Email Template for Education Budget Bill
Send a Thank You Email to Legislators who Voted No

Update: Bill SB 387 was defeated in the Senate!

Thankfully, the majority of Senators listened to the major education groups opposed to the bill that jeopardized the full funding of special education in future years. SB 387 was defeated in the Senate (12-26) after narrowly passing in the House (65-58) earlier in the day.

Thank you for sending emails!

And please see the instructions for sending thank you emails to the SMSD legislators who voted no.

How did SMSD area legislators vote?

Find your Representative and Senator at openstates.org

- Be sure to include KANSAS when entering your address in the lookup field.
- Your STATE LEVEL Senator is indicated by **"UPPER"** and Representative by "**LOWER"** chamber.

Voting NO (supports future full funding of special education)

Representatives: Linda Featherston, Jo Ella Hoye, Cindy Neighbor, Stephanie Clayton, Mari-Lynn Poskin, Jerry Stogsdill, Lindsay Vaughn, Susan Ruiz, Jarrod Ousley, Rui Xu, Heather Meyer, Laura Williams, Brandon Woodard

Senators: Pat Pettey, Ethan Corson, Cindy Holscher, Dinah Sykes

Voting YES (jeopardizes future full funding of special education)

Representative: Angela Stiens (appointed to Owen Donohoe's seat)

Senators: Mike Thompson, Senator Kellie Warren

What's next?

Members of the House and Senate Conference Committee will meet again today and craft another version of bill SB 387. We will watch closely to see what ends up in the bill.

In the meantime, please send a thank you email to the SMSD area legislators who voted against SB 387 yesterday.

Note: For those interested, you can read the history of the bill and find the press release from the education groups and their opposition to the last version of SB 387, at the end of the document.

Instructions for sending Thank You Emails

Use the links included and then follow the bulleted instructions.

CLICK HERE for a pre-populated email to SMSD area legislators who voted no on this version of SB 387.
Note: If the link above doesn't work for you, see the copy & paste email instructions below.

Instructions before hitting send:

- Feel free to use your own wording.
- Sign your name and city on the email

Copy & Paste Email

Best if you can customize/personalize the body of the email.

TO: Pat.Pettey@senate.ks.gov, Ethan.Corson@senate.ks.gov, Cindy.Holscher@senate.ks.gov, Dinah.Sykes@senate.ks.gov, Linda.Featherston@house.ks.gov, Joella.Hoye@house.ks.gov, Cindy.Neighbor@house.ks.gov, stephanie.clayton@house.ks.gov, Mari-Lynn.Poskin@house.ks.gov, Jerry.Stogsdill@house.ks.gov, Lindsay.Vaughn@house.ks.gov, susan.ruiz@house.ks.gov, jarrod.ousley@house.ks.gov, rui.xu@house.ks.gov, Heather.Meyer@house.ks.gov, Laura.Williams@house.ks.gov, brandon.woodard@house.ks.gov

SUBJECT: Thank you for voting no on SB 387

Just a quick note to thank you for voting no on SB 387. Please continue to fight for the full funding of special education for kids in the Shawnee Mission School District and across Kansas.

Sincerely,

History of bill SB 387

But first, here's an update on what's happened since our last action item.

Last Week (3/25-3/29)

