



**Senate Education Committee
Senator Abrams, Chair
H.B. 2170 Emergency Safety Interventions**

March 10, 2015
Bryan Wilson
Wichita Public Schools

Mr. Chairman, members of the Committee:

A safe, secure learning environment is a priority for Wichita Public Schools. The district educates over 51,000 students each day and we are committed to do what is best for students and families. I work directly with guidance counselors and secondary special educators who interact each day with students who exhibit behaviors that require attention. I have been a general educator and special educator for 18 years. I have been a Non-violent Crisis Intervention trainer for the past 8 years and have trained hundreds of employees in the art and science of verbal and non-verbal de-escalation, positive behavior supports and self- protection.

We believe the current regulations provide security for students while still allowing staff to safely redirect behavior. The state data shows emergency safety intervention (ESI) is used sparingly and impacts less than one percent of students. KSDE provides technical assistance for schools to assist in training and provide staff with options.

Based on the experience of our district and districts statewide we oppose this bill and urge the committee to allow the regulations to guide ESI application. However if this committee feels compelled to advance this bill we have several key concerns we would encourage you to address:

- “Serious bodily injury” is not defined in the bill. The word “serious” legal definition is bodily injury which involves risk of death, disfigurement or loss of body function. This is impracticable. We would ask to use the term “bodily injury” and define the term.
- Property destruction. As written the bill does not allow districts to intervene when property is begin destroyed unless the property destruction poses an immediate danger which refers to “serious” bodily injury. Property can be destroyed in situations which do not involved immediate danger.
- Training of employees. We would encourage the committee to insert language which is currently part of the regulations to clarify the training should meet the needs of the personnel and that training shall address prevention techniques, de-escalation techniques, and positive behavioral intervention strategies.
- Finally we would ask the committee remove the reference to sanctions. KSDE is able to provide a continuum of corrective measures.

We are in favor of creating a system of supports that allow individual staff members and teams to provide the best care, welfare, safety and security for our students and for themselves. We cannot afford to approve any changes that would provide a disincentive for staff to intervene when necessary because of the possible legal ramifications.