

Joanna Miller, 7th grade, MVPS

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HB 2506-Virtual KSHSAA Bill

Proponent

Date of Hearing: January, 24, 2024

Dear Education Committee,

Hello! My name is Joanna Miller. I am currently a 7th grade student at Maize Virtual Preparatory School. I have been a student with MVPS for three years, and I love it! It provides the perfect balance of teacher help, in-person activities such as the Innovative Technology Class, and getting to work at home. However, I feel like something is missing. I have never been able to play school sports.

I have never been a super fast runner, a champion volleyball player, or a fierce basketball player. I can still play at home. I can still run though our pasture with our dog or bike on our gravel road. I can still play knockout with my family, but it's just not the same. It's not the same as running on a cross-country team with a cheering crowd, a teammate saying "You can do it!" and a fresh breeze combing your hair. It's just...not the same. Maybe I have a secret talent, just waiting to be released, if I only had the chance.

My family lives 26 miles away from our Jr. high school and 11 miles away from our high school. It would not be feasible to take an in-person class and still be a student with MVPS. We do not want to quit schooling with MVPS, but we still want to do sports. We have even considered having me do homeschool for 8th grade, so I could do sports. Traveling teams would make our schedule very busy and are very competitive, and the competition could suck out the fun.

I have two younger brothers who dream of being professional football players. Although this probably won't happen, maybe they could be high school football heroes. One of them is in fourth grade. When he plays football with friends, he gets disappointed that he may never get to play on a team when he's older. I don't want him to give up his dream so soon. He should have hopes and dreams, like all young people.

I have never gotten to be in a band, either. I play the viola at ESU's Stringfully, but the day is nearing when I will be too old for that. Then I may continue with lessons, but I will only be able to showcase my music to a limited crowd.

There are other kids, too. Other kids who sit in the stands at their local high school homecoming game and dream of being out there, making a heroic touchdown, doing twists and leaps as a cheerleader, or playing an exhilarating song on a trumpet. Other kids who have a talent that they want to show the world, or maybe they don't have talent, at least not yet. Maybe they have a hidden talent that's just waiting to be unlocked, to be set free, to be allowed to grow. Kids should be able to pursue their dreams, to reach for the sky!

If this bill passes, we would be allowed to chase our dreams. We could be out on that football field. We could be cheerleaders, leaping and twisting. We could be playing a trumpet, flute, violin, tuba, clarinet, drums ...the possibilities are endless! If you pass this bill, you are doing

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more than making a law. You are allowing many kids to chase their dreams, to leap for the sky!

You are letting a discouraged student discover their talent! You are changing lives!

If this bill passes we will be saying more than thank you! We will be saying "Thank you for letting me grow! Thank you for letting me find my talent! Thank you for not leaving me in a state of discouragement! Thank you!!!!!!!"

Sincerely,

Joanna Miller