Research in Rural Education, Volume 6, Number 1, 1989

Capital Outlay Funding As An Educational Equity Issue: An Empirical Examination

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All Kansas superintendents were surveyed on various fiscal aspects and the age and condition of buildings. Extensive capital outlay data was accumulated and used to construct a profile of the state upon which tests for wealth neutrality were employed. Descriptive measures utilized raw range, restricted range, federal range ratio, and correlations. Pearson correlation coefficients were found for 32 variables which potentially contribute to ability of districts to sustain effective capital outlay programs. Moderate to high relationships were found between capital outlay ability and district wealth, enrollment and planned improvements, wealth and improvements, age and condition, and other variables. Finally, regression analysis concluded that district wealth significantly affects condition of buildings, capital project planning, and that the failure to equalize fiscal ability variations in the state may lead to legal jeopardy.

INTRODUCTION

The problem of how to adequately and equitably provide school facilities is one of growing significance in the fifty states. While adequacy has proved to be extremely difficult to achieve as educational resource needs have continually outpaced limited fiscal capacity, equity has become a multifaceted concept which has continually expanded since the landmark decision in *Brown v Board of Education* [1] in 1954. The burgeoning development of new dimensions of equity has resulted in sweeping changes in methods for financing public schools. A myriad of court rulings in the past two decades based on the concept of equalization popularized by the *Serrano* [7] decision in California has significantly altered how equality of educational opportunity is seen through the lens of school finance.

The research literature indicates a broad and general concern for both adequacy and equity in the funding of schools. As a subset of concerns is a growing awareness that both concepts may eventually be extended to financing facility construction and maintenance. Those concerns are documented through an expanding body of court decisions citing capital outlay as a source of consternation, and in an emerging redefinition of the concept of equity exemplified in court decisions such as *Pauley v Bailey* [6] in West Virginia where the court exhaustively defined the meaning of equality of educational opportunity and its relationship to educational facilities. The research literature is also concomitantly expanding and as Guthrie, et al., [4] suggest, capital outlay is a fertile field for reform.

Only recently, however, has research begun to examine rural school facility financing and to examine differences between rural and urban settings. In a time when economic stress is causing differences between rural and urban schools to be reexamined, there is a growing need for objective identification of differences and similarities, and better models and data for policy makers.

The present research was undertaken to serve three purposes. First, there is evidence that the concepts of adequacy and equity may become increasingly critical issues in the funding of school facilities in the 22 states which provide no substantive support for construction and maintenance. The legal basis of that concern was described by Thompson, et al. [8]. A second purpose developed from the recognition that despite the longevity and quantity of research involving capital outlay, no research was identified which addressed comparisons of rural and urban settings or which involved more than subsets of populations. Finally, in states such as Kansas, such a high degree of emotionalism surrounds differences between rural and urban communities that a need exists for unbiased assessment of the existence of such differences, their magnitude, and the implications for policy makers.

The present study was specifically designed to assess the extent of concern among Kansas superintendents about capital outlay financing, to utilize static fiscal information to compare and contrast rural and urban districts in the state, to consider associations between various economic elements and subsequent decisions regarding capital expenditures, and finally to apply earlier concepts of broad equity research in formulating conclusions and recommendations for policy makers. Efforts

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Special thanks are due to Dr. Jerry Horn, Associate Dean of the College of Education; The Center for Rural and Small Schools; and The Center for Extended Services and Studies at Kansas State University for support for this study.

were thus guided by three substantive questions: What are the differences and commonalities in the state regarding facility finance? Are there significant differences between rural and urban districts in capital outlay funding? Finally, are districts in the greatest need also the districts exhibiting other characteristics indicative of low wealth, and can these traits be tied to issues of equality of educational opportunity?

Documented court proceedings, a review of educational finance literature, and the research reported here are designed to provide the initial framing of this policy analysis.

METHODOLOGY

Research in Kansas has proposed equity models for alternative methods of funding capital outlay [9], sample analysis of urban school districts [3], sampling of rural school systems [5], and random sampling of rural and urban subsets [2]. The concepts of adequacy and equity were directly addressed by Thompson [8], and the focus of other researchers on deferred maintenance carried both direct and implicit comments regarding adequacy and equity in the estimates of a maintenance backlog identified by Burk [2], Devin [3], and Stewart and Honeyman [5].

