

Senate Bill 128 emails

Good day- I want to encourage you to support this bill. We pay taxes and we also pay 11k annually for private school as a result of situations occurring in public schools.

Please support freedom in education choice. My son is getting a far better education privately.

Austin Lee

Good afternoon!

Please support SB128 for a right for school choice! Please stand with Kansas families to have the freedom to make the right choice for their child's education.

Much appreciation,
Jennalee Ekeland

This is a very important bill! School choice is a must. Sending our kids to a private school was a very different choice! But one we felt was necessary and we have no regrets. That being said, it is financially difficult to make work. This bill would help a lot. Please pass this bill.

Thank you!

T.J.

It is my understanding that there is a bill regarding school choice that is being reviewed for the State of Kansas. My family has chosen to attend Elyria Christian School after 6 years of attending public school. Our choice was based on the curriculum being taught in the public school system that conflicted with so many of our families moral beliefs. Our decision was also based on the fact that our youngest child has dyslexia due to medical defects at birth. He needed extensive aid that the public system told us they could not provide and actually suggested we go to private school where he could have smaller class sizes and more in depth assistance.

Because of these factors we chose private school however my husband and I do not live far above the poverty level with 5 people in the home. It would be a huge help to our family financially if the school choice bill would pass in Kansas. Please consider supporting SB 128 to benefit so many families that desire a better education for their kids.

Sincerely,
Summer Moody

I am writing to you on behalf of my support for Christian Schools.

Two out of three of our children attended a Christian School (Berean Academy) and graduated from there. One attended from Jr. High through High School and the other his High School years. My third one attended a Public School, which I might add, I had the privilege of being on the School Board.

I can assure you that the one who attended the Public School would without a doubt, choose to attend a Christian School if given the choice. At Public School, he was threatened with bodily harm-thrown against a locker-and actually hid in the shadows after sporting events, which he participated in, for fear of being harassed. He was uncomfortable going there for that reason and several others.

Having been on the School Board, I was told that a student had brought a firearm to school, but when the staff went to check on it, it had been removed by the student. That was just one instance....and that was in the 80's when that was not the norm.

I believe that ALL students should have the security and stability of a 'safe place' to study, be with their friends and encourage each other. I believe that they should have a CHOICE to attend a Christian School, regardless of Social status or finances. My husband and I did not have the finances to send our children to a Christian School, but I worked, He worked and God saw to it that we could send them. We looked on it as an investment.

I have always said, based on experience, that a Public School will prepare a child for a higher education.....but a Christian School prepares them for LIFE.

Please, I am humbly asking that you pass SB #128 to make Christian Schools available to all.

God Bless You for your time!
Sincerely,

Dorothy Smith

My name is Diane and I'm mom to a freshman in high school and a third grade student. One is currently attending a private school and I homeschool the other. My hope is that both of them can attend the private school next fall. I'm writing to encourage you and others to vote in favor of school choice. As a family who has not seen their tax dollars go toward our children's education in the 14 years we've had kids... it would be so wonderful to have a tax credit to help with their tuition and schooling expenses. It is a struggle every year to afford tuition and books. We make a sacrifice by forgoing fancy family vacations, new cars, and fun events in order to provide the schooling we do. (Not to mention just paying the monthly bills!) It's well worth it in our minds, but wow! This bill would be absolutely instrumental in helping our financial struggles in this way. Please choose school choice. Please convince your fellow legislators that this is not only a good decision for so many families... but also the right thing to do. Why shouldn't our tax dollars follow our students?

Diane Frazier
McPherson, KS

Please support SB 128!

Jeff J. Janssen

To whom it may concern:

Please find my letter of support for SB 128. My wife and I are residents of Wichita in the state of Kansas, and we currently send our daughter (14, Freshman) to Trinity Academy. We have been fortunate enough to send her to this amazing institution since she was in 3rd grade, but her being able to graduate from Trinity has recently come into jeopardy. My wife's photography business was nearly crippled during Covid and that has made our ability to pay the \$1000 monthly tuition at Trinity a severe challenge.

We are currently cutting back in so many areas to keep her enrolled, but we know of many parents that are no longer able to accomplish the same. We know that academic excellence will benefit our daughter at this critical period in her young life. That, added to the spiritual basis to Trinity made it the only real option we considered for her education. We will continue to sacrifice, but it hurts to see other families who are out of options.

It is our prayer that as our elected leaders, you pass Senate Bill 128, and make Trinity and other wonderful educational options like it, an option to more and more families who currently can simply not afford it.

God's Blessings,

Scott and Jill Deines
9122 E. Windwood Court
Wichita, KS 67226

I have recently been made aware of discussion of a new Senate Bill 128, which provides a tax credit for families who pay for private education. Please consider this my letter of support for SB 128.

My wife, Shelly, and I both grew up in small communities, and value the education we received in our small town public school districts. We have raised our four children in Wichita, and in an attempt to create as many "small town feels" as possible, we have chosen to educate our kids in local private Christian schools. We have truly loved the faith-based component of our kids' education, and have been blessed to be able to provide this environment to our children.

I would love to see more families have the option of educating their children in a Christian school environment, and I truly believe that this tax credit could help make this private education more affordable for them.

Thank you for your time and your consideration of SB 128. Have a blessed day and a blessed week.

Charlie and Shelly Green

--

Charles Green, MD

Physician

Family Medicine

Ascension Medical Group Via Christi, P.A.

4815 E. 31st St. South

Wichita, KS 67210

Please accept this email note as written support for Kansas Senate Bill 128 on School Choice Tax Credits. Myself and my family are blessed to be able to send our 13 year old son to a private Christian school but it does come at a cost. While we are glad to also contribute to the community we live in, the tax credit to at least partially offset the private tuition we choose to pay would be a welcome one.

My wife and I live at 600 Brome Grass Circle, Inman, KS and our son goes to Elyria Christian School in Elyria, KS.

Thank you for your time.

Tom Saffel

McPherson



Tom Saffel

President | 620.755.8942

P.O.Box 431 | McPherson, KS 67460 | 620.504.5049 | pliteam.com

I support the School Choice bill!

I grew up going to a small rural private school and am now starting to send my own children to private school. This would be immensely helpful!

Thank you,
Julayne Gemmer

Please vote in favor of this bill. Many parents would love to send their kids to Christian schools but can't afford to. This bill passing would be Huge for Christian school's parents. Please vote yes to pass this bill.

Brian Johnson
Derby, KS 67037

I am writing to voice my support for this bill, and for the idea of school choice in Kansas. I have several nieces and nephews who are going to private schools, where they thrive in smaller classrooms with more individual attention, because of the major decline in the quality of public education, especially since COVID. Supporting parents' decision to choose private school is important for the future of young Kansans, and allowing the money to follow the student is a great way to do that.

I urge you to support SB128

Respectfully,

Susan Shepard

I wanted to send a note of my support for SB 128. I am a parent of three kids, the oldest of which is a first grader at Elyria Christian School in McPherson. As an alumnus of Emporia Christian School in Emporia, and as a Christian, it is extremely important to me to be able to send my children to a private school where they will not only get a Christ-centered education, but also a superior academic experience. While Elyria offers sports and extracurricular activities, the main focus is on academics which are the foundations that help kids to be successful in college and into their future careers. Furthermore, outcomes for students who attend private schools are much better with a much lower annual cost per student. That being said, I think more people should have the option to be able to send their kids to private schools and relieving some of the financial burden for families so that they can be very important.

Thank you for reading my letter in support of SB 128.

- Jason Green

I am writing in support of SB 128. I have three children ages 9, 8, and 5. Unfortunately our oldest experienced his first year of school the same time the COVID pandemic hit the United States. As the state of Kansas was one of the first states to go to remote schooling, his education was significantly affected from the time of kindergarten. As the pandemic unfolded, I, like many other parents around the country, became intimately aware of what he was being taught. I am so grateful that he was in a private school at that time and I was a stay at home mom. The school we chose for him continued to challenge him and maintain academic rigor in spite of the pandemic. It was their priority to return him and his 6 year old classmates to in person school ASAP. As the pandemic continued into years one and two, it became quite clear to us that public schools did not represent the academic standards that we knew our children could achieve nor did they seem to have the interests of students whole being in focus. It was heartbreaking to see our children see additional months of in person education that our neighbors and family did not get. This placed our children significantly ahead of theirs in achievement. We are certainly grateful for this, but it seems so unnecessary in this day and age that such achievement gaps should exist.

Additionally, over the last 3 years, we have seen and heard of increasing emphasis on social issues over academics. For those reasons, we can not in good conscience consider sending any of our children to public schools. We have been able to afford to send our students to private school for the last 4 years and we will do everything we can to make sure that continues. However, if we are unable, homeschool is the only alternative available to our family. We pay a significant amount of money to support private education for our kids and others. We would love to have some of our tax dollars work towards our own kids' tuition. We also feel it is very important for families to feel empowered to make the best choice for their children, not the government nor not have to depend on annual scholarships or donors which change from year to year. A child's education is much too important to be placed in limbo each year based on finances. I believe this bill reflects the best interests of our family and all Kansas families, left or right, religious or not, rich or poor. All families could have the choice of an excellent school that maintains academic rigor and their families values. Thank you for your consideration.

Erika Anderson
316-XXX-XXXX

I am writing this letter to let you know how much myself and my family support Bill SB 128 for School Choice! I have three children; one is attending Elyria Christian School as a first grader. I am amazed to see my child academically, mentally, socially, physically, and emotionally THRIVING at school. While only six, she has already shown that she has more compassion, concern, and care for others than most adults I know. My daughter can read, understands elementary math, and has a heart for caring for animals and learning more and more in science class. School Choice is an amazing bill and would positively affect the lives of many and have a tremendous impact on shaping our future generations.

I can honestly say that I am learning so much from my own six-year-old from what she is learning at Elyria Christian school. She memorizes bible verses, talks non-stop about Abraham Lincoln, and loves to teach her younger brother what she is learning; he is excited himself to join ECS in a year and a half! I grew up in Public school and see what a difference academically there is between my daughter's education vs. my own.

I only wish more people would have the opportunity to be able to send their kids to private schools and relieving some of the financial burdens for families so that they can is very important. School Choice would be an amazing bill to see pass and for me and my house, we are in support!

Thank you for reading my letter in support of SB 128 School Choice.

Thank you for your time today!

