



**KANSAS ASSOCIATION
OF SCHOOL BOARDS**

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Testimony before the
Senate Education Committee

on

SB 324 - Winter Celebration Curriculum

by

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January 28, 2016

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee:

SB 324 would allow part of history curriculum instruction on the history of traditional winter celebrations. It would allow for traditional greetings associated with winter celebrations and would allow for display of scenes or symbols associated with winter celebrations on school property. It goes on to say any displays must contain at least one secular scene or symbol if religious scenes are depicted and must not include any message that encourages adherence to a particular religious belief.

KASB appears as neutral on this bill because our legal staff believes it essentially reflects what is currently allowed under relevant case law; however, we also do not believe the bill is necessary. Schools may teach about religions and religious traditions, but cannot proselytize or promote particular religious beliefs under the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution.

This may provide statutory clarification of what is allowed, but state law cannot override First Amendment protections. Our only concern about such a bill is if it were misconstrued as expanding local school district authority in the area of religious instruction or celebrations.

Thank you for your consideration.