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Dear House Education Committee Members,

Jan. 18, 2023

My name is Chad Meitner. I'm the principal at Thomas More Prep-Marian High School (TMP-Marian) in Hays. I'm writing on behalf of our school community and families to ask that you kill or not recommend the KSHSAA Classification Modifier bill.

TMP-Marian is one of 28 private high schools in the state. In a time of heightened scrutiny on what is "just", we often create new seemingly justified ways to discriminate. This proposal would force some students to participate at higher classifications while others, just as successful, would not have to.

If any KSHSAA member school is not following the rules, then that school should be penalized. If any KSHSAA member school is super successful in some activities over 5 years, then that school should be pushed to a higher classification. It is fair to hold all member schools to the same expectations.

What is not fair is the current KSHSAA classification bill being proposed. It is KSHSAA's clear intention to create a system that can be applied to non-public schools while public schools would not be held to the same standard. Basically, a non-public school will have to go up in classification if they win 5 or more state championships in 5 years' time while a public school would not.

The assumption baked into this proposal is that successful non-public schools must be cheating while successful public schools must be working miracles. Here are some recent miracles that I ask you to look at and honestly consider what is the difference.

Public school Central Plains has won 9 state titles in 5 years. Hanover Public Schools' high school won 11 state championships, including 4 of the last 5 state championships in football. Perhaps more recognizable, Derby High School has won 5 of the last 6 football championships in the largest classification. For 6A schools, there is no mechanism if you are too successful. You are already at the highest classification. In 5A, Goddard High has won six consecutive high school state titles in wrestling.

Are non-public schools winning too many state championships? After all, there are only 28 of them so how can only 28 schools win such a high percentage of titles?

In reality, an even more select number of public schools won an even higher percentage of state championships. Between 2015-2021, 23 public schools who meet the criteria of winning five state titles in the last 5 years won 28% of all state championships. Compare that to the 25% of state titles won by private schools.

I'll close with our school community's earnest request, please hold those 23 public schools to the same standard. Thank you very much for your civic service and time.

God bless,

Chad Meitner
Principal