

Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 1608

By Committee on Federal and State Affairs

2-20

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION urging the adoption of a student bill
2 of rights.

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4 WHEREAS, Elementary and secondary students across the state of
5 Kansas deserve a high quality education from engaged teachers without
6 interference from outside groups. The state of Kansas can provide such an
7 education by adopting a student bill of rights; and

8 WHEREAS, Parents, teachers, citizens of the state, local school
9 boards, the state board of education, the state legislature and the federal
10 government all have a role to play in our K-12 public education system.
11 The student bill of rights should be a promise by each such entity to
12 ensure that all Kansas elementary and secondary students receive a well-
13 rounded education from high quality teachers in a safe educational
14 environment; and

15 WHEREAS, Local school boards have a responsibility to the students
16 and employees of their district. Local school boards should meet that
17 responsibility by: (1) Relying on quality educational research from
18 credible sources when proposing changes to curriculum or local policies;
19 (2) using existing processes to curate and maintain school libraries and
20 book collections without interference; (3) seeking student and teacher
21 perspectives in making decisions for the school district by including a
22 student representative and a teacher representative on such local school
23 boards; and (4) hiring and retaining more healthcare professionals, school
24 counselors, school social workers and school psychologists to address the
25 increasing mental health needs of students and school district employees;
26 and

27 WHEREAS, In addition to satisfying its financial obligations under
28 section 6 of article 6 of the Constitution of the State of Kansas, the state
29 legislature should do more than the minimum for our students by also
30 providing free meals to all students enrolled in and attending elementary
31 or secondary schools in this state and ensuring full funding for special
32 education and related services at the 92% statewide excess cost amount.
33 To attract and retain well-trained and committed teachers and other
34 school staff for our students, the legislature should provide enough
35 funding to increase the salaries of such teachers and other school staff.
36 The legislature should also ensure that any private school or organization

1 that receives public assistance, including vouchers, scholarships, tax
2 credits or other public assistance, should be required to adhere to the
3 same accrediting, assessment and transparency requirements that public
4 schools adhere to, otherwise, such public assistance programs should be
5 discontinued; and

6 WHEREAS, The state legislature should enact policies that addresses
7 the needs and concerns of our school boards, administrators, teachers,
8 parents and students. In order to better understand such needs and
9 concerns, legislators should spend at least two days per year as a
10 volunteer in a public school in this state. Additionally, the legislature
11 should require every K-12 education bill to have input from at least six
12 current educators from various geographic regions of the state prior to its
13 introduction and prohibit out-of-state special interest groups from
14 requesting introduction of K-12 education bills; and

15 WHEREAS, Parents and teachers should foster a mutually beneficial
16 and respectful partnership in the education of our children. At the
17 beginning of each school year, parents should communicate their plans
18 for setting expectations with their children for the timely and effective
19 completion of assignments, class projects, test preparation and other
20 school work. Parents should also seek opportunities to become partners in
21 education by joining school organizations and volunteering at their child's
22 school; and

23 WHEREAS, A safe educational environment is paramount to the
24 success of all of our students, teachers, staff and educational entities at all
25 levels of government. Common sense health and safety measures based
26 on the research and recommendations of experts should be put into place
27 to protect our students and school district employees from social media
28 harassment, doxxing, verbal and physical abuse, shaming, disease
29 outbreaks and any other unacceptable behaviors. Teachers should not be
30 forced to carry firearms in their classrooms, and school resource officers
31 should receive comprehensive training, including bias training. The focus
32 in an educational environment should be on learning, and that can only
33 happen when everyone feels safe and respected in such environment:
34 Now, therefore,

35 Be it resolved by the Senate of the State of Kansas, the House of
36 Representatives concurring therein: That the Kansas legislature urges
37 every educational entity in this state, including local school boards, the
38 state board, and the legislature, and federal educational entities to adopt a
39 student bill of rights that would protect the educational interests of our
40 children; and

41 *Be it further resolved:* That the Secretary of State shall send an
42 enrolled copy of this resolution to Senator Holscher.