



Kansas PTA
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January 28, 2022

Written Testimony to House Education Committee

Honorable Chair, Representative Steve Huebert

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Room 286-N, State Capitol Building

Neutral [House Bill 2466](#) – establishing the promoting advancement in computing knowledge act to increase the availability of computer science education in Kansas schools.

Hearing: Tuesday, February 1, 2022, 1:30 PM Room 218-N

Honorable Chairman Huebert and Committee Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony regarding HB 2466 – computer science. The Kansas PTA is appreciative of all the time and effort that Chairman Huebert has given to Graduation Task Force and this Committee, on behalf of the public education system that serves nearly 487,000 Kansas youth preK-12 and accredited non-public schools serving close to another 27,000. **While the Kansas PTA is supportive of many elements of this bill, our position is on the bill Neutral in its present form due to legislative graduation requirement.**

Our primary concerns with HB 2466 are the sections on coursework specifications and on a graduation requirement, even though present language sunsets the requirement on the effective date of the legislation. The Kansas PTA recognizes the constitutional authority of the Kansas State Board of Education to establish graduation requirements and their expertise in conjunction with the Kansas Department of Education to make such changes – with the capacity to consider intended and unintended consequences.

[Legislative Priority 1](#) – Kansas Constitution. Kansas PTA supports efforts to preserve the Kansas Constitution. This includes Article VI, regarding public education, to protect non-partisan elections of local school board members, to retain legislators' obligation to provide suitable finance for ongoing educational improvement, as well as State Board of Education oversight of state education standards for learning, accreditation, graduation and teacher licensure.

The requirement also potentially stands to be in conflict with students and parents role in choosing their personalized path to college and career readiness, through the [individualized plans of study](#).¹ While general computer literacy has become a fairly common expectation for post-high school graduates as well as K-12 students, software development is not for all high school graduates.

Kansas PTA welcomes the three sections of this bill that would allocate funding for the development and support of computer science in teacher development programs, including recruitment of non-typical students. Additional funding could help to increase the number of qualified teachers and to empower school districts with the capacity to offer more courses, with the intent of increasing the number of students with computer science skills in preparation of a growing career field.

We support the Kansas [Computer Sciences Standards](#),² adopted by the Kansas State Board of Education in 2019. [Kansas Curricular Standards](#)³ provide information on what students should know and be able to do at different grade levels, across 14 different content areas. Kansas curricular standards are guidelines school districts can use to develop their curriculum.

We acknowledge concerns identified in the work of the 2021 State of Computer Science Education [national survey](#).⁴ In terms of urgency, however, it is equally relevant to note that while only 27% of Kansas school districts are reported to offer computer science courses in 2019, these may likely include the largest Kansas school districts. Meaning, it is very likely that close to 70% of Kansas students have access to computer science courses.

We support the work of the Graduation Task Force and recognize the efforts of Chairman Huebert, author and sponsor of this bill. We recognize that members of the Task Force have engaged in significant work to update and revise Kansas graduation requirements which has been a point of conversation with the legislature for several years.

On behalf of the parents, teachers, and patrons of the Kansas PTA, we hope that the final bill HB 2466 can move forward without the graduation requirements. Thank you for your time and consideration.

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THE PTA POSITION

Kansas PTA is a nonpartisan association that promotes the welfare of children and youth. The PTA does not endorse any candidate or political party. Rather, we advocate for policies and legislation that affect Kansas youth in alignment with our legislative platform and priorities. [PTA mission and purpose](#) have remained the same since our inception over 100 years ago, focused on facilitating every child's potential and empowering families and communities to advocate for all children.

Endnotes

1 KSDE (website): <https://www.ksde.org/Agency/Fiscal-and-Administrative-Services/Communications-and-Recognition-Programs/Vision-Kansans-Can>

2 KSDE (website): <https://www.ksde.org/Agency/Division-of-Learning-Services/Career-Standards-and-Assessment-Services/Content-Area-A-E/Computer-Science>

3 KSDE (website): <https://www.ksde.org/Agency/Division-of-Learning-Services/Career-Standards-and-Assessment-Services/CSAS-Home/Curricular-Standards>

4 Code Advocacy Coalition, CSTA & ECEP (website): https://advocacy.code.org/2021_state_of_cs.pdf