Sarah Green

I write to you (Senate Tax Committee) in enthusiastic support of SB128. For the last 10 years, I have sent my daughter to an accredited private school. My daughter has benefited from the smaller classroom size, smaller school size, and numerous opportunities to be involved in extracurricular activities including music, art, sports, and student government. For my family and especially for my daughter, this is a decision I do not regret...even though it comes with a substantial financial burden. I believe SB128 provides an opportunity for school choice in the state of Kansas by allowing the BASE aid that would otherwise be provided to public schools, to be transferred as a tax credit to the taxpayer of tuition to an accredited private school. The tax credit is an obligation the State would be paying on behalf of my daughter if she was attending public school. I recognize that public schools need to be supported, and I do support my local public school district with property taxes as well as bond/special assessments. The tax credit proposed in SB128 would reduce the financial burden on my family and allow my daughter the opportunity to continue attending a school that fits her unique needs. I call on you to support SB128.

Respectfully, Anthony Wedel – Canton, KS.

I am writing to you today to ask that you support SB 128 Ad Astra Opportunity Tax Credit, a refundable tax credit that would allow me to provide a better educational experience for my three children, ages 6, 11, and 13. We give tax breaks to individuals in other areas, but not education. Why? Why is everyone so afraid of diversifying our education system- which has proven time and again to produce better results. Why shouldn't people want a choice in one of the most important decisions a parent can make- who is in charge of educating their children.

We removed our children from the public school they were attending during the pandemic, as we felt the public school system was failing our children. They closed school, and upon reopening refused any child, family, or parent that did not agree with the unhealthy approach of mass masking. The emotional and mental strain caused by these unnecessary measures- on top of what was already a very difficult time for everyone was too much, and we wanted more for our children. I lost all faith and trust in an educational system that no longer cared what parents thought was best for their children; this left us all in the dark and on our own.

I left my job, and our second income in order to be able to provide my family with the best education possible. We have paid for private tutors, paid teachers that have left the school system for reasons of their own to support us, paid for books, curriculums, tools, supplies, extra food for meals, travel to learn first hand. The quality of education my children are receiving is well rounded, hands on, and exciting to be a part of. There are so many different kinds of learners, ways to teach and inspire, that some leaders and administrators in schools have lost sight of.

I'm not trying to defund public school; I think the public school system provides a service to the community-even though it has become as bloated, mismanaged, and ineffective as our federal government at times. But as a Kansas resident, and a taxpayer that helps to fund my local community and schools, I think it is only fair to allow a portion of funding to follow the students. ALL children should have funding for education-not just public school children. Let parents-the ones who care most for our children's well being and educational experiences decide how that money could be best utilized for each individual child; A tax credit would help with the expenses that it takes to provide the high quality education we seek.

I kindly ask for your support of SB 128 for these reasons.

Thank you,
Trisha Slough
Lawrence, KS

I am so pleased to write to you today to voice my support for SB 128, the Ad Astra Opportunity Tax Credit. My family has decided not to utilize the public schools in our district. We have instead opted to educate our 6-year-old daughter (and our two younger children) ourselves, at home. It is exciting to have a chance to pass on our love of learning to our kids in this way, and to help them discover some of the wonderful intellectual pursuits available to them.

Our six-year-old daughter is precocious, and the education we give at home can keep up with her rapid learning pace and far-ranging interests. We purchase specialized curricula in different subject areas. We buy many books that are not available in the local public library system, or that we read so many times that we cannot keep them from the library long enough. We do art projects, science experiments, and hands-on math learning. We purchase audiobooks of classic literature, which she listens to again and again. We enrich our daughter's education with field trips in the arts, sciences, history, and more. And we practice sports - soccer, baseball, football, gymnastics, bicycling - at home, for physical education.

In some ways, we will never be able to reproduce the resource-rich environment of a public school. Yet, many materials are so essential for educating such a child, and so we do expend considerable funds in this endeavor. SB 128 would help us pursue a rich and full educational experience for our daughter - and, soon, our younger children.

One exciting innovation this bill would facilitate is the pooling of homeschool resources with other families to hire short-term instructors and presenters in particular subject matters, such as field medicine, veterinary care, engineering, music, or an artisan craft. We would also be able to utilize inexpensive locations to rent as a classroom for these joint lessons. It would be wonderful to be able to add this element into our children's education.

I think other families would come up with further innovative and effective ways to enrich education outside of the public school classroom.

I believe SB 128 would profoundly impact homeschool education in Kansas, enriching the lives of Kansas' children, and aiding in the production of bright, enthusiastic, adventurous minds.

I ask for your support of SB 128 for these reasons. Thank you for considering my submission.

Thank you,
Mrs. Hannah M. Sandal, esq.

We ask that you please consider including private school education as a refundable tax credit. We chose to send our daughter to private school because it was important for our daughter to be raised in a Christian school, have improved academic opportunities, and have a safe environment to learn in.

Thank you for supporting Christian education.

Sincerely,

Sheena Shoffner

The following is a letter in support for Senate Bill 128.

My name is Jason McClintock from Wichita, KS. I have four girls, my oldest is a Freshman in college and my youngest is in 1st grade. As a parent who has sacrificed financially for more than 6 years (with many more to come) to put my girls through Private Christian education, school choice is incredibly important to my family.

I grew up in Christian education as did my wife for many years. There are many things we value about our freedom to choose what school we send our girls to. Things like improved academic opportunities, safety (both emotional and physical) and most importantly Spiritual growth.

The financial sacrifices are immense but it is a cost I am willing to bear for the opportunity to send my children to our school of choice. Senate Bill 128 would provide some financial relief to that sacrifice and would force sub-par schools to raise their game to better compete. I encourage you fight for families in Kansas and push through a vote on this bill. It helps everyday families who make daily hard choices to put their kids in Christian schools such as Trinity Academy here in Wichita, KS.

Thank you for your support and help in fighting for the parental rights of Kansas families.

Sincerely,
Jason McClintock

Please know that I support SB 128 and the proposed tax credit for tax payers with eligible children seeking an education choice other than the public option. Parents should have have a choice in selecting a Christ based education for their children. Being compelled to pay school taxes and then paying tuition with after tax dollars is a scenario many parents simply cannot afford. It is highly unlikely the tax credit will affect public education but will definitely affect the lives of children whose parents simply cannot afford another means of education for their family.

Please consider supporting SB 128...

Best,
Robert C. Capps
Hutchinson, KS

Please bring school choice to Kansas this would be a major help to many hard working families across the board! I would never forget who helped get this passed and would be forever grateful thank you!

-Ryan Strutt

I am writing in support of SB 128. I have 6 grandchildren ages 11,9, 9, 8, 6 & 5. Unfortunately 4 of the 6 were in school at the same time the COVID pandemic hit the United States. As the state of Kansas was one of the first states to go to remote schooling, their education was significantly affected from the time the remote learning started. As the pandemic unfolded, I am so grateful that 3 of the 6 were in private school at that time and that their mom's could help them. The school they chose for them continued to challenge them and maintain academic rigor in spite of the pandemic. It was their priority to return them and his their classmates to in person school ASAP. As the pandemic continued into years one and two, it became quite clear to us that public schools did not represent the academic standards that we knew our children could achieve nor did they seem to have the interests of students whole being in focus. It was heartbreaking to see our children see additional months of in person education that our neighbors and family did not get. This placed our children significantly ahead of theirs in achievement. We are certainly grateful for this, but it seems so unnecessary in this day and age that such achievement gaps should exist. Additionally, over the last 3 years, we have seen and heard of increasing emphasis on social issues over academics. For those reasons, we can not in good conscience consider sending any of our grandchildren to public schools. Some of our children have been able to afford to send them to private school for the last 4 years and we will do everything them can to make sure that continues. However, if we are unable, homeschool is the only alternative available to the other families. We would love to have some of our tax dollars work towards our own grandkids' tuition so they can all afford private school. We also feel it is very important for families to feel empowered to make the best choice for their children, not the government nor not have to depend on annual scholarships or donors which change from year to year. A child's education is much too important to be placed in limbo each year based on finances. I believe this bill reflects the best interests of our family and all Kansas families, left or right, religious or not, rich or poor. All families could have the choice of an excellent school that maintains academic rigor and their families values. Thank you for your consideration.

Joel and Marcia Ensz, grandparents
Valley Center, Ks

I would love to see this go through! Our ability to choose what kind of education our children have has made a huge positive impact on them. This would help families support their choice of private schools, and would be very beneficial to said families.

Thank you,
Lisa Edwards
McPherson, Ks
Elyria Christian School Parent

Please find my letter of support for SB 128. We are grateful that the state of Kansas is considering a school choice proposal under Senate Bill 128. We are a family of five on a single income with three boys attending high school and middle school. Several years ago we made the decision to transfer our kids out of the public school system and into a private school in Wichita, Kansas because their values, curriculum and instruction aligned with our Christian faith. This has been a heavy financial burden for our family since our tax dollars did not follow our students to the private school. We firmly believe that all parents should have the right to choose which schools their children attend based on their principles, values, beliefs and faith. School choice drives increased accountability, competition and performance at the schools as the better schools will attract better talent, and will yield better performing students emerging into our colleges and the business sector. We support school choice and we would appreciate your vote in support of this important bill.

Respectfully,

Josh and Stephanie Hobson

Please support for SB 128. Our family has chosen a Christian education and our kids are thriving more than when in public school last year. It has changed them for the best and they will make a difference in this world. The financial impact to pay for school is costly for our family but the academic and spiritual opportunities is far greater than public school. A tax benefit would be huge for our family.

Please support 128.

Sincerely Amanda Diefenderfer

I currently have 3 children enrolled at Central Christian school in Hutchinson Kansas. As a family we have been blessed at the opportunity to have our kids in the school of our choice. However this would not have been possible without some financial assistance from an anonymous donor. Our desire was to send our kids to a private school where we knew they would be learning the same biblical truths that we teach at home and they are taught at our church. My wife and I both attended public education as we grew up. I personally know of many families who have desired to send their kids to a private institution but have been unable to due to the financial burden. What a blessing it would be If families could take advantage of a tax credit in order to send their kids to the school of their choice.

Thank you,

Jason Huff

Thank you so much to you and this committee for considering SB128, the bill advocating for school choice. As a family that is making the financial sacrifice to provide our children with a school situation that is in line with our faith based values, I would strongly urge you to support this bill. It is difficult financially with the number of children that we have, but we have determined it is worth it for us. We chose Elyria Christian School this last August. The transition from public to private school was a rough at first as the academic expectations seem to be higher at Elyria; however since the class sizes are smaller, my children adapted and I'm happy to report that they are thriving! There are many reasons why someone may choose to send their child to a private school, whether the reasons are faith based, school performance based or reasons dealing with class-size. The barrier for families who want this is a financial one in most cases. Each family should have the opportunity to do what they feel is best for their children and family situation.

