



Testimony before the Senate Education Committee  
in support of  
**Senate Bill 271 – Repealing the sunset provision for the high-density at-risk weighting**  
by  
Judith Deedy, Executive Director **Game On for Kansas Schools**  
February 4, 2020

Madam Chair, Members of the Committee:

[Game On for Kansas Schools](#) is a nonpartisan grassroots effort among Kansans who share a belief in high-quality public education as a right of all Kansas students. We advocate for Kansas public schools to ensure our teachers, principals, superintendents, and school board members have the resources necessary to deliver quality education to all Kansas students. We inform communities across the state about issues and legislation affecting their students, and our membership extends statewide.

The high-density at-risk rating is an important part of the school finance formula that passed the legislature and successfully ended the Gannon case last year. Districts with high numbers of at-risk students face extra challenges and need additional financial resources to support their students. If the sunset provision is not repealed, those school districts will lose \$50 million annually. We believe this would be a substantial move in the wrong direction at a time when our districts are just beginning to realize substantial fiscal certainty and make progress after years of inadequate funding.

We are aware of the recent LPA audit on at-risk spending and respectfully disagree with some of the conclusions being drawn from it. We hope that the legislature will continue to support this funding rather than withholding it from students who need it. Although we are a statewide organization, many of the members of our leadership group reside in the Shawnee Mission School District, which would face the loss of about \$1 million annually from its budget if the high-density at-risk weighting is allowed to sunset. That is a substantial amount and would have an impact on students in the district. Now is not the time to be cutting at-risk funding.

We ask you to support Senate Bill 271 and pass it out of committee.