

March 19, 2021

Senate Public Health & Welfare Committee.

Please do not remove immunization compliance /regulation out of KDHE,

I feel that it is very important for us to have a medically licensed person who works in the KDHE and works closely with the CDC to update the schools, doctor's and work places on the current immunization compliance/regulation requirements.

I attended last year in Topeka the lobby from the anti vaccine group and listened to their complaints.

I, as a school nurse, do not judge anti- vaccine or feel differently towards them and their children for not being vaccinated. It is their decision to choose not to vaccinate their children. I need to respect that. Many times during this meeting I heard complaints that their rights were not being respected. I am sorry for that. I believe the policy and procedures we have in place in the school and work environment are there to protect their children and our workers in case of a break out of a disease at their school or work place. For example: If a child in the classroom comes down with chickenpox and it was determined through the KDHE and CDC the non-vaccinated child is a close contact, we would notify and send the non-vaccinated child home for further monitoring for the specified number of days.

Another problem I saw, is the anti-vaccine group did not have all their facts straight. One person complained that we were vaccinating everyone with Hepatitis B vaccine and this vaccine was made for gays and drug addicts. In observing the exchange between the house representative and the anti- vaccine person, it seemed he understood and was concerned. When in fact Hepatitis B vaccine was made for all because it is highly contagious and lives on the surface in drops of blood for 5 days!!!! Think about your sports, play, people caring for this person. They are at high risk of ingesting, or getting someone else's infected blood in your system by touching them and you have no idea they are positive for Hepatitis B. Like any virus it stays dormant in your body and flares up when your immune system is down. Many suffer from ascitis, liver failure and damage.

Also, you need to consider the cost. I had a dad who did not want to get his daughter vaccinated with the Meningitis vaccine the 2nd time because of the cost.

Required vaccines are free or covered by insurances. Our KDHE and health clinics work hard to provide vaccinations at a minimal cost to those with strained finances. I asked him, is \$30 - \$60 too much when a person who contracts Meningitis may spend weeks to months in the hospital, out of school and out of work. And more than likely will suffer from long term health problems because they were not vaccinated? He is taking his daughter next week for her 2nd meningitis vaccine.

In closing - the anti- vaccine group have the right to choose if they want their children to be vaccinated or not. They and their children should be respected for their decisions. But they are ill informed, not medically licensed, or rational as to why vaccines exist and should not be making or having someone else make the decisions that affect the majority of the people in Kansas. Therefore, the KDHE should be the forefront on immunization compliance and regulation. They are well informed, have sound research that is conducted with the CDC, medically licensed and have the medically sound knowledge to put this information out to everyone including the professionals like the doctors, school nurses, companies, etc. This information is very important for us to keep our community safe, healthy and prosperous.

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