



September 27, 2019

Senator Groene and Members of the Education Committee:

As you begin your examination of administrative costs through LR 153, I want to supplement your knowledge from the perspective of the elected school board member. The Nebraska Association of School Boards (NASB) works hard in its support of school board members of all sizes across the State. As part of that support, we continually promote the notion that in addition to leadership of the district, one of the most important duties a school board does is to hire the district's Superintendent. It is so important that NASB allocates full time resources to assist districts with the completion of this important duty. While the hiring task may not occur with a great deal of frequency, the right hire, at the right time, is critical to the success of the district.

I can report to the committee that the free market system is alive and well within education. Competition for quality leaders of school districts is a reality school boards must deal with. School boards are forced to look critically at the competition and offer compensation packages that can sometimes compete with neighboring districts or more attractive communities. The experience and education level required by Superintendent candidates is significant and can make the selection process narrow, yet competitive. The Superintendent Pay Transparency Act assures taxpayers are aware of the potential and realized taxpayer resources to be expended on behalf of the taxpayers. This transparency and public input is welcome. School boards are accountable to the taxpayers of their community. They have to find balance between recruiting/retaining quality leaders and the management of the district's budget. This is a task school boards in Nebraska handle well. While the posted contracts are helpful to citizens, they don't always tell the entire story of the decisions that go into a competitive agreement between a district and their superintendent. Of note, is the tenure of the selected candidate. As in the private sector, tenure plays an important role in the compensation package. In short, more experienced leaders command more compensation. In addition, location of a district also plays an important role in the recruitment and hiring of district leadership. Some districts have found themselves increasing pay to attract higher quality candidates to their area of the State.

NASB is thankful for the opportunity to go on record on this important issue and request this letter be made part of the public record for LR 153. We are always available to assist the committee in answering further questions.

Colby Coash
Associate Executive Director/Government Relations Director
Nebraska Association of School Boards
www.NASBOnline.org