



Making public schools great for every child

KANSAS NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION / 715 SW 10TH AVENUE / TOPEKA, KANSAS
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Mark Desetti, Testimony
House Education Committee
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House Bill 2199

Mister Chairman, members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify on HB 2199.

KNEA believes it is important for students to participate in a comprehensive sex education program. We also support the right of parents to choose not to have their child participate. We believe, however, that it is better policy to have an opt-out policy than opt-in. This bill would require that boards of education adopt an opt-in policy.

The biggest problem with opt-in is that too many people simply don't respond. Those parents who do not wish to have their child in the program will seek the opportunity to opt-out. Unfortunately, an opt-in policy will likely remove students from the program who might otherwise have participated.

We would also note that in considering HB 2031 on sex abuse education, the bill was drafted with an opt-out policy.

While we do not support subsection (a), we believe that subsections (b) is a good policy recommendation and we would encourage its adoption.

As for section (c), while we do not disagree with it in principle, we wonder about its implementation. It would require a classroom that is used solely for the sex education program or require a teacher to post and remove materials between class changes. What would be the school's responsibility if a child who was a participant in the program shared something on the bus with a child who was not? Additionally, we wonder if this policy would also prevent the posting, for example, of abstinence posters in the school hallways.