The present research was conducted in two phases. Phase I involved a mailed survey to all superintendents in the state of Kansas in FY 1986-87. District enrollments in Kansas range from a low of 78 pupils to over 42,000 with a median statewide enrollment of 543.4 FTE. Of the 304 districts, 223 (72%) were below 1,000 FTE enrollment, the break-point utilized in the study to identify rural and urban divisions. Superintendents responded to questions related to capital outlay funding which assessed the financial base and perceived facility needs of districts. Questions were related to tax base size and type, general fund budget, capital outlay budgets, mill rates for general fund and capital outlay, bonded indebtedness, and dollars budgeted for planned improvements. Additional questions also queried recent bond election success or failure, plans for new bond elections, adequacy of present facilities including plans for major renovation and construction, and potential school closings. Superintendents were also given the opportunity to address capital outlay issues of general or unique concern. The survey experienced a 98 percent total response rate. For the few nonresponding districts, necessary financial information was derived from state department documents. Data were utilized to construct a descriptive profile of the state and its rural and urban subsets, and to allow for further descriptive treatment and inferential regression analysis in Phase II.

Phase II consisted of analysis of the date in order to provide a foundation for policy recommendations. Five statistical measures were utilized to obtain a panoramic view of the state and the rural and urban subgroups. Measures utilized were: 1) unrestricted range, 2) restricted range, 3) federal range ratio, 4) Pearson correlation coefficients, and 5) multiple regression. The unrestricted range provided a raw score identification of the upper and lower limits of the distribution of fiscal ability by looking at the amount of revenue available in each district when levying a uniform four mills against the unadjusted assessed valuation for each subgroup of the study. As the difference in unrestricted range decreases, the degree of equity is assumed to increase.

Restricted range was utilized to find a second measure of raw differences between subgroups. Expressed as (Restricted Range = $X_{95} - X_5$), a modified perspective of raw score ability was obtained. The logic for a restricted range measure is that it subtracts the effect of outliers, resulting in a less distorted view of the majority of the group by observing clustering of scores. Again as the size of the range increases, the assumption of inequity also increases.

The federal range ratio is a wealth neutrality measure utilized to determine eligibility of groups for certain monies in which fiscal neutrality is required. The federal range ratio also assesses the width of a distribution, expressing it as a single calculated value and thus providing a third estimate of the achievement of equity. Based on the restricted range, the federal range ratio is expressed as $[(X_{95} - X_5)/X_5]$. Ideally, the federal range ratio should equal zero, and as the calculated value increases, the degree of difference among districts is also assumed to increase.

Correlation was utilized to explore associations between factors hypothesized to covary or to be at least positively associated. The Pearson correlation coefficient was utilized to assess conditions frequently surmised to have an effect on district ability to construct, maintain, and improve facilities. A total of 32 Pearson correlation coefficients were utilized to confirm or reject suspected associations and to identify variables for inclusion in subsequent regression analysis.

The final statistical measure utilized regression to identify contributions of suspect variables to undesirable conditions and to allow policy makers to go beyond the limitations of the research in predicting the effect of intervention strategies on the distribution. As an inferential tool, the regression equation steps beyond descriptive correlation and allows for modest speculation regarding the effect of changes and adds the value of prediction to quantitative research.

ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

The profile of Kansas school districts in Table 1 suggests a rural state made up mostly of 304 small, independent school systems. The moderate 396,385 FTE enrollment for the state was housed in a relatively large number of 892 elementary schools, 209 variously defined junior high schools, and 356 high schools with an average enrollment of 270.9 FTE per building. Building enrollments spanned from a low 25 FTE in one rural six-year high school to 2,077 in a suburban four-year high school. The most common grade arrangement was

TABLE 1
Physical Profile

	Rural	Urban	State
N of districts	223	81	304
FTE	96,911.7	299,473.3	396,385.0
Elementaries	360	532	892
Middle/junior highs	90	119	209
High schools	246	110	356
Organization:			
K-8-4	115	13	128
K-6-6	51	3	54
K-12	5	0	5
Other	53	62	115
Age of buildings:			
0-10 years	56	75	131
10-20	97	90	187
20-50	335	361	696
50+	153	100	253
Condition of buildings:			
New (age 0-5)	35	32	67
Good	411	489	900
Fair	151	58	209
Poor	51	15	66

