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Written Neutral Testimony

SB 63 - Expanding the provision of the ACT college entrance exam and WorkKeys assessments to non-public school students

Presented to the Senate Education Committee

Tuesday, February 2, 2021

By

Deena Horst and Ben Jones, Legislative Liaisons
Kansas State Board of Education

Chairwoman Baumgardner, Vice Chairwoman Erickson, Ranking Minority Member Sykes and Members of the Committee,

SB 63 seeks to expand provision of the ACT college entrance exam and WorkKeys assessments to students enrolled in non-public schools. Since this is not on the State Board of Education's Legislative priorities, we offer neutral testimony.

When it appears there is no additional expense to the state because of the current agreement the Department of Education has negotiated with ACT Inc. supplying the assessments, it makes perfect sense to include all Kansas students regardless of whether they are enrolled in a public or a non-public school. However, there are concerns that what has appeared to be simple, is indeed more complex. Since SB 63 would expand the provision of the ACT college entrance exam and WorkKeys assessment to students in both accredited and non-accredited non-public schools, ACT has logistical data concerns about testing the non-accredited non-public students as part of the agreement with the Department of Education. Those concerns are as follows:

- They don't have any way to determine how many students that might be.
- ACT assigns students to a building for reporting purposes and they have no building codes for many of the non-accredited schools.

For these reasons, the Department of Education does not know how the inclusion of non-accredited non-public students might impact the cost of the contract with ACT, which expires at the end of this year. Therefore, we urge moving forward with caution until full knowledge of the true impact of SB 63, as currently written, is known.

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Hopefully, the end result of this discussion and potential action will be more of our graduating seniors choosing to attend postsecondary venues to earn an industry-recognized certificate in a trade or a postsecondary degree.