

Central Plains Elementary-Holyrood
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Jane Oeser, Principal

Chairperson Williams and K-12 committee,

Thank you for taking time to read my written testimony on HB2612. As I reviewed this bill, there must be an assumption that school districts are not following established laws.

I believe the state legislature should allow the State Board of Education to perform their established duties. School accreditation is more than a series of numbers or a disagreement on how dollars should be used or how a report should be completed. Schools are required to follow state laws and State Board of Education regulations. If schools don't show growth or meet the expectations, districts are provided the opportunity to review the process while KSDE provides guidance and support. Accreditation affects every student in a school district and should not be used as a punitive punishment based on the interpretation of a law. Accreditation should remain in the hands of the department who have the staff, skills, understanding, and experience working with schools and school districts; the resources to support all schools.

One could ask why the legislature has been able to break the law for so many years by not fully funding special education? Knowing the past history of the Kansas budget, why did it take multiple lawsuits before the legislature fully funded general education? Possibly because of the discrepancy in interpretation of what is fully funded. Don't get schools caught up in the middle of interpreting the laws and divert them from their role of educating the students.

In summary, the schools are governed by the State School Board and locally elected boards of education. Please allow our local boards to monitor educators and the daily work they perform. If they are intentionally breaking the law, I'm sure our boards can handle the issue.

It is sad that public education continues to have to justify everything to you up in Topeka. I have been an educator for over 35 years and do not understand why we don't have people in Topeka fighting to protect the educational system for so many students in our state. I encourage you to come out and visit our school and see the great things we are providing for so many wonderful children. Please put our Kansas children first in your decisions.

Sincerely,

Jane Oeser, Proud Principal

