

Oral Proponent Testimony before the Committee on Child Welfare and Foster Care
To
HB 2407 Creating conditions for the administration of certain tests, questionnaires, surveys,
And eliminating the parental consent requirements.

Presented to the Committee on Child Welfare and Foster Care
Monday, February 20, 2023
1:30 P.M. Room 152-S
By Jim Karleskint, United School Administrators of Kansas

Chairperson Concannon, Members of the Committee on Child Welfare and Foster Care

I appreciate the opportunity to speak with the committee today. I support the intent of HB 2407 in changing the current statute to allow students and parents to “opt out” of surveys, questionnaires, or examinations. While still not recording or requesting a student to provide and personally identifiable student data, and reporting of data will be done only as aggregate data.

The primary survey this bill was aimed toward is the Kansas Communities That Care Student Survey. The survey tracks teen use of substances such as alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs. The survey provides a measurement of student risk and protective factors that influence the behavior, attitudes, and opinion of Kansas teens.

The changes made to the statute by the Legislature regarding “opt in” or “opt out” for participation in the survey has greatly impacted the usefulness of the survey. The 2022-2023 school year was the lowest in regard to participation in the 28 years the survey has been conducted. Student participation dropped to less than 25% for the 22-23 school year. If tweaking of the survey needs to be done on questions we are not opposed. We also support the parents right to not allow their child to participate in the survey and reporting of data should be done as aggregate data only. The survey can be beneficial to assessing risk factors for teens. The results highlight the important relationships that guide school prevention and intervention programs designed to positively impact young people across the state. For these reasons we would recommend the “opt out” clause be used.

Respectfully,

Jim Karleskint
United School Administrators of Kansas