

Testimony before the

House Committee for Education

on

HB 2602

by

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Testimony provided on behalf of the United School Administrators of Kansas

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Chairman Aurand:

Thank you for this opportunity to address the committee.

Our organizations stand opposed to House Bill 2602

Reading challenges and disabilities are an enormous concern to Kansas Educators, but Dyslexia is only one of a multitude of issues which might affect a child's ability to learn to read. With recent KESA standards set forth by the Kansas State Department of Education, all school districts are required to have some form of tiered intervention of support. We believe this bill includes expectations that are already in place by KSDE.

Kansas elementary schools are required to utilize phonological screeners that begin as early as Kindergarten and usually continue through 2nd grade. An example of a common screener utilized is the DIBELS Screener. Once a child has been identified as potentially at risk, additional diagnostic assessments are administered to identify where the breakdown in both phonemic awareness and processing. When this has been completed, an instructional intervention is determined and implemented.

All screeners are completed for both general and special education students. A student who has been identified as having Dyslexia receives research based interventions via the tiered interventions model, section 504, or IDEA. Regardless of whether the student is determined eligible or not, interventions are expected to be research based and individualized to meet their unique reading needs.

In line 21 and 22 on page 1 of the bill it states: "Such notice may include a recommendation that the student be evaluated by a licensed physician, psychologist or psychiatrist." Although it is completely the right of a parent to take their child to a physician, psychologist, or psychiatrist, we don't believe it is necessary in most situations. A school psychologist or speech pathologist who is employed by a schools district is going to use many of the same diagnostic tools as a professional outside of school, but at no cost to the student or family.

In closing, we believe this bill is redundant to what schools are already expected to do according to the Kansas State Department of Education.