

Testimony before the
House Committee for K-12 Education Budget
on
HB 2119
written testimony by
Karl McNorton, USD 345 School Board Member

I am an opponent of HB 2119.

My name is Karl McNorton and I am a school board member in the Seaman School District here in Topeka. Our district serves approximately 4,000 students. This includes special education students, lower academic performing students, higher academic performing students, religious students, non-religious students, LGBTQ students and families, and minority students. We serve all students and families and we believe *public* funding should stay with *public* schools for the benefit of all kids.

We have several private schools within our county and share many students. We have private school students who utilize our resources for special services which private schools do not provide. Some of our families choose to send their students to private schools in earlier years and transfer to our public schools as they look for more course offerings and other opportunities. This year, some of our families chose private schools in order to meet the needs of childcare during remote learning with a plan to return to our buildings, if they haven't already. As you can see, public schools are already working side-by-side with private schools. Keeping the *public* funding with *public* schools will ensure *public* dollars are being maximized for the gains of all kids and in cooperation with private schools as needed.

Public school districts remain accountable to the state and our communities through reporting and assessments. Public schools continually look for ways in which we can improve academic performance for every student, regardless of any barriers that may exist. All academic and financial reports remain available to the public and subject to open records requests as stated in the Freedom of Information Act.