



900 S.W. Jackson Street, Suite 600  
Topeka, Kansas 66612-1212  
(785) 296-3203  
www.ksde.org

Janet Waugh District 1	Melanie Haas District 2	Michelle Dombrosky District 3	Ann E. Mah District 4	Jean Clifford District 5
Dr. Deena Horst District 6	Ben Jones District 7	Betty Arnold District 8	Jim Porter District 9	Jim McNiece District 10

## Written Opposition Testimony

HB 2602 – Establishing an alternative method for calculating graduation rates for virtual schools for purposes of accreditation

Presented to the  
House Committee on K – 12 Education Budget  
Monday, February 14, 2022  
By  
Deena Horst and Ben Jones, Legislative Liaisons  
Kansas State Board of Education

Chairwoman Williams, Vice Chairman Hoffman, Ranking Minority Winn and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for allowing our input on HB 2602.

The Kansas State Board of Education has set the vision to lead the world in the success of each student. As part of this vision, we have set a statewide four-year cohort graduation rate goal of 95 percent. We have improved graduation rates statewide since this initiative, particularly for special education and minority students. This is part of a holistic approach to address overall student achievement through social-emotional learning, kindergarten readiness, individual plans of study, civic engagement, graduation rates and postsecondary success. This bill presents challenges in addressing graduation rates in our virtual and physical buildings.

For purposes of accreditation, this bill changes the way virtual schools calculate their graduation rates. As proposed, this change in graduation rate calculations for virtual schools will likely provide an advantage to the graduation rate of the school of which it is a part.

When publishing its Building Reports, KSDE reports virtual schools and brick-and-mortar schools separately. This provides data points specific to each to inform schools of achievements and deficits in order to target supports. As proposed, HB 2602 would alter outcomes, potentially concealing areas of need.

Many high schools receive senior students who have not earned enough credits to be on track to graduate with their four-year cohort, yet those students count toward their school's graduation rate even if the student has only been enrolled for less than a month. From that point of view, HB 2602 does not ensure fairness for all schools. In addition, the federal graduation rate definitions will not allow such an adjustment.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify regarding HB 2602.