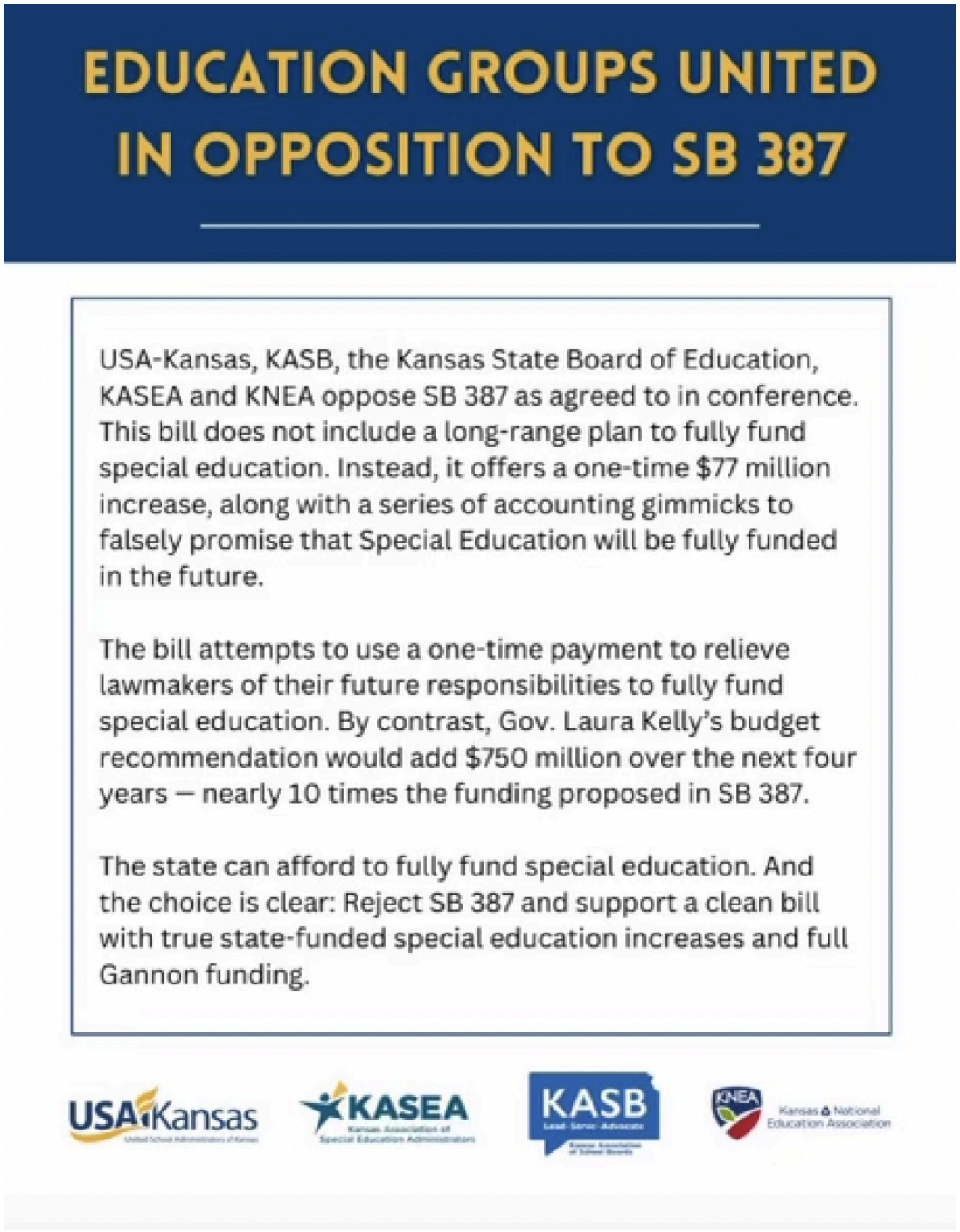
The House K-12 Education Budget bill that we opposed, narrowly passed the House last Wednesday by just three votes. Representative Angela Stiens voted for the bill; all other SMSD reps were opposed.

This Week (as of morning of 4/4)

Select members of the House and Senate have been meeting in Conference Committee to negotiate differences between their two versions of the Education Budget. Improvements have been made, but the resulting bill still contains the harmful policy that uses an accounting trick that will falsely represent the state as having met its obligation to fully fund special education going forward.

Education Groups United in Opposition to SB 387

The Kansas State Board of Education and these other education groups oppose the latest version of SB 387. You can read their statement (issued on 4/3/24) here:



Talking Points from the version of SB 387 opposed above

- Kansans have been asking the legislature to fully fund special education for years now. SPED has not been fully funded since 2011.
- This budget does not fully fund SPED in future years.

- The budget bill uses an accounting gimmick to make it appear as if SPED has been funded by requiring districts to use funds from the local option budget which are then incorrectly counted as state funds.

- Requiring school districts to use their Local Option Budgets to cover SPED costs, takes away the district's ability to direct spending in a way that meets all student needs.

- This bill uses an accounting trick to make it appear as if the state is fully funding special education by counting funds raised locally through property taxes as state funding.

- Bill HB 2738 that contained the policy that utilizes an accounting gimmick to make it appear as if the state has fully funded special education, had close to 100 opponents and just one proponent.

- Do not stand for this irresponsible process that allows bad policy to be pushed through with public education funding.

- Instead of actually fully funding special education as was recommended by the State Board of Education, the Special Education Task Force, and the Governor, an accounting gimmick is being used to take money from local option budgets (funded by property taxes) to make it appear as if the state is meeting its obligation to fund 92% of excess SPED costs.

- Vote NO on SB 387 and instead tell leadership to vote for a clean funding bill that fully funds special education as recommended by the State Board of Education, the Special Education Task Force, and the Governor.

- SMSD is currently covering a $10 million dollar shortfall in SPED funding. These are funds that could otherwise be used for resources to better support educational outcomes for students, such as additional paras, counselors, social workers, math aides, instructional materials, or mental health supports.