TABLE 2
Financial Data

State	
Total Assessed Valuation	$11,201,043,673
Total General Fund Budgets	1,288,503,382
Total State Aid	435,209,307
Total Bonded Indebtedness	384,875,687
Highest General Fund Mill Rate	91.33
Lowest General Fund Mill Rate	6.13
Median General Fund Mill Rate	51.33
Aid Range under State Aid Formula	0 - 80%
Mean Aid as a Percent of Total Budget	33.8%
N of Zero-aid Districts	37

Subclasses	**Rural**	**Urban**	**State**
Mean State Aid to General Fund expenditures	33.8%	40.0%	35.6%
Wealth per pupil (AV)	$51,354.20	$24,826.20	$44,025.40
Mean Mill Rate (GF)	49.6	57.6	51.8
Mean Capital Outlay Levy	2.8	2.9	2.85
Mean Bonded Indebtedness Levy	3.4	6.3	4.5

Other State Data	
N of districts planning capital projects in FY	47.3%
N of districts planning bond elections in FY	20.0%
N of bond election failures in the past five years	10.0%
N of districts planning facility closings/ curtailment	21.2%

a K-8-4 pattern in 128 districts, 54 districts reporting K-6-6, and the remaining districts reporting other organizational characteristics. The least common grade arrangement was K-12, reported in only five districts. Enrollments and the number of school buildings consistently reflected the rural and urban economies of scale where more buildings educate correspondingly fewer students at a potentially higher cost.

Financial data in Table 2 profiled the wealth distribution. The raw data indicated a somewhat different profile than was found under later analysis by suggesting a preponderance of wealth in rural communities where average assessed valuation was $51,354.20 per pupil compared to $24,826.20 in urban communities. The appearance of wealth in rural settings was maintained by equalization aid distributions where the mean state aid level was 33.8 percent in rural communities compared to 40 percent for urban districts. Similarly, local tax effort was 49.6 mills in rural settings compared to 57.6 mills in urban locations. The extreme variation in general fund mill rates also yielded a first appearance of higher rural wealth, ranging from a low 6.13 mills in one rural community to 91.33 mills in a suburban Kansas City school district.

The raw wealth data provided an interesting contrast to the age and condition of buildings, where reported values consistently supported other research which has identified the aging condition of facilities in the nation. Districts reported 131 buildings ranging from 0-10 years, 187 buildings aged 10-20 years, 696 buildings whose ages fell between 20-50 years, and 253 buildings more than 50 years old. Rural and urban subgroupings indicated the age of buildings to be somewhat unevenly distributed across the two subgroups, with rural districts holding over three-fourths of the buildings aged greater than 50 years. Ratings of the condition of buildings indicated 67 buildings (5.28%) in a new or near new condition, 900 (71%) in good condition, 209 buildings (16.5%) in fair condition, and 66 buildings (5.2%) in poor condition. The rural and urban subgroupings revealed that 29 percent of rural schools were rated in fair to poor condition, while only 7.1 percent of urban schools were similarly rated. A check for tax base reliance among schools reporting poorer facilities yielded a 58.5 percent primary reliance on singular tax bases such as agriculture, leading to formulation of preliminary assumptions questioning the accuracy of the appearance of widespread rural wealth. These assumptions were supported by later regression analysis, indicating that the narrowness and rural nature of the state's tax base may be a substantial contributor to higher percentages of poorer facility ratings among rural schools.

The profile also suggested that a majority of both rural and urban school districts has found it necessary to levy for capital outlay and debt service. Total bonded indebtedness for the state reached $384,875,687 with 129 districts (40%) reporting no bonded indebtedness. Many of those indicating no debt were rural districts who correspondingly reported facilities in need of repair

or replacement. While assertions can be made about the absence of debt in needy districts, rural districts also reported a higher than average incidence of bond election failures within the last five years, and were among those districts frequently citing plans to close or curtail facilities. Although mean levies for maintenance and bonded indebtedness were lower overall for rural communities, 77.7 percent of all rural communities were exerting significant capital outlay effort, levying a mean 2.8 mills for capital outlay and an additional average 3.4 mills for debt retirement, resulting in 12.5 percent of local tax effort devoted to facility needs. With the exception of capital outlay effort representing a significant portion of local tax effort, the overall profile from the foregoing data suggests at first glance a less burdensome local responsibility for construction in rural communities in the state of Kansas, despite the fact that troublesome issues appear to underly a pleasant surface.

Further descriptive data in Table 3 provided a different perspective of wealth concentration through central tendency and variation and correlation among variables.

