

My name is Bryce Matteson and I am a school board member of USD 312 in Haven, Kansas. I oppose HB2345 because I think its passage would be far too restrictive in finding and recruiting qualified candidates for school boards, especially in smaller communities like Haven and communities within our district, Mount Hope, Partridge and Yoder.

In the upcoming April election, we have four seats available to be filled. Three incumbents are running unopposed leaving only one incumbent challenged. One single candidate when there is room for four. It is difficult getting people involved in running for public office. Passage of this bill would only make it more challenging.

The present system works fine. My wife has been a secretary at Haven Grade School for more than 15 years. I have been on the board for three. Any time an issue comes before the board involving my wife's employment in the least possible way, I recuse myself from the discussion and abstain from voting. It's as simple as that. We have had zero problems with the present system. Why change that?

Even if my wife was not employed by our district, this proposed bill would prevent me from serving on the board. Why? Because my sister, who is a high school counselor in Sublette, a district far away from ours and having absolutely nothing to do with the management or policy-making of our district, would force one of us to drop our service or employment.

To have either of us step down because of this bill would be ridiculous and irresponsible. Please defeat!