and ensure safe and appropriate learning environments. In fact, it has been a testament to how effective state and local partnerships can be. Unfortunately, the distribution of capital outlay state aid was suspended last year. The long-term consequence of this action could potentially result in the rapid decline of facilities across the state. More importantly, a decline in the educational environment will almost undoubtedly yield low quality education over time.

We believe that each child in Kansas should have access to school facilities that are safe and conducive to learning. As administrators, we believe that quality education is directly associated with the quality of the learning environment. Investing in the ongoing maintenance and modernization of school facilities should be a priority for the state.

Capital improvements are about more than just the beautification of facilities. In some cases, it is about creating healthy learning environments for our students and teachers – clean air, temperature control and natural light. In others cases, these projects support the modernization

of school facilities to ensure that our students and teachers have access the tools and resources necessary for a 21<sup>st</sup> Century learning environment.

Many school districts are working to implement technology plans designed to enhance student learning. Often times, these improvements are necessary – not simply desired. For example, distance-learning tools have allowed districts to expand the opportunities available to students, while at the same time, sharing personnel with other districts. And, as we work to measure student progress, the State is moving more rapidly towards conducting all assessments online.

Administrators ask that you consider the long-term impact that this could have on buildings in your communities and students in your district. We know you share our belief that each child in Kansas should have access to school facilities that are safe and conducive to learning.

\*USA|Kansas represents more than 2,000 individual members and ten member associations:

Kansas Association of Elementary School Principals  
Kansas Association of Middle School Administrators  
Kansas Association of School Administrators  
Kansas Association of School Business Officials  
Kansas Association of School Personnel Administrators  
Kansas Assoc for Supervision and Curriculum Development  
Kansas Association of Special Education Administrators  
Kansas Association of Secondary School Principals  
Kansas Council of Career and Technical Education Administrators  
Kansas School Public Relations Association