



**Senate Committee on Education**  
**Neutral Testimony (Written Only) SB 47**  
**February 11, 2025**  
**Submitted by: Dr. Tonya Merrigan, Superintendent**  
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Chair Erickson and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written neutral testimony for SB 47, requiring school districts to publicly list the names and email addresses of current board members; authorizing local school board members to add new items to board meeting discussions, ask questions or engage in discussion with members of the public and access school property; authorizing members of the public to address school boards at board meetings; authorizing payment of annual dues to any not-for-profit organization that provides services to member school districts.

Blue Valley has a student population of more than 22,400 and consistently ranks in the top tier of high performing schools, both in the state and in the nation. (See "Quick Facts" at the end of testimony.)

The primary goal of the Blue Valley district is **to ensure every student attending our schools has the educational programming and opportunities, delivered by quality educators, to allow them to thrive long after they leave our doors.** We embrace every student who walks through our doors and always work to provide them with the tools to succeed.

Regarding specific provisions of SB 47, the Blue Valley School district already has policies and procedures in line with these requirements. For example:

- We include our school board members' names and emails on our district website.
- We have a policy allowing for board members to add new items to agendas, engage with the public, and access school properties.
- There is time scheduled at the beginning of each regularly scheduled meeting for the public to address the school board.
- Regarding payment of annual dues to not-for-profits providing services to member school districts, we have never been asked, but if a majority of the board wanted alternatives to KASB, we would honor their wishes.

The Blue Valley Board of Education has a long-standing priority position that states:

*The Blue Valley School District supports...decision-making ability on the part of local Boards of Education to efficiently and effectively operate their education systems and opposes efforts that reduce decision making authority or autonomy of local Boards of Education.*

Our preference would be that the legislature leave decisions such as this up to local school boards. Again, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

**USD 229 Blue Valley Schools: Quick Facts**

K-12 Student Enrollment	21,767	ACT District Composite Average*	22.9
Early Childhood—grade 12 Enrollment	22,450	ACT Statewide Average	19.2
Average Daily Attendance	94.4%	SAT District Average	1357
Graduation Rate	96.7%	SAT Statewide Average	1256
Teacher's with Master's Degree or Higher	76%	*with 91.6 % of graduates taking ACT	