

February 2, 2015

Testimony before the Senate Education Committee

RE: Senate Bill 60

Gary Musselman, Executive Director

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the Kansas State High School Activities Association

Chairman Abrams and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you regarding Senate Bill 60

The Kansas State High School Activities Association and its 356 member senior high and 405 middle/junior high schools oppose Senate Bill #60 based on the following concerns:

1. Annually, more than 100,000 Kansas students who elect to attend accredited private and public schools that are members of the KSHSAA, earn their eligibility and participation privileges by meeting their school's enrollment, attendance and scholarship rule requirements. The process of earning eligibility is ongoing for students each semester. To statutorily provide eligibility for students electing to home school without regard to accountability to the same standards is a disservice to those 100,000+ students. Parents of these students will be justifiably concerned for the inherent unfairness, since their students earn eligibility for school activities by being accountable to specific and measureable academic standards in schools which are accredited. SB 60 imposes eligibility for students choosing home school without regard to those students being accountable to the same standards.
2. To grant automatic eligibility to home school children to play on another school's team where they have no standing or connection, fundamentally changes the nature of school activity groups and teams as extensions of the sponsoring school. The philosophical basis of all KSHSAA activities is that the student responsibilities comes before being an athlete. This bill changes that foundational principle. School teams will no longer be school teams, but rather community teams more like recreation or club teams. Will the Legislature grant eligibility for non-students to play on Kansas junior college, college or university teams in the same manner?
3. Parents and students elect to home school by choice. Like all choices, that decision provides certain opportunities and eliminates others. KSHSAA makes no judgment about home schooling except to point out there is no oversight, auditing or accreditation of home schools in Kansas. To afford participation eligibility without regard to those same requirements is an injustice to 100,000+ Kansas students' grades 7-12.
4. As the January 28, 2015 Fiscal Note on SB 60 correctly states, *"The bill will cause increased expense for school districts from greater participation in school activities."*
5. Since the late 1970's the KSHSAA has administered a category for small, non-accredited private schools and home school organizations known as the *Approved School List*. 29 schools are currently on the list for the 2014-15 school year. KSHSAA Approved Schools can and do compete with KSHSAA member schools in regular season and invitational competitions. They are then free to compete in their private school and home school association post season events on the state and national level. It affords them the best of both worlds. Throughout the state there are associations and networks of home school families who are successfully using the Approved School listing as a way to serve the interests of their students.

The KSHSAA asks that you not report SB 60 out of your committee.