



April 11, 2017

To Whom it May Concern:

The Board of Directors of The Chamber of Lawrence, Kansas has voted unanimously to support Unified School District 497's secondary school bond initiative, aimed at improving facilities at both of the district's high schools and all four middle schools. The Chamber's Public Policy Task Force reviewed the bond proposal and submitted a recommendation to the Board. The Chamber urges citizens to support our public schools by voting "Yes" on their mail-in ballots.

The successful elementary school bond election of 2013 resulted in the transformation of 14 elementary schools to support 21st-century, student-centered learning. Now it is time to finish the process that started in 2013 and to do the same for our middle and high school students. Investing in designs that promote student collaboration, innovation, creativity, safety, and security for *all* K-12 students will ensure that the education and experience provided by Unified School District 497 remain a source of pride for our community now and in the years to come.

The Chamber's *Guiding Principles for Advocacy and Policy Evaluation* state that our community must support adequate funding, resources, and leadership for early childhood, K-12, career and technical, and higher education to prepare all students for the jobs of the future and to provide a skilled workforce to support the region's employers. The positive effects of education spending appear in indicators ranging from economic development to employment rates, small business starts, productivity, personal income, housing values, social stability, and quality of life.

A high quality K-12 education is one of the best investments the public can make. When you receive your ballot in the mail this week, we urge you to vote "Yes" for Lawrence.

Sincerely,

Jason Edmonds

Chair, The Chamber of Lawrence, Kansas