

SESSION OF 2025

SUPPLEMENTAL NOTE ON SENATE BILL NO. 47

As Amended by House Committee on Education

Brief*

SB 47, as amended, would require school districts to list names and email addresses of current school board members on their websites, allow school board members to add one discussion item to the agenda of any school board meeting, allow members of the public to publicly comment in regularly scheduled or budgetary school board hearings, and allow school board members to access school district property during school hours or activities. The bill also would amend law regarding annual dues for membership in a not-for-profit organization.

Board Member Names and Email Addresses

The bill would require each local school board to list the name and an email address for each current board member on the school district's website. The school district would also send the list of current members and associated email addresses to the Kansas Department of Education (KSDE), updating KSDE when any change to such information occurs. KSDE would maintain a public database of all school districts' local board members' names and email addresses, and post the database on its website.

*Supplemental notes are prepared by the Legislative Research Department and do not express legislative intent. The supplemental note and fiscal note for this bill may be accessed on the Internet at <https://klrd.gov/>

School Board Meeting Agendas

The bill would authorize any member of a local school board to add one item of discussion to the agenda per school board meeting.

Public Comment

The bill would authorize any member of a local school board to ask questions or engage in discussion with members of the public who are addressing the school board during a school board meeting. The bill would require time for public comments at each regularly scheduled local board of education meeting, including virtual meetings. This would also apply for meetings held for the purpose of a budget hearing or a revenue neutral meeting. The bill would stipulate that all public comments, questions, and other engagements in discussion would be subject to any procedural limits set by the presiding officer.

Board Member Property Access

This bill would allow school board members access to any school buildings and attendance centers during school hours or during school or community activities on the property, subject to any school district policies regarding property access. Current law grants the school board control of these properties.

Annual Membership Dues

This bill would authorize local boards of education and boards of trustees for community colleges to appropriate money of their general funds for payment of annual dues for membership in a not-for-profit organization rather than to a specific organization. This organization must provide guidance, resources, and other services to member school districts.

Background

The bill was introduced by the Senate Committee on Education at the request of a representative of the Kansas Policy Institute.

Senate Committee on Education

In the Senate Committee hearing, **proponent** testimony was provided by a representative of the Kansas School Board Resource Center. The proponent stated that the bill would override barriers of communication between school boards and constituents and would lead to improvement in student outcomes.

Written-only proponent testimony was provided by a representative of the Kansas Policy Institute, who stated the bill would help school board members best serve their community and allow for greater transparency between board members and the public.

Opponent testimony was provided by representatives of the Kansas Association of School Boards (KASB) and United School Administrators. The opponents raised concerns about cybersecurity, as school board member information would become public, and with school board meeting safety and orderliness, especially as local boards already have meeting policies in place.

Written-only opponent testimony was provided by representatives of USD 229 (Blue Valley), Game On for Kansas Schools, Kansans for Excellence in Education, Kansas PTA, and USD 233 (Olathe Public Schools).

No other testimony was provided.

The Senate Committee amended the bill to specify that time for public comment would be required:

- At any regularly scheduled board meeting; or
- At a board meeting for the purpose of a budget hearing or revenue neutral hearing.

Senate Committee of the Whole

The Senate Committee of the Whole amended the bill to restrict school board members to adding only one discussion item per meeting to the agenda of school board meetings.

House Committee on Education

In the House Committee hearing, **proponent** testimony was provided by a representative of the Kansas Policy Institute and two members of local school boards. The proponents generally discussed the need for transparency and accountability and stated that the bill would contribute to improving student outcomes.

Written-only proponent testimony was provided by Senator Shane, representatives of the Kansas School Board Resource Center, a school board member, and a private citizen.

Opponent testimony was provided by representatives of KASB and United School Administrators. The opponents questioned the reasoning for changing the meeting rules for school boards as compared with all other governing bodies subject to the Kansas Open Meetings Act. The opponents also expressed concern with hindering a board's ability to manage decorum and potential safety threats and to manage access to school buildings.

Written-only opponent testimony was provided by representatives of Game On for Kansas Schools, Kansans for Excellence in Education, Kansas PTA, State Board of

Education, USD 233 (Olathe Public Schools), and a private citizen.

Written-only neutral testimony was provided by the superintendent of USD 229 (Blue Valley).

No other testimony was provided.

The House Committee amended the bill to:

- Stipulate that board members' access to school district property would be subject to any school district policies regarding property access; and
- Stipulate that all public comments, questions, and other engagements in discussion at a board's meetings would be subject to any procedural limits set by the presiding officer.

Fiscal Information

According to the fiscal note prepared by the Division of the Budget on the bill, as introduced, KSDE indicates that the additional administrative requirements required by this bill would be performed by existing staff of the agency. However, if the combined effect of implementing this bill and other enacted legislation exceeds KSDE's administrative resources, additional expenditures for administrative costs beyond KSDE's current budget in future years may be required. Any fiscal effect associated with enactment of the bill is not reflected in *The FY 2026 Governor's Budget Report*.

The Kansas Association of School Boards (KASB) indicates that enactment of the bill may require school districts to incur additional administrative costs; however, KASB cannot estimate these additional costs. Additional security upgrades and cybersecurity services, as well as additional insurance, may be necessary as a result of allowing additional individuals in schools and attendance

centers and sharing board member email addresses. It noted the school board members may be more vulnerable to security and cybersecurity attacks. For membership dues made to not-for-profit organizations, school districts and community colleges may experience additional expenditures; however, any additional expenditures for these dues would be optional.

Education; local school boards; board meetings; public comment; contact information