

February 13, 2019

Greetings House of Representatives Members:

RE: HB2150

I am proud to say this is my 19th year as an educator in the great state of Kansas. During my tenure I have had the privilege and honor to serve as a business educator, principal and now the director of teaching and learning. I have been blessed to work in the Emporia, Eudora, Turner, Shawnee Mission and now the Basehor-Linwood school district.

As I review HB2150 there is a clear underlying meaning behind the bill to privatize education and stifle the growth and development of our great public education system. This bill in no way works to end bullying, but rather creates an atmosphere of false allegations in an effort to get state funding for private school tuition, fees and transportation. This bill could create a windfall of false allegations against students and staff. There are no stipulations for false reporting and no parameters for decreasing bullying in private or public schools.

The bill does not guarantee that a school will take the reporting student and creates a competitive privatization of education that could lead to further recruitment and false allegations to lure athletes to private schools. This bill in no way works to decrease bullying, but simply works to shift students from school to school. There already is appropriate legislation regarding bullying and this bill would simply be another attempt to privatize education. Staff are trained yearly on bullying and how to prevent these unwarranted behaviors in our buildings.

This is simply another regressive measure aimed at the continued pursuit to destroy the free appropriate public education that our students deserve. With the limited number of private schools across the state, they would only be able to serve a minimal part of our student population, primary in our metropolitan areas. This bill is not in the best interest of our students, staff or parents. If I may provide further insight, please feel free to contact me at anytime.

Respectfully,

Dr. Ben Pretz