TABLE 3
Descriptive Ability Measures

Measure	Rural	Urban	State
Unrestricted Range of Ability	$2,380.80 12.50	$854.90 36.80	$2,380.80 12.50
Restricted Range Difference	$477.20	$101.70	$455.60
Federal Range Ratio	9.5	3.6	9.6
Wealth Ratio of Raw Assessed Valuation	190:1	23:1	190:1
N of Districts Incapable of Funding an Average Practice Model	128	77	291

Despite sweeping generalizations, school districts have wide variations in ability to fund capital outlay, and the variations are most pronounced among rural schools. At the state level, the unrestricted range under a uniform four mills indicated capacity in the highest wealth district to be 190 times greater than in the lowest district, yielding a difference of $2,368.30 per pupil per four mills of tax effort. When the restricted range removed the upper and lower 5 percents of districts, the remaining high wealth district continued to exhibit a wealth ratio of 10.6:1, or $455.60 more per FTE. Similarly, the federal range ratio yielded a high value of 9.6.

The appearance that rural districts are wealthier than urban districts was not upheld when analyzing rural and urban unrestricted range ratios. Extremes of both wealth and inability were present among rural schools, and urban districts were found to be much closer to one another in relative ability. The upper and lower limits of the unrestricted range for rural districts corresponded to the range for the state, indicating that extreme concentration of wealth in some rural districts results in deceptive averages. While urban districts suffered from unequal wealth variations as demonstrated by the unrestricted range, where the wealthiest urban district could raise 23.2 times more revenue per FTE for capital outlay than the poorest urban district; the ratio of 23:1 was much narrower than the 190:1 ratio present for rural districts. When the effect of outliers was removed, the restricted range still yielded significant wealth disparities where urban districts were within $101.70 per FTE of each other, compared to a differential of $477.20 for rural districts. Similar support for recognition of wide variations of wealth existed when comparing rural and urban districts using the federal range ratio (FRR). Whereas the FRR for urban districts yielded a 3.6 value, the FRR for the state yielded 9.6 and for rural schools a 9.5 value, again indicating that while considerable variations of wealth distribution occurred among all districts, urban districts presented a higher degree of equity in resource accessibility. Conclusions about a preponderance of wealth in rural districts were rejected on two levels, as 128 rural districts (60%) were below an average expenditure model for the state, and as rural districts occupied both ends of the wealth continuum. While extraordinary wealth resides in a few rural communities, broad conclusions regarding excessive wealth among rural districts were difficult to substantiate.

The Pearson correlation coefficient was next utilized to assess the strength between factors thought to logically relate to facility adequacy and resource equity. Results of statistically significant correlations among the 32 variables tested are found in Table 4.

Correlations obtained were of varying degrees of strength. The strongest positive correlations (other than for capital outlay ability to district wealth +1.0) were for FTE to planned improvements (.6397), wealth to planned improvements (.6333), condition of facilities to age (.598), FTE to level of bonded indebtedness (.38), wealth to level of bonded indebtedness (.3034), and planned improvements to level of debt (.2641).

Correlation between ability to generate revenue for capital outlay and district wealth yielded a predictable perfect positive relationship (+1.0) because unlike the

TABLE 4
Significant Pearson Values

Variables	Coefficient
Ability to Wealth (AV)	+1.0
FTE to Planned Improvements	.6397
Wealth to Planned Improvements	.6333
Condition to Age of Buildings	.5980
FTE to Bonded Indebtedness	.3034
Planned Improvements to Bonded Indebtedness	.2641

N = 304
p = .05
Significance = .095

general fund budget, revenue capacity for capital outlay is directly dependent on assessed valuation. While the coefficient may be predicted, the concept is central to the concern reviewed earlier regarding the dependent relationship between wealth and ability to pay in that capacity of local districts to provide quality facilities depends on local property wealth. The positive relationship was further supported by a relatively strong .6397 coefficient between FTE and planned improvements, indicating that it is reasonable to assume that growing districts develop needs for new and updated facilities as enrollment increases. In declining districts, reduced enrollments suggested reduced expenditures. However, data on stable and declining districts provided little evidence to suggest that maintenance needs or obsolescence of existing facilities correspondingly declined; in fact, with time they usually intensify as indicated by anecdotal superintendent responses. The substantive analysis of data suggested that the execution of planned improvements is affected either favorably or unfavorably by enrollment patterns, but that expenditures rather than needs decline concomitantly with enrollments—*i.e.*, decisions are influenced by declining resources which often accompany diminishing enrollment. Other significant value correlations to enrollment also led to the same conclusions, indicating the possibility that declining enrollments, lower tax base, aging facilities, and other variables tended to be related and may potentially account for further positive associations between FTE and planned improvements.