Thank you for reading this and once again thank you for taking the time to consider SB128, the bill advocating school choice.

Sincerely,
Kasi Morales
McPherson

I would like to write in support for SB128.

I am a recipient of private school education. I feel it played a tremendous role in my upbringing.

I desire the same for my four children.

Two of my children are receiving private school education currently. My other two children will soon be school age, but our financial situation is questionable as to whether or not we can afford to send all four children through private schools. The tax credit proposed in SB 128 would be a major answer to prayer for my family in providing a way for all of our children to attend the same education and environment that we want for them.

Thank you,

- Nick

To whom it may concern

My name is Gary Gibbs. I was born in Wichita, Kansas in 1941.

My wife and I have four children. All spent part of their elementary education in a parochial school. Then because of availability they all finished intermediate and high school in the public school system. And for the most part I was confident with what they were taught and was pleased with it.

No more. Subject matter has changed significantly. Emphasis was placed on "reading, writing and arithmetic." No longer is writing taught (cursive). I don't think they now how to sign their name on a check and most struggle just to make change.

History is not taught but if it is it is not reflecting the proud heritage of our country (critical race theory).

We started the school day pledging allegiance to the greatest country in world history founded by Devine providence which is evident in every part of the founding documents and government buildings. Public education is failing us in these as well as moral character.

We should have choice in what our children are taught and not dictated by government.

Gary Gibbs

1010 James

Derby, Kansas

I am writing on behalf of my family in support of the "Ad Astra Opportunity bill." As one of the families who has had to make extreme sacrifices in order for my boys to attend the rural private school that we chose to send them to, I feel this bill would make a huge difference in the lives of many Kansans.

I grew up in a small town in Kansas very poor and the youngest of 10 children. I was bullied to the extent that I hated going to school and was left with emotional wounds that have continued into adulthood. So when my husband and I started our family and my oldest son was extremely shy and introverted I made the decision to send him to private school because I didn't want him to have to go through anything close to what my memories of school had been. When my middle son was born with a birth defect I was extremely thankful that we had made the choice to send them to a private school where my older son was thriving.

When my oldest was in Jr high my husband was laid off from his job and was out of work for 8 months. It was extremely difficult to keep them in private school with only one income. We had to rely on family and friends to help get us through that time. I know of many families at our school that are struggling to keep their children in our school due to financial strain right now and some have had to remove their kids despite knowing that the school was the best one for them.

I know that private education is not the right choice for everyone but for my boys it has allowed them to have a happy healthy childhood experience. My 2 older boys are now grown, married, and graduating college and are active members in their communities where they are making a difference in the lives of young people every day. I have one son yet in middle school and i feel that this bill would be such a blessing to our family as well as many others. I think it is very fitting that it is called Ad astra meaning To the stars. I believe that that's what this bill would help with... the per aspra part. I feel like this generation is facing enough difficulties that if our state can help lessen the financial burden in some way for those families who feel that private school is the best choice for their kids to reach their full potential then why would we not support it!??

Thank you for considering this petition,
Samantha Leinbach

My name is Victoria Le, I'm a parent at Trinity Academy, a private Christian school in Wichita, Kansas. I cannot express how important this bill would be for our family. My family moved to the States and I attended public high school here. After my experience, I couldn't, in good faith, let my daughter attend public school. Though placing her in private school meant we would be living paycheck to paycheck, we never looked back on that decision. As a household with both working parents, college graduates, and strong Christian values, we want the best for our child.

As we are doing our family planning and working on our goals in the last year, we have found it difficult to decide on expanding our family because we are uncertain that we can provide the best education, life experience, and care for them. I believe this bill would greatly benefit the future of our community, allowing parents a little extra stretching room to choose the right school for our children's needs, and showing that our government cares and supports private schools.

Private schools allow us to live where we want without having the best public school in the area and not having to move, in turn, avoiding shifting the demographic and housing market to attend a better public school. It can be a hassle between choosing to move (if one can afford) to a better district or paying the premium for private school and continuing to live in the desired area.

We hope the state of Kansas would support and pass this bill.

Sincerely,

Victoria

I'm a mom of 5 children and I am very much in favor of the "student choice" bill. This would help me place my children in a school that teaches according to my values and focuses on their academic education-not political ideology.

Please say, yes!

Sincerely,

Christy Wilson

My name is Jay McCurry and I serve as the National Director for Advocacy at the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI). We currently have 23 member Kansas Christian schools serving thousands of students.

Please accept this email as our support for Senator Caryn Tyson's SB-128. ACSI believes in, and stands for, freedom of choice in education—freedom for parents to choose schooling for their children. Parents know best the needs and strengths of their own children and should be empowered to choose the best academic options for them. Education Savings Accounts (ESA) provide true academic freedom for families to not only choose the school that best fits each child but to also access educational services and therapies to overcome barriers to academic success.

Thank you!

Jay

Jay McCurry, Ed.D.

National Director for State Advocacy

Passing this bill would be a huge benefit to families and households that are considering sending their kids to private schools but financially not able to do so.

I grew up in Wichita, where my parents sent me to private school. They sacrificed and stuck to a strict budget to do so. Now as an adult with my own family we have decided to send our 4 kids to private school in hopes we would be eligible for some type of financial aid. Two of our kids are in private school and our other two will be school age in the next year.

Choosing private school for our children has been a difficult decision only because of the financial commitment. The academics, safety, Christian curriculum, and opportunities that come with private school are only a few of the reasons it's a priority to our family to make that financial sacrifice but it's uncertain if we will be able to do so.

Passing this bill will lift some of that financial burden to all families who choose a private education including ours and a huge answer to prayer.

Please pass SB 128.

Respectfully,

Hailey - a Wichita mom

My name is Gregg Oehlert, Respiratory Therapist, father of three school aged children and concerned citizen.

Berean families in the Wichita, Newton, Whitewater, and Elbing areas pay a portion of their taxes towards the public school system, and only the public school system. This bill would support true educational freedom, providing parental choice that considers the unique learning needs of each student and the values of their parents. HB 2218 would finally provide a means to make education access equitable because it would give parents the financial freedom to direct the education of their children while providing accountability. As of right now, tax payers in Kansas who send their children to private schools must pay twice for their children's education, which seems very unfair, and limits who can actually attend.

When only one type of school receives all the funding that comes from taxes, this system is favored above all other choices. We are asking for you to support students, not systems. Please provide your support for the Sunflower Education Equality Act, so that true and equitable educational choice for families can become a reality. Many states have already experienced the benefits of a school choice program - Kansas should be a leader in this movement, not playing catch up.

Thank you for hearing my concerns and considering what a great opportunity this is to help families in Kansas.

Respectfully,
Gregg Oehlert

My husband and I were blessed to send our children to private school, 1995-2011. It was a sacrifice but worth it. Today, our daughter and her husband are making the same choice to provide their children with a Christian Education. Since all of us have paid taxes for public school and also paid private school tuition, the passage of SB 128 would be a welcome help financially. Please vote for the passage of this bill. Thanks for your attention to this bill.

Sincerely,
Vanessa Johnson

This is our second year sending our son to a private school and we couldn't be happier. After much thought, prayers and consideration we chose Elyria Christian School. We had experienced some unfortunate situations in the public school system and were looking for more. We wanted a more robust curriculum and a strong Christian foundation, among many other things. We have found these things and much more in Elyria. Choice of school is very important to us and we are blessed that we have this option. SB 128 would provide a sense of peace, so to speak, when it comes to the cost of making the decision to send our son to a private school. This possible tax credit would be a huge blessing to our family. In all honesty, any extra money is always allocated towards tuition and sometimes it feels like a game of Tetris making sure everything is covered. But at the end of the day, we wouldn't change a thing. We know our son is receiving a quality education in a school of our choice.

We are strongly in favor of SB 128 and the benefits that it could provide to our family. I kindly thank you for taking the time out of your day to read my message

Sincerely,
Cassie Sechler

I wanted to send you a note this evening to express my support for SCHOOL CHOICE and SB 128. This is a very important issue for myself and my family as we send three of our children to a private, Christian school. Removing our children from public school was not an easy decision (financially, logistically, and logically), but we wanted to ensure that our children were given a high quality education and given the opportunity to learn in an environment that mirrored our values. We have been extremely pleased with our new school and will continue to our kids there through graduation, regardless of the outcome of this bill. However, it is time that Kansas join the other 30 plus states (both RED and BLUE) that have provisions for SCHOOL CHOICE tax credits. This bill needs to reach the floor of the Senate for debate and discussion. The people of Kansas deserve for the issue to be looked into seriously and for our elected officials to go on record with their views on this issue. Thank you for your time.

Regards,
Tyler and Kendra Emery
McPherson, KS

I am a strong supporter of SB 128. I believe my children would benefit from this bill and as a parent, having the ability to select the best educational experience for my children is important.

Thank you for your service and representation.
God bless,
Austin Ochs

I personally sent my four daughters to a private Junior high and high school. I was financially able to do so but many are not. Not only did my daughters receive a top notch education but it also taught values that are important to me. I would support a bill that would give more people this opportunity. Parents who send their children to private schools pay taxes to support education but receive no benefit. This is a fairness issue and an issue to spend tax dollars wisely for youth to receive the best education for our tax dollars.

Paul Blythe

I choose to send my kids to a private Christian school in Elyria, KS. I am in support of this bill and desperately need the tax benefit. I work very hard to be able to afford tuition (even when it seems impossible). The love and support that Elyria Christian School provides had been such a blessing to my family.

From the Teachers, Administrator, Office Staff and even the Bus Driver, this school has been the BEST!! Being a single mother can feel pretty lonely at times. Especially at band concerts, sporting events and other school functions. I have not felt that way since we began attending Elyria. They welcomed us with open arms and made us feel like family from the first day. I have never felt like that in any public school that we've ever attended.

Please support us by supporting this bill.
Thank you very much!!

