

Obama urges additional school spending in session with KC school board member, others

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President Barack Obama met with the Council of the Great City Schools Leadership in the Roosevelt Room of the White House on Monday. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss efforts to strengthen educational opportunities for students in city schools. Olivier Douliery TNS

President Barack Obama on Monday urged Congress to spend more federal money on education.

His call came during a morning discussion at the White House. Among those attending: Airick Leonard West, a Kansas City Public Schools board member.

Obama said that Congress should “focus on low-performing schools” and that states should avoid shifting money away from education in favor of sports stadiums or tax cuts.

“The notion that we would be going backwards instead of forwards in how we’re devoting resources to educating our kids makes absolutely no sense,” Obama said.

West was one of a dozen school officials attending the White House session as members of the Council of the Great City Schools, an advocacy group for urban education.

In an email, West said Obama looked at pictures of Kansas City public school students while discussing education spending. “He was well versed on the issues,” West said.

The federal government is providing the Kansas City Public Schools with roughly \$45 million this fiscal year, about 20 percent of the district's operating revenue.

It's also about \$10 million less than Washington provided the district the previous year.

The new White House budget calls for spending \$15.4 billion on grants to low-income school districts, an increase of \$1 billion.