A moderately high value of .6333 was found when correlating wealth to planned improvements. A positive association in high wealth districts would indicate that the ability to spend more for improved and additional facilities may in fact lead to increased expenditures. Inversely, factors that could contribute to a positive relationship between planned improvements and wealth in districts with low assessed valuation would indicate that inability to spend higher amounts because of low tax yield and priorities for scarce resources may lead to reduced expenditures. Analysis of the data indicated a relatively high frequency of negative decisions in low wealth districts, while decisions to engage in improvement projects were more favorable in wealthier districts. This conclusion was further supported by a coefficient of .5980 between age and condition of facilities, supporting other research which has proposed a positive relationship between wealth and deferred maintenance and construction decisions.

Other correlations of lower statistical significance were found. Correlating FTE to level of bonded indebtedness yielded a .38 coefficient, supporting earlier contentions that growing districts face a continual need to expand, while stable or declining districts must maintain and improve facilities. A coefficient of .3034 between wealth and bonded indebtedness and a coefficient of .2641 between planned improvements and level of bonded indebtedness led to questions about the extent to which debt may affect decisions for planned improvements and the extent of deferral that arises as a result of higher debt and district wealth. The correlations consistently supported assumptions that facility condition, planned improvements, and adequacy/equity concerns demonstrate significant interaction.

As a final measure, regression analysis was utilized to provide additional evaluation and to assist policy makers in assessing the potential for capital outlay as an equitable concern. Analysis of these data was performed using a regression equation with expressed need as the single dependent variable. Results of the analysis indicated that district wealth was the single best predictor of need. In the regression equation, the variable of wealth had a multiple R of 0.63 and explained approximately 39 percent of the variance in the dependent variable. Substantive analysis indicated that the needs of districts resulting from wealth dependency appear to be positively related to tax base inadequacy, leading both to decisions to defer maintenance and construction and to increasing age of facilities for which there are insufficient resources to address either dimension of adequacy or equity. With other regression research emphasizing the dependence of distressed facility condition on similar variables such as level of indebtedness functioning to prohibit maintenance and improvement of facilities in rural schools, the implications suggest that a multiplicity of wealth—interrelated conditions operate to the disadvantage of all lower wealth school districts. Because rural communities are affected by greater disparities in ability as demonstrated by several range measures and because of singularly narrow tax bases which exhibit higher sensitivity to varying economic conditions, rural communities may in fact experience a greater disadvantage under conditions generally unfavorable to both rural and urban subgroups.

SUMMARY

The findings suggest that Kansas school districts are confronted with facility finance issues deserving consideration. Superintendent responses and other data describe an existing need of significant proportion. The age and condition of facilities suggest continued and increasing maintenance and replacement costs, and unfortunately they are aging as a cohort group.

The profile suggests that districts will continue to face facility needs and inequalities unless mechanisms are developed to address local tax revenue insufficiency. That insufficiency is heightened by wide variation in local revenue capability. Correlational and regression data suggest that plans for improvements are adversely affected by fiscal constraints including wealth, existing debt, and age and condition of facilities. Simply stated, there are very different levels of financial ability present among Kansas school districts, suggesting that most often wealthier school districts have better facilities than do poorer systems, in part because they are able to generate and spend money. The data provides an affirmative response to the question of whether districts in the greatest need are also those which exhibit lower wealth. Insofar as the courts have typically focused on

ability as a primary element of equity, the questions of equality of educational opportunity, resource accessibility, *ex post* and *ex ante* fiscal neutrality remain viable considerations in Kansas for the future.

CONCLUSIONS

Kansas school districts are significantly affected by total local responsibility for financing capital outlay. Fiscal year plans for facility improvement and construction totalling more than $67 million in a conservative rural state speak to attention currently being given to facility needs. The substantial mill rates for capital outlay and bonded indebtedness illustrate the burden capital projects place on the more than 80 percent of districts which levy for facility needs.