Leslie Schneider

Please find my letter of support for SB 128. I am a firm believer in Christian education. As a Christian Christ is in all aspects of our life including school. Also, many Christian schools have improved academic opportunities with smaller class sizes. The cost of school tuition defiantly affects our family's monthly budget. I know of many families who desire private education for religious or other special needs of their students but are not able to do so because of cost. Aid in the financial aspect of private education would benefit many Kansas families in allowing them to make the right choice for their children, resulting in a greater education for the student. Thank you for your consideration in my support of SB 128

Arie J Bons

I'm writing this as both a passionate mother and community member in support of SB 128, and to encourage the Kansas legislature to take a bold step in supporting parental rights and school choice.

Nearly 6 years ago, my husband and I purchased our first home after giving birth to our first child. Like many parents, we went searching for homes in the desired public school districts. We both came from the public school system and always thought our kids would go through them as well. Fast forward a few years when COVID became the new norm, the government kept our children from healthy learning environments, and the country became more politically polarized, including our school districts. We quickly began questioning what type of school environment would work best for our family, instilling both strong academics and the Christian upbringing we desired for our children. We are proud to say our son is now in Kindergarten at Trinity Academy in Wichita and thriving in every aspect, and so is our family.

My husband and I are filled with peace every day we drop him off, knowing that we are blessed to be able to send him to the school of our choice, and that his two sisters will eventually follow. We know that we are incredibly fortunate to be able to afford the tuition, but it does not come without financial sacrifices which will become even greater once our girls are older. Had we had our son a few years sooner, we would not have been able to even consider an alternative to public schools due to our financial situation.

So many families do not have the choice of where to send their children to school because of the financial burden of private education, which is truly heartbreaking.

Parents deserve the right to choose a school that instills in their children the values that are core to their household, and that fills them with peace when they say goodbye to them morning after morning. I urge you take this opportunity to boldly stand up for parental rights and school choice by passing SB 128.

Thank you,
Cassidy Detsadachanh

I expect bill 128 for school choice to pass with your support and vote.

- Please find my letter of support for SB 128”

Dr. Sameh Moawad DO, FACOFP, FACHE

I am a first year teacher at age 55. This is my third career. I love teaching. I work in a low SES school. This tax credit would allow me opportunity to send students from my class that may not ever have the opportunity to attend a Christian School like my two children have. As a family, we chose to to send our children to the school that was best to meet their needs. A smaller school with shared values, more accepting of differences and opportunities for furtherer academic growth. If we were to receive a 5000 taxes credit, that would allow us the funds to send a student from a low SES background to rise up through education and be given the opportunity to see different possibilities for their future.

All students are our future of our nation. Every student is blessed with the opportunity to choose.

Thank you for your consideration.
Carla Pannell
Goddard, Kansas
2nd grade teacher Haysville KS

with high standards and achievements and wide variety of life experiences from a the importance of choice for your family, parental rights, improved academic opportunities, safety (emotionally and physically) of your Christian school, and genuine stories about how finances have kept you or families you know from being able to send their children to Trinity

I am in favor of SB 128. It is important for my family and within my parental rights. It also provides improved academic opportunities, as well as emotional and physical safety. I know first hand how finances can prohibit this wonderful option. Thank you for supporting a balanced choice in this.

Sincerely,
Beth Bolt

Please vote for Kansans right to choose where their child should be educated and the direction of their tax dollars for that school chosen.

Thanks

As a parent of four children attending a private Christian school and as a staff member of that school, I want to give my wholehearted endorsement to SB128.

America has poured an incredible amount of money into our public school systems which have yielded less than flattering results.

As shown in recent election cycles, Parents really want to (and have a right to)have a say in the education of their children.

It is time for Americans to put the kids and their futures ahead of special interest groups. This bill would end up with parents getting to choose where their tax dollars go and would DOUBTLESS increase the quality of the kids' education.

Please listen to parents on this bill and do what is right for the students of Kansas.

--

Jeremy Smith

Assistant Superintendent

Sunrise Christian Academy

My husband and I have lived in Kansas nearly our whole lives. We both attended Kansas public schools. While I was very grateful for my education and felt I received a good one at USD 373, I can't say that I feel the same level of comfort in the education being offered today through our public schools.

My husband and I both work full-time in Wichita, KS. We work hard to be able to send our two precious daughters to Sunrise Christian Academy. We long for our girls to be challenged academically, however, we want their education to be rooted upon Christian values and a moral worldview based upon God's Word.

Next year, we will pay \$12,800 for both of our daughters to attend SCA for the 2023/2024 school year. As we have a first grader and a third grader, we have many more years to go. We feel very blessed to be able to afford this, but it is a large sum and sacrifices are made. While the State of Kansas spends in excess of 50% of its budget educating students, our daughters' education receives little, if any of this. The passing of SB 128 would be a huge help and a step in the right direction for so many Kansas families longing for alternative routes of education. As parents, it is so important for us to have the opportunity to choose what is right for our children. Please help us to do so.

I thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Michelle Riemann

I wanted to write in support of SB 128 and School Choice. My husband and I both grew up going to public schools and both of my parents teach in public schools. I am also the CFO for a small private college in Kansas. Education is a big part of who I am and I value the teachers, staff, and administrators that make everything work smoothly for our students across the state of Kansas. I have ran into many dedicated teachers and individuals throughout my school years and my two children's lives. No matter if a school is state funded or privately funded, one thing remains the same...they both feel like they do not have enough resources.

My two children (who are in 3rd grade and 6th) grew up going to public school until this current year. Again, we ran into many wonderful teachers who have positively impacted my kids' lives and our family. Our family made the decision to switch to a private Christian school this last summer because we wanted our kids in an environment that aligned closer to our religious beliefs and also so they could receive a strong, rigorous education. Again, we had good experiences in the public school and my kids have learned a lot, but when we switched to the private school we realized just how behind academically our two kids were. We have made it through 3 quarters now and my kids have learned so much. We are very thankful for the education that they are receiving, but the school needs resources and the teachers and staff make only roughly 60% of the salary they could make in the surrounding public schools. These are dedicated individuals and I strongly agree with school choice. I want my support and money to go toward where my child is attending. This school deserves to be supported just like the state schools because ultimately my kids will grow up, graduate, and contribute to the great state of Kansas. By supporting School Choice and SB 21 it is a win win for our families, students, and schools. Please vote in favor of SB 21 and address School Choice so we can bring this option to Kansas.

LeAnn Moore
McPherson County

My name is Eric Paubel, my wife Elena and I are residents of Park City, KS and we currently send our two youngest children to Berean Academy in Elbing, KS. We also have five older children, they have attended a mixture of other private schools, public schools, and homeschooling depending upon our stage of life and where we lived at the time. We believe that having a choice of schools for our children is a fundamental right. Not every school is the best fit for a given child. As parents we know our children better than anyone and we are in the best position to determine which school type, size, curriculum, and location is best suited for each of our children. In our case, Berean is a perfect fit for our family not only from an educational standpoint but a spiritual one as well. Berean Academy being a Christian school is very important to us, and their excellent reputation for education makes it a perfect match for our family.

Competition is a common building block to improvement in many aspects in life and is essential to a successful business. Schools are no exception, by expanding access to private schools we will all see improvement through competition. Competition between public-public, public-private, and private-private schools will create a drive for all to improve. Not every school has to have identical teaching styles and curriculum to successfully send out well educated young adults who will be productive and contributing citizens of our great nation. We have ever increasing competition from other countries so why shouldn't we push ourselves forward by having better competition within our own schools to excel across the board?

Obviously, financial considerations are a huge part of a families ability to exercise their school choice by sending their child to a private school. We have not always been financially able to send all of our children to private school. Sacrifices are frequently required but sometimes there just are not enough of them to make it happen, we've been there. Senate Bill 128 is a great step in the right direction, enabling parents to choose the best educational environment for their children's success.

We enthusiastically support Senate Bill 128 The Ad Astra Opportunity Tax Credit, and we humbly ask for your support to move this legislation forward to a passing vote.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Eric & Elena Paubel

Park City, KS

My name is Jeff Wendling and I'm writing in support of SB 128. 4 1/2 years ago my wife and I made the choice to pull our son from public school and move him to private school at Newton Bible Christian School. This was a hard decision for us to make as we weren't sure how we could afford it but we knew he wasn't getting the quality of education we desired for him at the public school where our tax dollars go. After moving him to private school he began to read on his own within a month where that wasn't on the road map for him to start learning to read until the following year. Since choosing to move our son to private school he has flourished in his education testing two grades above the class he is in. While we are pleased with his growth we are worried about if we can sustain sending him and his younger brother in the future because of the additional costs we pay on top of the tax dollars we pay to a school district we chose not to send our kids to. This bill would help provide us with aid in being able to make the choices as parents in how we choose to invest into our kid's education. We are two years away from when our youngest would start in private school and we encourage you to help pass SB 128 to help him to have the same quality education our oldest son has enjoyed so far.

Kind regards,

Jeff Wendling

I am writing you to let you know how important this choice of school bill is. We have seen incredible standardized testing scores for our children at a private school. Also, the dedication these teachers invest in our students goes well beyond anything we had seen at a public school. When you consider most of the teachers' salaries at private schools are much less compared to what public school teachers are making. When students are excited to go to school to learn and be challenged, they continue to develop into well rounded young adults who in turn give back to the communities they are a part of.

When parents sacrifice much of the family income to send their children to private school, they are doing it for many good reasons. We have family members who pulled their kids out of public school and had their eyes opened as to how far behind their kids had become. These students were at the top of their public-school classes and found themselves needing a tutor to bring them up to where they needed to be.

If you question what I say let the ACT scores between private and public schools do the talking. Some of my friends told me about the differences between private and public-school education they saw in college and that made them determined to send their kids to a private school to get a head start on life.

As Kansas parents we would appreciate if you would make this bill (SB 128) or one like it for "school choice" a reality. Who would want to have their children not be educated at the most competent level available? This is why we support SB 128 which would allow a tax break for parents who choose to send their children to a private school.

As a small business owner and an agricultural producer, I see the need for educating the next generation well. If we are not willing to improve our education system other countries will continue to leave US students behind. Education has a trickle-down effect. Citizens of communities with more quality educated individuals in them solve problems much quicker and also have much less crime.

Thank you for your consideration and please support parents in their quest to give their children the best education they know is possible.

Sincerely,
James Anderson

I want to reach out and explain how important school of choice is to me. My child attends a private Christian school where he thrives! I love that he is able to not only receive a christian education but he is also able to learn in such a positive environment. I am not saying public school is bad. I also went to a public school (hoisington high) and so did my husband(dodge city high). With my sons personality a smaller close knit school fit just right! He has built great relationships with all of the staff and peers. His confidence becomes stronger every day. As a parent we just want what's best for our children! School of choice allows parents to choose what personally fits that child's needs. Would a tax credit be nice absolutely but I also think of friends and family members who are unable to afford a better school for their child because let's face it private school comes with a huge price tag! Let's put the individual child's needs first!

