



Oral Opponent Testimony on
HB 2236 in
House Education Committee

By

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Mr. Chair and Members of the Committee,

KASB appears today in opposition to HB 2236.

Kansas public schools are the pride – and often the lifeblood – of their communities. Graduation rates are at an all-time high, including for low income and special education students. Our high quality public schools attract businesses to the urban centers represented by many legislators and are the primary employers in the rural areas of the state represented by others. The legislature recently honored the Kansas Teachers of the Year, the cream of the crop of public educators. No doubt each member of this committee can share examples of great things happening in their constituent school districts.

KASB supports the development of relationships among local teachers, students and families. In Kansas public schools, parents have long played a prominent role, serving as room parents, site council members, paraprofessionals, and other school staff. And most Kansas school board members – accountable to local voters – are parents or grandparents with a vested interest in a strong school/community relationship.

Kansas parents currently have extensive legal rights over their children up to the age of 18, which for most students coincides with graduation from public and private K12 schools. Parents may opt their children out of courses or content, and many do so each school year. As a result, we feel HB 2633 adds nothing to parents' existing rights over their children and need not be enacted.

As written, HB 2236 is overly broad and would allow parents to withdraw their children from core classes such as math, science or reading if the child is struggling in those classes and claims “harm.” This sets children up for failure to progress through school, to become successful high school graduates, and to go on to a fruitful, productive life as happy, healthy Kansas citizens. As the representative of the 286 Kansas school boards charged with the education of nearly 500,000 students, KASB cannot support this provision. It is not in the best interest of Kansas children.

Kansas Association of School Boards

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Kansans are weary of the culture wars that are plaguing our state and our nation. KASB stands ready to work with the legislature and parents, and focus on the education of every Kansas child. We believe we can all accomplish this goal without the enactment of HB 2366.

Thank you.

KASB is a non-profit service organization built on an abiding belief in Kansas public schools. We have put the needs of students and K-12 leaders first since 1917.