

Chairperson Williams and K-12 committee,

Thank you for taking time to read my written testimony on HB2612.

I am an educator with 44 years of experience. The last 19 years have been in Kansas.

As I reviewed this bill, there must be an assumption that school districts are not following established laws.

I can assure that we are struggling to remain in conformance with all state laws and regulations. The problem is that the interpretation of such laws and regulations seems to be in a constant state of flux.

I believe the state legislature should allow the State Board of Education to perform their established duties.

School accreditation is more than a series of numbers or a disagreement on how dollars should be used or how a report should be completed.

Schools are required to follow state laws and State Board of Education regulations.

If schools don't show growth or meet the expectations, districts are provided the opportunity to review the process while KSDE provides guidance and support. Accreditation affects every student in a school district and should not be used as a punitive punishment based on the interpretation of a law. Accreditation should remain in the hands of the department who have the staff, skills, understanding, and experience working with schools and school districts; the resources to support all schools.

Another concern with the bill is a state audit must be performed by KSDE to reinstate the district to accredited status. The auditors are already overwhelmed with the caseload so adding to their duties will only diminish the fidelity of their work.

In summary, the schools are governed by the State School Board and LOCALLY elected boards of education. Please allow our local boards to monitor educators and the daily work they perform. If they are intentionally breaking the law, I'm sure our boards can handle the issue.

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