The magnitude of the problem in Kansas is also seen in the age and condition of buildings. The data indicate that districts will likely experience growing problems. Although conscientious efforts have resulted in many older buildings being well kept and preserved, age and condition of facilities must be a vital concern for communities and the state because of costs for replacement and modernization. The concern is heightened when nearly 20 percent of buildings exceed 50 years of age, and physical condition is described as fair or poor in nearly 22 percent of the state's facilities. With the sizeable debt load that exists in districts and the current 14 percent debt limitation on local assessed valuation, the evidence indicates that there are significant needs in school districts for repair, maintenance, and replacement for which there are no elastic resources. With research which suggests that deferred maintenance represents roughly a $381 million deficit, district needs will likely increase for renovation, modernization, and replacement.

The data speak to the circumstances many rural and urban communities face, suggesting both commonalities and unique conditions. One clear similarity emerges in that no school district receives assistance from the state, making any advantage or disadvantage strictly related to district wealth. That neutral posture in itself is a major stumbling block for states such as Kansas which do not substantially support facility finance.

The commonality of local responsibility for funding facilities results in uniquely differing outcomes reflecting the varying effects of tax base sufficiency on physical condition, facility planning, and the need to continually improve educational programs. Urban districts face enrollment growth, intergovernmental competition, and aging facilities. While urban districts can access a larger and more diverse tax base, the sufficiency of resources is critical because urban revenue is limited by finite resources for which at least proportionately more tax supported institutions compete. As urban districts continue to serve increasing general populations, they are also expected to accommodate a growing number of students who are more expensive to educate. At the same time, they are expected to provide quality education under dual pressures for increased services and economy of scale. The data suggest that while equity is a major consideration for urban communities, urban schools have a more pressing need to consider solutions that assure adequate resources to meet their growing needs.

Rural districts face significantly different problems. In contrast to urban areas of the state, rural schools are generally experiencing stable or declining enrollments with few exceptions. Rural districts face narrowness of tax base, aging buildings, and increasingly fewer students resulting in proportionally higher cost. While urban schools are pressed for increased services and reduced expenditures, rural districts face difficulty convincing constituents of the desirability of program growth and higher per unit costs.

Tax base and wealth considerations lead rural districts to exhibit high levels of concern. Rural districts in Kansas rely primarily on agriculture or other singular industries for property tax support, creating severe problems for communities because the health of local economies often dictates the outcome of school facility efforts. The data indicate that the effect of energy and agriculture on local economies has been a significant contributor to decisions regarding aggressive programs for facility maintenance, expansion, and new construction. Declines in agricultural and energy commodities, including farmland, has placed rural communities at a recent disadvantage, resulting in increasing property tax rates and general fund state aid in order to maintain standards. As rural school districts in an agricultural state such as Kansas are among the first to encounter the effects of decline in economic prosperity, the dependency of facility initiatives in rural communities on local wealth cannot avoid expression through local decisions to initiate or delay projects based on the state of the economy.

The data also suggest that rural communities may face special disadvantages in equitably funding facilities. While the raw data depict urban communities exerting greater tax effort, the evidence also indicates that rural communities may have a more difficult time passing bond elections and hold a higher level of need as defined by tax base inadequacy and condition of facilities. Regression analysis suggests that rural communities are affected to a greater extend because wealth variation is seen as the best predictor of decisions about facility projects. As the narrow tax base in rural communities is frequently under stress, lower mill rates for capital outlay and the presence of upper limits of wealth in rural communities cannot be assumed to indicate an adequate tax base where 128 districts (40%) are unable to fund an average practice model in the state. Apparent lower tax effort may reflect any of several conditions, including community preferences, varying needs, and inability resulting in forced prioritization of limited resources toward direct instructional expenses. The conclusion for rural communities requires a high consideration for adequacy of funding mechanisms, but it particularly demands a sensitivity for equity where uncorrected wealth ratios for capital outlay are 190:1.

Clearly, decisions about facility projects do not operate entirely within free choice principles in Kansas for either

rural or urban districts. If equity proposes that students should have access to resources regardless of residence and that taxpayers have a right to expect the state to support education to such an extent that variations in local wealth do not have an adverse effect on the educational system, then the conclusion must stand that equity is conspicuously absent.

The past 20 years of court reform have clearly delineated a sensitivity toward fairness and the centrality of state responsibility for educational equality, providing a framework from which to structure governmental policy. That framework suggests that states should exhibit a renewed interest in capital outlay funding as an issue of equitable concern.

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