

To: Kansas Senate Standing Committee on Education

From: Jerry Meier President Kansas Association of Middle Level Educators
Board member Kansas Association of Middle Level Administrators

Subject: Senate Bill 60

The Kansas Association of Middle Level Educators, and the Kansas Association of Middle Level Administrators vigorously oppose Senate Bill 60. I will try to keep our reasons succinct and reasonable.

1. There are very few, if any, standards to many home school situations. Standards are in place through KSHSAA to make sure students are in good standing with grades and behavior. What common standards are there for home schooling?
2. Under this bill, can a student who fails all of his or her classes, drop out of school, and then become eligible for after school activities in the same school? If so, is that fair to students who do work hard and achieve, but may not have the same athletic ability as the dropout? And with this new system are we telling young folks that sports are more important than grades and learning? We believe our culture does enough of this already.
3. Would “pick a team” become an option? By this I mean, if a student does not like the home school team within the district he or she lives in, could they use “grandparents” address to play for another school? If the grandparents or another guardian signs an affidavit of guardianship, why couldn’t they do this?
4. The above scenario would lead to highly unethical recruiting methods. The KSHSAA today regulates and is actively involved in any reports of illegal or unethical recruiting. How could anyone be expected to control recruiting from home schooled students? They can change addresses at any time and tell the district they now live in that district, or move guardianship to another adult.
5. There are financial costs involved in after school activities. These costs are absorbed through general funding of students. We do not receive funding for home schooled students, nor should we. I am assuming with our current financial conditions in our state that more funding will not happen for these students. That should be a major consideration.
6. Our teams and activities are an extension of our school. The students who participate represent our school. Home schooled students represent themselves. This is a major challenge.
7. If we have serious discipline issues in an activity, we have the right, and the responsibility, to not only stop the student from participating in that activity or sport, we can also suspend a student from school. If we have serious discipline issues with a home

schooled student, we obviously can stop them from participating in our program, but how do we suspend a student from a school they do not attend? And quite simply, that student could just “transfer” to a new home schooled address and play for another school.

8. Families make a choice to attend the school of their choice, be it private or public school, or to home school their children. In doing so, we also make the choice of what activities will be available to our students in that particular setting.
9. I can envision in certain areas of the state where athletic teams may be made up of a majority of students who do not attend the school they are playing for. Is that really what the State of Kansas wants to do? I am not sure that is what most constituents want to see.
10. I think the biggest, and most important issue is one of fairness. Students get up every morning, follow the rules of instruction in our schools, wish to participate in activities or athletics, and then may be replaced by a young person who doesn't have to follow the same constraints or rules, and has no financial obligations to the school. Schools actually become a community within a community. Though I am speaking for two educational organizations today, I can also speak for my school's PTO, which would find this change, if it passes, to be detrimental to our activity program and would be met with very strong resistance.