

## March 18, 2019

Worlds are colliding in the Kansas Legislature.

The Kansas Senate has approved a school finance bill that could be difficult to sustain given tax cuts the Senate has also approved.

But Gov. Laura Kelly may be the one who prevents the collisions. She supports the school finance bill, SB 142, and will likely veto the tax cuts, SB 22.

SB 142 provides \$90 million in additional K-12 funds to address the inflation adjustment cited by the Kansas Supreme Court. The measure, approved on a bipartisan 32-8 vote, now goes to the House where Republicans have teed up an extremely different approach, HB 2395.

HB 2395 cuts off the \$90 million inflation adjustment after two years and includes numerous policy provisions opposed by the education community. These include private school vouchers for targets of bullying, caps on school district cash balances and new rules governing how school boards can go out for bids for roofing projects. The House K-12 Education Budget Committee is expected to vote on the measure this week.

On the issue of tax cuts, the Senate on a 24-16 vote, sent Kelly a bill that will reduce revenue by more than \$200 million in the next fiscal year. Most of the benefits would go to corporations. The Senate approved a House-amended version, which also includes a cut in the state sales tax on food from 6.5 percent to 5.5 percent and levies sales tax on some internet purchases. Kelly has said the cuts would rob revenue needed for education and numerous other functions of state government that have been struggling from lack of funding.

Numerous other education related bills that are still being worked on in the Legislature, including SB 7, which would allow school boards to elect officers in January instead of July; SB 128, requiring schools conduct nine safety drills

per year and HB 2346, updating vision screenings in schools.

Some important legislative deadlines are coming up. Friday is the last day for non-exempt committees to meet and consider bills and April 5 is first adjournment.