Thank you
Haleigh Hernandez

I eagerly wait for the KS legislation to reveal the outcome of SB 128. I support this piece of legislation for education choices for Kansas families.

I am a born and raised Kansan. I attended private, Christian schools from K-12 grade. I now have my children attending the same school as well.

My christian education was invaluable to me throughout my childhood. To be able to surround our family with like minded families and children who value faith in God and pursue the same lifestyle and beliefs is a great blessing in our lives.

The private Christian schools that Kansas offers have provided families with a choice for education for their children. The choice provides instruction more aligned with my values and opinions than the public school offers.

The benefit of Christian education comes at a great cost. I previously worked in a position at a private school and worked with numerous families who needed financial assistance and I saw a tremendous need for help. We have struggled to pay for the tuition for our 2 children each year. I am currently starting a third job later this month in order to assist in making tuition payments. The proposed tax credit would provide much needed relief for families in Kansas that are making similar sacrifices.

Thank you
Celeste Mathews
Wichita, KS

My name is Candice Oehlert, currently a homemaker, mother of three school aged children and concerned citizen.

I know that everyone has to make the decision to send their children to a school where they will thrive best for safety, academics, social skills, and spiritual aspect. My husband and I appreciate the freedom that we have to be able to send our children to a private school. We feel this is the best environment for our children. This comes as no easy feat. There are times we've struggled financially to make all ends meet because of our decision.

I know there are other families that would love the same freedom to choose where they send their children but are strapped financially to the point they don't get to choose the school for their children. Berean families in the Wichita, Newton, Whitewater, and Elbing areas pay a portion of their taxes towards the public school system, and only the public school system. This bill would support true educational freedom, providing parental choice that considers the unique learning needs of each student and the values of their parents. HB 2218 would finally provide a means to make education access equitable because it would give parents the financial freedom to direct the education of their children while providing accountability. As of right now, tax payers in Kansas who send their children to private schools must pay twice for their children's education, which seems very unfair, and limits who can actually attend.

When only one type of school receives all the funding that comes from taxes, this system is favored above all other choices. I am asking for you to support students, not systems. Please provide your support for the Sunflower Education Equality Act, so that true and equitable educational choice for families can become a reality. Many states have already experienced the benefits of a school choice program - Kansas should be a leader in this movement, not playing catch up.

Thank you for hearing my concerns and considering what a great opportunity this is to help families in Kansas

I write to you today to express my support for SB 128. My husband and I always knew we wanted our child to go to a private school. We have a fourth grader at Trinity Academy and have been blessed to be able to afford it. In just the last 5 years we have spent nearly \$50,000 on her elementary education. Sending her to a private school will give her improved academic opportunities and the best education available. By the time we get her through high school we will have spent over \$150,000. Not only did we choose a private school, we wanted her to be in a Christian school with other Christian families with a full Christian education. We chose Trinity for that reason. Her safety, physically and emotionally is one of our priorities in choosing a school. Being with like-minded families and faculty allows her strong personal connections to family and faculty which will help her succeed in this tough world.

Figuring out how to stretch dollars to make this financially work is always a challenge. We know others who desperately seek a private education but even with financial aid simply can't afford it. We have single parent families at our school that struggle every month with the monthly tuition bill. Some of us are able to work it out because we know the value of a private education. Sadly our tax system offers no relief for those of us who foot the bill. This tax bill will help those of us who contribute to the public school funding but have no use of the funding finally see some relief.

Thank you for taking the time to hear from those of us who support this bill. I look forward to it becoming a state law.

Sincerely,
Minde Baumgartner
12 S. Drury Lane
Eastborough, KS 67207

It is with great enthusiasm I take this opportunity to show support for SB 128. In today's rapidly changing society we find our freedoms rapidly melting away. Where we once found comfort and confidence in our public education system, no longer is this the case. Instead our schools have become a battle ground, where culture wars are fought and traditional values are regarded with spite. Luckily we still have the freedom to send our children to private institutions where family values are important and parental rights are respected. Unfortunately, those of us that **choose** these institutions are penalized monetarily. Even so, our child is worth the financial sacrifice! Every parent should have this option! The ability to send our precious children to a school that has their best interest at the forefront, where futures are bright and opportunities are boundless where the rights that we are endowed with by our Creator are respected.

I was unaware that this Bill was even in the works until today. Shame on the Kansas Legislature! Shame on the media! This is probably the best reason I could offer for passing this Bill. Kansans are being kept in the dark by the same powers that control our classrooms. It's time to get on board and lead the way Kansas! My prayer to almighty God is that soon, all Kansas parents will be empowered to choose where and how their children are educated.

Gods Blessings,

Geff Gibbs

I am writing this letter in support of SB 128. I currently send my child to a private Christian school and would like to see the passage of this bill. Going forward it will be very beneficial as I have two other children who I intend to send there as well. The reason we chose to send our children to a private school is because of the academic opportunities, safety from bullying, and our faith. I have heard story after story about bullying and how bad it is getting in our public school system and did not want that for my timid child. Going to public school myself, I have seen first hand what bullying leads to. He feels safe at his current school and loves his classmates. He is excelling academically, and is learning so much about the bible. It just seems like it this is what is best for him and his siblings. Financially we have made sacrifices in order to send him there. I know that it is not ideal for other people to forego a vacation or a new vehicle whenever they want but that is not our families priority. Our priority is for our children to do well in school and feel safe so that they can grow up and be the leaders of tomorrow. I have a niece and a cousin who wish to go to private school too but their parents cannot afford it. This bill would definitely improve the parents' chances to send their children to a private school. In the next couple of years it will only get more difficult to keep up with the high cost of private school (Especially if we don't get this inflation under control) so I hope you consider these things when making a decision. Also, I want to add that I do not know the ramifications this bill will have on public schools and I hope it isn't negative. Not saying it is bad to do so, but I do pay taxes for a school district where my child does not attend.

Thank you,
John

Please find my letter of support for SB 128. I support SB 128. It will be a tremendous help for parents to get their children out of the public school system where they are being bombarded with unacceptable issues, and into a private school where that doesn't happen. Private schools are expensive, so any help you can give parents will be much appreciated! Thank you for your support. Brenda Gibbs

Please vote "yes" to this bill!

I personally benefitted greatly from my education at Berean Academy, a small Christian school in Elbing, KS. We would like to send our children there where we know they will receive instruction based on God's Word from Christian teachers who love the Lord. However, tuition is a factor. It is not free like public school.

Thank you for your consideration. We are praying that this passes.

Rachel Wiebe

To Whom It May Concern, I would kindly request your support for SB128. It's imperative for a child's education and emotional well being and success that parents have the opportunity to choose and educational setting that best fits the individualized needs of each child. Parents know their children best and should have the freedom to choose the educational setting best for their children and family. Children deserve to have the educational opportunities where they will excel despite financial barriers. Support of this bill would allow more children to excel in academics and develop their strengths without placing and additional financial burden on parents.

Thank you for your review and support of this bill,
Jeanine Jantz

I'm asking the state to pass the bill SB 128 offering school choice to parents. By offering a tax credit of \$5000, parents would be available to choose the best school for their student. Having sent my older children and now my youngest daughter to a private school, I have been able to ensure that she receives the highest quality of education possible. It has been very evident that the smaller class sizes and higher expectations has brought my daughter closer to realizing her full potential. In the public schools, she was not challenged to learn and her education was being affected by children with emotional and behavioral problems. This has not been the case for private education.

Private education has allowed us to send her to a school that aligns with our values, and that is extremely important to us. In a world with so many outside forces trying to influence our children, the value of a private education is further enhanced. We were able to interview multiple schools and find the one that we felt would best serve our daughter both academically but also spiritually.

We are fortunate enough to be able to afford private education whereas others in the community and around the state are not able to make that choice due to the financial commitment that it entails especially for families with multiple children.

Please vote in favor of our children's future and vote to give parents choice.

Thank you,
Leann Nickel

I am writing in support of Senate bill no 128. My children attend Elyria Christian School and our family would benefit from this tax credit. Our kids started out in public school. When the school district adopted the Summit platform, we knew our oldest son would struggle with the online, self-paced learning and needed another option. We were so thankful that Elyria was a choice for us. Through saving and scholarship funds we have been able make it work. A large portion of our budget goes toward schooling. Receiving a tax credit would be a huge relief in the stress of how to budget for those things we have to do without so our kids can have the best education for them. I am glad to have the option of private school and hope that a tax credit will be in our future. Please consider our situation when making your decision.

Sincerely yours,
Susan Olsen

I am writing you in regards to my support of the Senate Bill No 128. I urge you to please do whatever is in your power to help this bill to pass. I believe that it would definitely benefit my children as well as thousands more here in Kansas. My children have been attending a private school for over 20 years and have benefitted greatly. They have greatly enjoyed the smaller class sizes with positive teaching involvement and close friendships. Many of their professors continue to be good friends afterwards. Due to the involvement and dedication of the teachers in my children's lives, they have received a high quality education. My two oldest children, who have graduated from high school with honors, have gone on to 4 year colleges with most of their expenses payed by academic scholarships. I strongly believe that parents should have opportunity get the education that each individual child needs to succeed as an important part of Kansas' future. School choice opens up that opportunity for Kansas families. Please support it.

Sincerely, Roger Beck McPherson, KS 67460

I am writing to show my support for SB 128. I have become aware over the past couple years that our public education system is broken. Many educators are bringing up topics that have no place being discussed in schools (Critical Race Theory and sexual preferences for example). Students are being questioned about their gender and in many places forced to compete in athletics as well as share bathrooms/locker rooms with transgenders against their will. Accurate American history is no longer being taught, the Pledge of Allegiance is no longer recited and God has been removed (and almost shamed) in public schools. Students are now being forced to accept ideologies that go against their beliefs. And when parents go to school board meetings to voice their concerns the board members are not listening and at times have parents escorted out. None of this is acceptable. This is why I believe parents should have the right to send their children to the school they feel is best. Money is allocated for each child in the state and parents should have the right for that child's money to go to the school of their choice. This is why I support SB 128.

