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Written Neutral Testimony

HB 2615 – Authorizing policies to allow students to earn course credit through alternative educational opportunities outside the classroom

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 2615.

This bill authorizes policies that allow students to earn course credit through alternative educational opportunities outside the classroom. As part of the State Board of Education's effort with school redesign, school districts can accept such educational opportunities now. Districts that accept alternative education efforts require that state standards for the course are met in order to offer the credit. A teacher on staff must also document that the standards for that course have been met.

While we do know that there are schools that have allowed alternative ways to meet standards, there may be school districts that do not realize such opportunities exist for all districts. HB 2615 would serve as notification of the student involvement in educational opportunities that exist outside of the classroom. The suggested policy also serves as guidance for assuring the state standards are met prior to granting course credit.

We do have a concern regarding Section 1 (d) and (e) which require districts to submit their proposals to the State Board of Education. The State Board would then approve or deny the proposals before they could be implemented. Such proposals are generally assessed by staff who are trained in the coursework standards. With current staffing levels at the Department of

Education, this would significantly overburden them with additional unreasonable workloads. Therefore, *we recommend that Section 1 (d) and (e) be deleted. Also, we would suggest that in Section 1 (g) (1) (B) 'is approved' be deleted so it would read "and meets course content standards as determined by the state board of education."*

Thank you again for the opportunity to share our thoughts regarding HB 2615.