

Kansas Families for Education

Demanding Excellent Education for All Children

**Testimony
House K-12 Education Budget Committee
March 14, 2019**

Thank you, Madam Chairwoman and members of the committee, to allow us to submit written testimony in regards to HB2395.

Kansas Families for Education is a statewide, nonprofit, nonpartisan pro-public education organization representing children and families since 2002 who depend on Kansas public schools.

We present this testimony in opposition of HB2395. This bill enacts many changes to current education policy and fails to remedy the Gannon VI ruling by the Kansas Supreme Court.

The bill appears to cut nearly \$200M in education funding which the legislature passed just last session. Most concerning is the removal of the 92% excess mandate for special education funding that is relied upon by some of our most vulnerable students.

HB2395 also includes an unconstitutional voucher scheme, which would allow public tax dollars to be used for private institutions, many of which are religious schools. We argue that this is a clear violation of the Kansas Constitution.

Further, HB2395 would weaken the ability of local school elected officials to make financial decisions in the best interest of their districts and students by mandating how and when they spend their reserve funds.

This bill erodes the work of the last legislative session to phase in SB61 over five years and totally ignores that the Supreme Court's declaration that phasing in SB61 with an additional \$363M in **new** money for inflation is necessary to end litigation.

The passage of this bill will do harm to Kansas students and most certainly will NOT end the litigation. The legislature worked tirelessly last session and came close to finally offering Kansas children a constitutional school finance formula. This bill drastically curtails that work.

We request that the formula not be manipulated, that we fully fund the \$363M in new inflation money and finally give Kansas school children the resources we know that they need to be successful.

We urge the members of this committee to vote NO on HB 2395.

Thank you to the chair and the committee for their time and consideration.