Kris Dorsett, Derby, KS

Thank you for taking the time to read my letter of support for SB 128. As a parent of 5 kids ages 5-14 who go to Central Christian School, I would like to let you know that school choice is important for my family. Our tax dollars should go to support where our children go to school, not just public schools. My children are so blessed to go to a school with great student-teacher ratios, special education for my child with dyslexia, and an emotionally encouraging and uplifting environment. Finances kept us from even applying for years. My employee discount and ACE scholarships are making this possible for us right now but it is a sacrifice. We are so grateful to have them here and we strongly believe that American families should have freedom to choose the best educational environment for their children. And that our tax dollars should follow them where they go. Thank you for your consideration in this matter and for your hard work for Kansans

Dana Huerta

Regarding private school tax credit.

We have been blessed to have our children enrolled in a private Classical Christian school over the past 7 years. This education is challenging and has a focus on Biblical values. The rigorous academic curriculum insures logical thinking skills with a Christian focus so that the students can become involved citizens for the future success of our nation. Our founding Fathers wanted to ensure that students were taught morals, integrity, and character, which is what our private school provides. We should be able to use the money we are taxed to support the school of our choice to ensure the money is being used wisely. Competition creates a better education system for every child, requiring the school system to be good stewards of the funds they are given. Thank you for your support of SB 128, Ad Astra Opportunity Tax Credit.

Sincerely,

Dr Jeremy and Jennifer Durham

We would like to express our support for SB 128 to give parents a refundable tax credit when they decide to place their children in a private school. Our family is unique in that we have experience with our children in our local public schools, homeschool, and a nearby private school. Our son graduated in 2020 from our local public schools whereas our three daughters have attended both public and private schools in addition to being homeschooled. As parents we believe that it is our responsibility to educate our children according to our faith and to make sure they receive an education that will prepare them for college and the career of their choosing. Only teachers and administrators in the private schools in this country can teach our children according to the Word of God. The teachers at our school challenge our children academically and nurture their social, emotional, and moral development according to the standards set forth in the Bible. Our oldest daughter transferred from our local high school to the private school where she graduated in 2022. She was excited to finally be academically challenged by teachers who respected her and appreciated her. She was welcomed and included by her peers in the new school before the school year even began. The young men in her class treated her with kindness and respect. This is in stark contrast to what our children experienced in the public school system where biblical values cannot be taught, much less enforced. Our younger two daughters continue to attend our private school. They are challenged academically and have homework almost every night. The older one pursues her artistic interests and abilities, which include band and choir at school as well as dance and piano outside of school. Our private school administration supports her in these pursuits, even those extraneous to the school. The younger one is pursuing athletics. The coaches at our private school coach to win, but they also coach to build up each athlete as a whole person. The coaches expect academic and moral excellence as well as 100 percent effort on the field or on the court. We have observed our coaches to be persistent and kind but never demeaning. Our teachers, coaches, and staff live honorable lives that our students can emulate. As for the other families and students at our school, we love the fact that our daughters have friends who share their values and their faith. As parents we hav encourage one another as we raise our children to live lives that honor God.

We ask our legislators to vote on SB 128 to support families who want to ensure that their children are grounded not only academically but also morally and spiritually.

Respectfully,

Matt and Heather Friesen

Hesston, Kansas

Elyria Christian School

Please vote yes to pass bill SB 128 for families who are sending their children to private school to be given a tax credit.

Marlin and Betty Jantz

4907 N Shadow Lane

Park City, KS. 67219

Please vote in support of SB 128

Curtis Cowgill

My name is Mark Koontz and my wife is Jamie Koontz. We live in El Dorado, KS and strongly support SB 128 to give tax credits to Kansans to help them send their kids to the best schools in their area.

We have three children. Our oldest child graduated from the public schools in our areas. We were disappointed with the values that were taught to our oldest daughter in high school. We knew that there was a better private school in our area, but I didn't think that I could afford to send her there. We were estranged from our daughter for a couple years and she just recently came back to a full relationship with us.

After the experience with our oldest daughter, I was convinced that I had to do whatever was necessary to send my younger 2 children to a better high school that would support our values. We had to make sacrifices and do without some things. We also had to increase our family debt, but it was worth every penny. Nothing is more important than our God and our children.

It shouldn't be this difficult to send my children to the best school near where I live that supports my values and helps me teach my children how to be responsible adults and citizens. I pay large amounts of money in property taxes, sales taxes, and income taxes to fund schools in my area. It is not reasonable for me to pay once for the public schools and then pay a second time for a private school that is a better fit for my family. In my view this is immoral and wrong.

Every reasonable parent wants to send their children to the best available school. Nobody is more knowledgeable and concerned with a child than his or her's parents. Parents should be able to choose the best schools for their children without going into debt or missing family time by working extra jobs.

Mark and Jamie Koontz

My family are lifelong Kansans. I was born in Kansas and attended school in Liberal. When I had my first two children, they attended public school in Anthony (USD 361). I wish I would feel comfortable and excited about my children attending public school in Wichita (USD 259), I do not.

Last year, due to my desire to have my children raised in a Christian environment combined with the sudden, unexpected death of my husband, I knew my children needed additional support. I chose to place them in Trinity Academy. My children have excelled throughout all of the programs, both academically and in their socio emotional needs, and will be a Citizen any state or republic would crave. The cost of all of this has been born by myself, a single, widowed mother of three. The average cost is approximately 20,000 dollars per year for education. By the time they have finished school I will have expended approximately 200,000 dollars in tuition alone. This, just to ensure an education prior to college. The State of Kansas, by certain estimates, spends in excess of 50% of its budget on educating students, of which my children's' education has received little of. This bill would rectify in a small amount some of that shortfall.

I know politics today is viewed through many lenses. I know there are constituencies that advocate strongly against my position. I believe in funding the greater good. However, in this particular situation, it appears disingenuous to continue to charge my family for a product I have little interest in purchasing. Schools in Kansas lack a mechanism to hold them accountable, this bill would be a step in the right direction. Thank you all for broaching this first step and I look forward to any opportunity this bill may take in becoming state law.

Sincerely,

Mindy Westenhaber

My name is Sarah Forsberg, and I'm taking the time to email you regarding how important the SB 128 bill is to me and my family. I have two daughters who attend Elyria Christian School, and it has been life changing for them.

As you're aware, this comes with a cost out of pocket tuition that can be challenging. I'm a single mother who wants my daughters to thrive, and be safe while doing so. This bill would help us SO MUCH.

Thank you for your time.

Blessings,

Sarah Forsberg

We have had our seven children in both public and private schools. We appreciate teachers and school staff for the amazing work they do every day. Three of our children were born in China and are ESL learners.

Having opportunities to choose the best educational fit for each child's schooling is an important part in the making of a successful young adult.

Our biggest bill each month and greatest sacrifice over the years has been private schooling. Having Bill 280 would greatly help families like us give their children the education they need.

Please do all you can to give students opportunities to grow and learn in the best possible school situation. So many would reap the benefits for generations to come.

Thank you for your time today,

Jim and Kari Schott

"But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and forever. Amen." II Peter 3:18

I'd like to testify how important it was for my son to attend Christian school.

My son went to a public school until 10th grade. His classmates were not interested in school work and my son was very discouraged by the environment. His grades deteriorated significantly after being in high school. He always wanted to go to this particular Christian school but we couldn't afford it and we didn't have an extra vehicle for him to drive there, either.

When he was in 10th grade, we worried that he might drop out of school. we decided to send him to this Christian school the following year, even though we weren't sure how to pay for it.

After attending, his grades improved dramatically, he was motivated to do well, and he was surrounded by caring, enthusiastic students and faculties. My son told us many times that the Christian school changed his life. We were grateful for having the choice of sending him to the Christian school as well. It was very challenging but we managed to pay the tuition. I wish that we did not have the financial issues, so that we could have sent him there much earlier.

Sincerely,

Kaori Armstrong
308 S Burrton Ave
Burrton, KS 67020

I am writing you in support of SB 128. This bill is critically important to me and to thousands of students across the state of Kansas.

As you are well aware, the education of our youth is the foundation for the future of Kansas and our country. The ability to for a family to provide our students the best opportunity to have a strong education, with teachers that are able to provide exceptional support, and facilities that enrich the experience in a safe environment has become extremely challenging over the past several years. Curriculum has moved away from the core of what education is about and has shifted to extreme ideology that is not aligned with my personal values, nor my faith.

SB 128 will provide me and many other hard working parents an opportunity to find the best school options for my children in the coming years. In addition, the freedom of choice by parents will require the “product” that is being offered by all institutions to be raised to a significantly higher level than it is today. The ability for parents to put their tax dollars to use where they feel their students will flourish creates an amazing opportunity for all students to receive the education they deserve and need.

Finances is the largest hurdle in getting children into private education. SB 128 offers a path to thousands of families that aren’t otherwise able to get their children the attention, support, and environment they deserve. Please help me and the rest of the parents across Kansas minimize that hurdle by passing SB 128. The future leaders of our state and country deserve the best and this is your chance to help lay the foundation for a brighter future for all students.

I appreciate your attention to this important bill and look forward to partnering with educators to create the best environment for learning possible for all students. With your help, Kansas will become a place that is filled with well educated, critical thinking, youth that will lead our state and country for decades to come.

Regards,
John Turner
Wichita, Kansas

I believe it is my parental right to provide improved academic opportunities for my children. The choice to have my children and other children attend Christian schools, providing a safe environment both emotionally and physically and improved academic opportunities is very important to me and many families.

A refundable tax credit would increase the opportunity for more families to be able to choose Christian education. I went back to work full time in order so send my three children to Christian schools. My family has also not been able to save for our children’s college because of the burden of the cost of providing this opportunity for our children. A refundable tax credit would ease the burden as well as provide my family an opportunity to start saving for college.

Please consider approving this bill.
Thank you,
Jessika Mayer
Wichita, KS

As a father of two school-age children, this legislation was extremely exciting. My wife and I both work, and we have a 4 year old daughter and a 2 year old son. We've explored a few different options for preschool for our daughter this year. She's sharp, fun, talkative, and social. The Lawrence public school system and the plethora of other options across our city give us an abundance of choices.

The only problem? All of our options (besides the public school route) are increasingly and prohibitively expensive. This is not only because these alternative schools are looking to turn a profit; it is because the supply of students to these schools is unnecessarily constricted. The parents' who wish to send their children to these schools could be allowed to do so with tax credits such as this one, decreasing the per-pupil cost and making these alternatives far more accessible. For children with learning disabilities, different values/word views, or simply a desire for different educational styles, this would be life-changing.

