



## USD 507 Satanta

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February 1, 2024

Chairperson Williams and K-12 committee,

Thank you for taking time to read my written testimony on HB2612. As a district leader, I take my duty to ensure that the school district follows all state laws very seriously, and I believe that HB2612 is unnecessary. The state legislature should allow the State Board of Education to handle accreditation. Under the newly approved accreditation system in Kansas, districts are required to follow state laws and State Board of Education regulations. If schools don't show growth or meet compliance expectations, districts are provided the opportunity to review the process while KSDE provides guidance and support. The state BOE and KSDE already have a system in place to address districts that struggle to comply with requirements. Accreditation should not be used as a punishment. Let's base accreditation decisions on the work that schools are doing to advance student learning, instead of getting schools caught in the middle of differing interpretations of the law.

Another concern with the bill is that it requires a state audit be performed by KSDE to reinstate the district to accredited status. Auditors are trained to deal with numbers only, not the big picture issues that impact accreditation. For this reason, accreditation decisions should not be placed in the hands of already overworked auditors.

I am also concerned that HB2612 only addresses public schools, not private or charter schools. This sets up an unfair system where private schools are allowed to violate laws and regulations, while public schools can be stripped of their accreditation based on individual interpretation of laws.

Kansas public schools are governed by the State School Board and locally elected boards of education. As a lifelong Kansan, I value the principle of local control. Please allow our local boards to monitor educators and the daily work they perform.

Sincerely,

Karen Burrows

USD 507 Superintendent

*Every student, every day, whatever it takes.*