

February 11, 2022

Chairwoman Kristey Williams and Committee Members  
Room 546-S, State Capital  
Topeka, KS 66612

RE: HB2662 Parent Bill of Rights

Dear Representative Williams and Committee Members,

I am Shane Kirchner, a former teacher and currently a teacher education professor from McPherson, KS. I am writing in **opposition to HB2662**, also referred to as the Parent Bill of Rights.

Several components of this bill cause me alarm. The first part of the bill lists various rights that parents should have. These include things such as access to curricular materials and access to meetings. In actuality, parents already have access to most of these items. All they have to do is seek them out by engaging with their child's teachers or the district. Any district official or teacher not willing to share this information should be dealt with, but passing a blanket policy is not the right approach.

Most concerning to me is the mandate of posting all teaching materials online. This requirement appears to be an unfunded mandate that will cost teachers and districts a considerable amount of both time and money. Districts will need to add multiple pages to their websites (IT costs), and I can only imagine the hours and hours of time needed to post all the materials used in the course of a school year.

What is most disturbing to me, however, is the restrictions this will likely put on the act of teaching. There is an art and a science to teaching. The science is often thought of as the skills that teachers employ during the course of the day to get the material delivered to the students. The art, though, is the nuance of connecting with students. It is the teacher who can glance at a room of children and see who understands and who doesn't. This bill, in my opinion, will hamstring the art of teaching. For example, an elementary teacher may decide at the last minute that her/his students need another day of practicing the times tables or have extra time to experiment with the water cycle. But, because these curricular materials were not posted on the website for parents to review, these extra practices or added experiments can't be done. Additionally, I'm concerned that if all exams have to be posted online, what's going to keep a high schooler from "hacking" the system and getting hold of a copy of the exam prior to the administration of that exam?

Again, I urge you to oppose HB2662 on the grounds that 1) parents already have access to most, if not all, of the rights as outlined in this bill, 2) this is an unfunded mandate that will take needed resources from schools, and 3) these requirements will hobble the flexibility, spontaneity, and artistic nature of teaching.

Sincerely,

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