I also believe in the value of our public school system. Unfortunately, Kansas public schools operate more like a monopoly. With this tax credit, schools could finally become subject to the same free market pressures and healthy competition that forces other businesses and organizations to innovate and improve. In my family's experience here in Lawrence public schools, there are some academic strategies and many social theories that our schools need to leave behind.

This tax credit can and will be a win-win. It can open up more diverse and equitable options for parents and their children across our state, and it can make a way for our public schools to receive the consumer feedback that so many thriving organizations depend on.

For the sake of my two children, and for the sake of children across our state's educational system for years to come, I ask that you would support SB 128. What an opportunity this indeed could be!

Joshua Prescott
Lawrence, Kansas
2nd District
Called to Greatness
Lawrence, KS

Please pass the private school tax credit SB 128, Ad Astra Opportunity Tax Credit. The tax dollars that we contribute should be able to be used for all education, including private school if a parent so chooses. I am very thankful for the private school that my children have been attending for the last 7 years. It is extremely academically challenging while instilling the character and morals that will allow them to succeed in their chosen profession, society and their personal lives. My educational tax dollars should be able to go to the specific school that is educating my children. Thank you for your support in this.

Sincerely,
John and Sandy Harder

I wanted to reach out as a mom of five asking for the SB 128 to be passed allowing personal choice for schooling options. We send our two oldest to private school after having troubles in our public school system and my oldest falling behind. Since switching to private school we have gotten back on track and are excelling in the smaller class sizes, more individual attention, and the environment that lines up with our family's morals and goals. We believe all families should be provided the opportunity for personal choice when it comes to their children's education, and passing SB 128 would allow that chance for more families.

Thank you for your consideration,
Kayla Sides and Family, McPherson, KS

Please, please add my name to the list of Kansas voters who believe that the provisions of this bill are important and necessary for the citizenry moving forward regarding the education of our children. Pre pandemic we were scraping by to put our kids in a school where they could learn in a manner, environment and culture that we feel is appropriate for them and benefit them in their educational experience. With rising inflation and most employers not keeping wages commensurate with the cost of living, that has become nearly impossible. I would greatly appreciate your help in this endeavor by supporting SB 128 for passage as I believe it will make it more feasible to still consider the children's educational opportunities.

Thank you in advance for taking the time to hear us.

Sincerely
Michael J Burrill

I am in favor of SB 128. It is important for my family and within my parental rights. It also provides improved academic opportunities, as well as emotional and physical safety. I know first hand how finances can prohibit this wonderful option. Thank you for supporting a balanced choice in this.

Mark Bolt, Wichita

I am writing to declare my support for SB 128.

We send all 6 of our children to a private school because we feel it is the best option for them. My older children went to several (3) different public schools before we finally decided to enroll them at Central Christian and we see the huge difference it has made in their academic success, social interactions, and character development. They themselves would tell you the same thing.

It took us several years to make the switch due to the financial burden of private school. We have tried to talk to other friends who are unhappy at their public schools about joining us at Central, but the cost keeps them away. I wish everyone could experience schooling the way we now do! It is very different from the public schools teachings and ways of operating. This bill would give other families the opportunity to experience this difference in their education.

The public school system has drifted very far from the path it was intended to follow and that just doesn't fit many families values. This would be an opportunity back to that path.

Thank you for supporting SB 128,

Camille Barnett
Hutchinson, KS

I am very much for this bill that provides a refundable tax credit to parents of children who choose to attend accredited private schools or nonaccredited private schools. I would appreciate any consideration you would give this bill.

Thanks for your support.

Mel West, Bel Aire, KS

I am writing to show my support for The Ad Astra Opportunity Tax Credit.

I have two children attending a private academy and this bill, if passed, would significantly reduce the financial burden to our family.

With quality education being a top priority for our family, we will continue to sacrifice what is needed to pay our tuition bill but with the current recession, higher fuel/grocery/utility bills, the strain is felt all the more.

We appreciate your work to push through legislation that truly benefits your constituency and reflects our priorities and values.

Thank you,
Amber West

I am a mother of four children. My three oldest children attended a small rural-community public school system from K-12. Each of them received a fantastic education, free from the mire of political agendas. The last of those three kids graduated in 2020. After moving, our youngest entered a more populated city/school system and during kindergarten. During COVID, we began to identify that things were different than our previous experience with public schools. We experienced the beginning of indoctrination to teachings/practices that ran contrary to our Christian faith. Gender neutrality, gay rights – God forbid you say the words “Christmas program.”

Through 30 years of parenting, I have never asked my school system to teach the Word of God, I do expect, however, that they not teach and indoctrinate our child to anything that run contrary to the Bible. The choice to move our daughter to a private school was an easy one. The focus in school should be education, not politics.

We support SB128 and ask respectfully that this bill be supported by our lawmakers so that anyone who values a Christian education over all else, can afford to send their children to the school of their choice.

Thank you – Lori Gibbs

I would like to share that I am in support of SB 128. It would be a great blessing to families in our state to receive a tax credit for children attending private and home schools.

I would like to ask if there is any way a clause could be added to include private schools of the Kansas City Metro area? We live in Shawnee, KS and our children attend a private Christian school just across the state line in Missouri, so I don't believe that we would benefit from this bill the way it is currently written. But, again, I still support this bill!

Thank you for your work to support Kansas families, Heidi Krause

I want to express how important this bill is to our family. I am a mother of three children and my oldest son attends a private Christian school in Wichita. Being able to afford this education for my child (and hopefully my other children once they are of school age) does not come easily for us. We've had to save up the funds while my son attended public school based off of our geographical location. I was discouraged with the influences he had around him, the lack of continually challenging my son to improve while they focused heavily on kids who were behind, and because of that, he started falling behind in reading and didn't love school. My husband and I finally pulled the trigger and made some huge sacrifices (like selling our second car) so that we could give our son the education he needs - one rooted in truth, surrounded by educators and peers that hold the same faith values, and students eager to be challenged. We are in our second year at our school and our son has become excited from continually being challenged and encouraged and it gives us a peace of mind that our child is safe and learning things we agree with and support. It's made an incredible difference in his love for learning, how engaged he is throughout his day, and even the behaviors we see at home. Choosing this school makes us feel like a true partner with our son's education and we are so much more involved. Being able to choose this path for our kids is a necessary freedom. Not every child thrives in the same environment as others. Financially it is a burden that I'm always concerned about because I don't want to lose this opportunity for my children simply because of the cost. My husband and I are hardworking American and lifelong Kansas citizens who continue to work two job jobs each. We also pay for our two youngest to have a safe and loving daycare environment during the week. We still live paycheck to just before the next paycheck so that we can afford what's best for our children. This bill will relieve us of so much mental and financial burden of a quality education for our kids.

Thank you for your time,

Leah Haden Foster

I am in complete support of school choice.

We will be praying for you and for the senate to make the right choice

Travis Dorris

Please find my letter of support for SB 128. This Bill could help to provide more opportunity for families to have a choice of the education they receive that fits their Childs needs. It would give parental rights, improved academic opportunities, safer environments for our children.

There are many families that we personally know that their children need this opportunity to choose a school that best fits their needs. The family just can not afford it. With this bill, it could open the door for them and give that child a better chance at long term success.

Thank you

Seth Asher

I am emailing to express my strong support for Senate Bill No. 128. I believe parents should have the ability to send their children to the school of their choice, and I believe this bill would make it financially possible for more parents to do this.

I am the proud father of six children, all raised in our great state of Kansas. All have either primarily or partially spent time in private schools, receiving excellent and personalized schooling. My older five have all gone on to do very well at Kansas colleges, with my older four each gainfully employed in their field of study and my fifth child a junior at Wichita State.

My youngest is a freshmen at a private school, enjoying both the many academic opportunities and activities such as sports and music. He is thriving at this private school, has made great friends, and gets daily encouragement from teachers who know him and know us.

I can attest that the cost of private schooling is great. We have made many financial sacrifices to be able to send six kids to private schools, all while paying property taxes in support of our local school district. We have felt the financial sacrifice was worth it, especially as we see our adult children thriving (three of my older four are living and working good jobs in Kansas).

I closing, I support and encourage your support of SB128.
Thank you for your time.
Sincerely,

Kerry Robinson
311 Blue Spruce Road
Hutchinson, KS 67502

This is to express my support for passage of SB 128, and school choice for private school education in Kansas. I believe this legislation is long overdue and is the right action to foster education and the future of our great State and Republic. Thank you for your time.

Stanley D. Jones

I'm so grateful that this bill has even reached the discussion point. I am out of town visiting my sister who is dying of ALS, but I want to at least send a letter commending this important action on behalf of education for my fellow Kansans.

I have taught secondary English in both California and Kansas in private and public schools. Just as a fiscal matter, tax dollars ought to be directed to the school of the taxpayers choice. The need for choice has become more evident, and I commend the myriad reasons parents are considering all options in the best practice from academia for their children.

The bulk of my career has been spent at Central Christian School in Hutchinson, where my own three sons attended. Numerous families, ours included, impoverished themselves (gladly) in order to have their children in a wholesome environment that provided a different level of safety and academic rigor. I fully support SB 128!
Kathy Rich, Hutchinson, KS

Dear public servant,

Thank you for serving, as you've been called & for allowing God to work through you. I am in favor of SB128 & the tax credit for enrollment in private education. Please vote in favor of this bill & encourage your colleagues to do the same.

May God Bless You & show you favor,

Brooke Kanitz
McPherson, KS

We moved from San Jose, California to Kansas a few years ago and sending our children to a Christian school has been a priority. We did while we lived in CA and do now in KS as well. Both my wife and I are former students of Christian schools and the values instilled in us, as well as strong academics, is because of where we attended school. I have a masters degree and my wife graduated college in 3 years.

As you know, it is very expensive to send kids to Christian schools, especially with 3 of our own. It is a sacrifice we've chosen to make so would certainly welcome state assistance. I have many friends and family members that have not been able to do the same and have regrets they didn't, finances being the main reason they could not attend.

Considering the state has plans currently in place to provide nearly \$100M for public university's that can match 3:1 in fundraising to be used for a science grain building at KSU or a convention center/stadium renovations at KU, it would be great for the state to support the kids before they get to that education level in this manner.

Thank you,
Dan and Ellie Beckler

I am emailing you to acknowledge my families support of SB 128. As a lifelong educator, for both my spouse and myself, across multiple education fronts, middle school, secondary and post-secondary, we understand what comes along with the ministry opportunities that we have at the faith based institution in which we are employed. We do not work here to get rich but to hopefully plant seeds and work for eternal purposes. We do send both of our boys to Elyria Christian School and have for the duration of their education. We are in total support of this bill.

