

Testimony in Opposition to HB2099
The Massive Collection of Student & Family Data Must Stop
by
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How much longer will Kansas parents and the Legislature tolerate the massive amount of data being collected on every public and private school student and their family?

The Kansas Individual Data on Students (KIDS) database in the State Department of Education was initially funded by the US government. It is based on 28 pages containing 90 data elements which Federal bureaucrats want collected on each public and private school student in Kansas all the way through the next 23 years of their life.

Not only does it cost taxpayers millions of dollars every year for local school districts to report these data to the KSDE, but it also costs millions of dollars to maintain the database at the state level. Each data element is coded, yet there is no way to verify if the information entered is accurate.

Even worse, most parents have no idea that the data which they provided in good faith at the time of enrollment about their child is being sent outside the school district. No parental permission was requested or granted.

The KIDS database managers reported to the State Board of Education that there are nearly daily attempts by hackers to break in and steal these personal files. They do not know if files have already been stolen. But last Spring, two hack attacks of student data being collected about each student taking the Common Core state assessments were successful. The servers crashed and none of the test scores were valid or reported—but the data was stolen. It cost the state millions of dollars plus stolen student data.

HB2099 is about collecting survey data about students and their families. The results are not used by the State Board of Education to make any decisions. The descriptors allow easy identification of individual students and their families. The questions asked are no one else's business and cannot be verified as accurate—yet bureaucrats want to keep giving the survey—like they have since 1995.

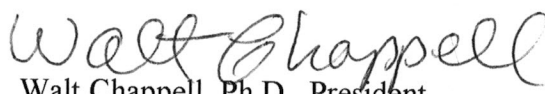
The bill tries to get around the SB367 data privacy protections passed into law last year by asking parents to “Opt-Out” their student. The law says that parents are to be provided with accurate information about any survey so they can decide if it is appropriate to “Opt-In” their child to take the survey.

The salaries for half of the 250 employees in the KSDE depend on getting the grant they administer renewed year after year. The monthly State Board consent agenda is packed with 20 or more grant renewals amounting to millions of dollars each with no verification that the data collected or money spent is helping any Kansas student or teacher. The only benefit is for the state and federal bureaucrats.

It is time to end this nonsense. The breach of privacy is growing as more student and family data is leaving school districts to be stored and mined by third party contractors.

I urge you to let HB2099 die a natural death. Instead, I recommend that K.S.A. 72-6214 be amended to state that: **“No student-identifiable or survey data shall leave respective school districts, either in written or electronic form, without prior written informed parental consent. Parental informed consent shall detail what data is to be collected, how data is to be collected, how it is to be used, the dates over which the data will be used outside the school district, and with whom the data will be shared.”** This amendment will allow parents to decide whether or not any data about their child or family leaves the district.

Respectfully submitted,



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