[Guy Gardner, Head Basketball Coach, Central Christian College of Kansas](#)

Please pass this bill!!

We have 3 kids in private school (Trinity Academy) in Wichita. We are only there because of scholarships and family help. Having the tax rebate would make a HUGE difference. We apply for every scholarship available. We were in public school and experienced difficulties with IEP implementation and just the sheer overwhelming size of the classroom. For a child with anxiety this was a daily stressor.

Being in a smaller school/class setting is something we should have the ability to chose and not be financially penalized for. We are not using any of the resources our taxes are being allocated to for USD259 and it is only fair and right that we be given that back to invest in OUR school.

The Prahm family

Our families are both lifelong Kansans. Both of us were born in Kansas and always attended public school, myself in Topeka and Riley County and my spouse in Holcomb. We then continued on to Kansas State University where we met. We have lived in Wichita now for over 20 years working closely with many of the area schools through our careers in the organization of Young Life.

We have spent our entire careers investing in the lives of adolescents, middle school through college aged. With an inside perspective of multiple schools in the Wichita area, when it was time to send our oldest daughter off to kindergarten, we had no interest in sending her to the public school in our neighborhood. As an ordained minister working for a non-profit that would have been our only option. Through indexed tuition, an endowment and the generosity of other donations we were able to start her at Wichita Collegiate instead. She was followed there by three younger sisters. As a middle schooler she asked us to consider moving her to Trinity Academy as she was deeply interested in receiving an education that also would help her grow in her Christian faith. She has blossomed there. As she approaches her graduation this spring, we feel confident that we will be sending off a young woman to college this fall who is sure of who she is, knows her ability to impact her community for good and has received an education that will allow her to pursue any career field she chooses.

Just over 6 years ago we were able to adopt a little boy at birth. We knew that due to the circumstances of his birth he would likely have lifelong consequences that impact his every day. We have been diligent his whole life to pursue everything that will give him the best chance at success. As we looked at kindergartens for him to start at this year, we were discouraged by large class sizes, accommodations that only partly cover his needs and curriculums that don't suit his learning style. The passage of this bill would be a huge step toward us being able to put him in a school that can address the specific needs he has and give him the opportunities he deserves.

Every year we have had to watch and wait so to speak to see if our children would be able to continue at the schools they are currently in. While we know that this has grown our children in their understanding of budgets, generosity and faith, it is a stressful and tedious process every year as we fill out multiple applications for financial aid.

The State of Kansas, by certain estimates, spends in excess of 50% of its budget on educating students, of which our daughter's education has received none of and our son has received very little of. This bill would rectify in a small amount some of that.

We know politics today is viewed through many lenses. We know there are constituencies that advocate strongly against our position. We believe in funding the greater good. However, in this particular situation, it appears disingenuous to continue to charge our family for a something we have no choice or say in. Schools in Kansas lack a mechanism to hold them accountable, this bill would be a step in the right direction. Thank you all for broaching this first step and we look forward to any opportunity this bill may take in becoming state law.

Sincerely,

Matt & Tara Shepherd

As a family that prioritizes a Christian education for our daughter, please consider this a letter of support for SB 128. We have paid private school tuition for our daughter for the last 8 years. As a dual income family, our tax dollars support a seat at Wichita Public Schools that our daughter does not utilize. It is important that families continue to have a choice when it comes to education, improved academic opportunities and both emotional and physical safety. Having this choice comes at a significant cost for working families. We currently pay \$10,000 annually to send our daughter to a private school in Wichita, Kansas. It is not easy financially, but we have made the necessary sacrifices to make this our #1 priority. We respectfully ask you to consider passing SB 128 which would allow for a refundable tax credit equal to the state's base aid. Thank you for supporting a family's right to choose a Christian education.

Ricardo and Chris Morales, Wichita, KS

I am in full support of SB 128 as it directly provides for familial and student choice in pursuing academic excellence with a tailored educational experience.

Dr. Scott A. Rich
President
Sterling College
Sterling, Kansas

We support SB 128!

As a lifetime educator, I encourage you to uphold the parental right of choice to determine their children's education, as intended in the national Constitution as well as the individual state Constitutions. A tax credit would be the best way to provide parents with the decision making power to provide for the education they desire for their children without having to pay twice, which causes an unnecessary burden upon parents. We have many family members who have struggled to provide the education for their children that they felt was best, even if it was not at a public school. SB 128 allows for the parents' money to follow the child, which would be for the best for our state!!

~Dr. Jay Nicholson
Sedgwick County, Kansas

This letter is to state my support of Senate Bill 128. I am highly encouraged about the expanse of school choice that Senate Bill 128 would offer parents and families. In choosing the right school for our family the improved academic opportunities and freedom to practice our faith openly and without ridicule led us to private Christian education. We appreciate the smaller class sizes as well as the emotional and physical safety our private Christian school provides. We are blessed to be able to choose a private school for our children. Unfortunately, many other families do not have this luxury and, therefore, have no choice but to send their children to public schools even when it is not in the best interest of their child. Other families simply choose to forgo an educational institution all together and choose to homeschool their children causing one parent (generally the mother) to leave the workforce in order to safely and effectively educate their children. This in turn places a financial burden on the family due to lack of a second income as well as removing highly valued working women from the labor market for the sake of their child's education. This bill would promote parental rights providing parents a choice about what educational institution would be best for their child.

Please accept my support of Senate Bill 128.
Stacie Smith

Thank you for hearing opinions on this important tax relief bill for parents/grandparents/guardians of our precious children in the state of Kansas. As parent's of 4 children, my wife and I navigated through 20 plus years of public, homeschool and private education. I remember well the days of praying for the wisdom and will to choose the best possible educational pathway for each individual child. The title of this bill reflects well the intent behind it; our state motto, "Ad Astra..." tells us that good results come from hard work. Tax money supporting education totally depends on private individuals who sacrifice for the good of the future. I am excited to support this bill that will give basic education cost relief to those who choose to direct the training of their own children.

When I was campaigning for a seat on the Ks State Bd of Education this past summer, a common theme among parents/grandparents and private educators was that "if we could only keep some of our own money that goes to education, we would have choices that better fit the needs of our child/children." The power of a tax credit bypasses the need and expense of funneling the taxpayers own money through government agency, saving administration cost(s) and adding value to the dollars intended; a quality education at the discernment of those most interested.

I pray God will give you wisdom to encourage families in these inflationary days by giving them financial relief in passing this bill to the Houses and on to Gov. Kelly's desk to be signed into law.
Respectfully, Dennis Hershberger, Hutchinson

I apologize for the lateness of this email. I was just this morning made aware of this bill and wanted to respond briefly. I would enthusiastically support this bill as an encouraging step in the right direction to support school choice and raise the standard of education in all of our places of education, whether public or private.

Our own experience with private school has proven to us its value, and supporting parents who make this choice makes sense.

Thank you,
July Pulscher
McPherson, KS

This letter is in regard to the Bill SB 128. This is a bill that is very important to me and our family.

I was given the opportunity to attend a private/Christian School as well as my four brothers and sisters. It was the foundation I needed to shape not only my life, but my choices for my entire life. I am now retired, spent my career in nursing (RN) and being a wife and mother to our three children.

The emotional and physical safety I felt with classmates and staff who shared my views of the world, my faith, gave me the confidence that has carried me through life. I thank my parents for the choice they made, the sacrifice they gave of their time and finances to enable us to go to this school. It gave me improved academic challenges and helped me make better decisions throughout my lifetime. My husband and I were able raise our children with those same learned values which they in turn follow today and have made the choice to send their children to a private/Christian school, making the same financial sacrifices.

School choice is very important for many reasons, but often the choice for families is limited and they are forced to make the lesser choice for their children due to finances for differing reasons. One school choice for one family may not fit the school choice for another family.

I was excited to see that Kansas is showing support for all families and I encourage you to be our voice, to make the decision to allow parents financially to send their children to a Christian/private school!
Thank you!

Anita Buller, Inman, KS

I am writing to show my support for SB 128. I believe this bill is important because it gives parents the ability to make a choice on where their child goes to school based on the individual needs of their child. In 2020, we made a difficult decision to pull our daughters out of Marion schools and send them to Berean Academy. Our son had just graduated from Marion and began attending Wichita State University at the same time, so it has been a significant financial burden to “have three in college” as I say (two children are not in college, but it feels like it financially). We are paying taxes for our girls to attend public schools and we are paying tuition for Berean. After we moved our girls to Berean, we saw a significant change in the mental state of our daughters. We knew this is where they needed to stay to flourish.

We would sincerely appreciate a tax credit for the tuition that we are paying at Berean Academy to lessen the financial burden of educating three children.

I appreciate your consideration and hope that you will support SB 128.

Sincerely,
Tammy Ensey, Marion, KS

Please pass this bill!!

We have 3 kids in private school (Trinity Academy) in Wichita. We are only there because of scholarships and family help. Having the tax rebate would make a HUGE difference. We apply for every scholarship available. We were in public school and experienced difficulties with IEP implementation and just the sheer overwhelming size of the classroom. For a child with anxiety this was a daily stressor.

Being in a smaller school/class setting is something we should have the ability to chose and not be financially penalized for. We are not using any of the resources our taxes are being allocated to for USD259 and it is only fair and right that we be given that back to invest in OUR school.

The Prahm family

I would love to express my support for SB 128.

I have for the last 5 years sent my kids to Central Christian School in Hutchison, KS. It has been a very difficult road financially to do so and I have to say they are one of the best schools in the area!! I have been fortunate to have been able to work there some of those years to be able to afford sending my 3 children there. (I did this along with running my own business.) Like I said it has been very difficult!! I also have friends who would love to send their kids but are not able to due to finances. This bill would open doors for them to do so!

I have 3 children that are very different from each other. Each has benefited in their own ways from us making the choice that we did. Private school is not for everyone but for us it has been a huge factor in who my kids are growing up to be. On the other side Public school is not for everyone either and neither is homeschooling. I believe as families should have that choice to decide where is best for our kids. We as parents should not miss out on the funding that the state pays to educate our kids due to us making a choice that will be the best for our children.

At the public school, my oldest son got lost...was kind of a loner had very little self-confidence. He began attending Central Christian his sophomore year and we saw a totally different person evolving. From the quiet secluded student to the one who was involved in sports and lots of school activities to having friends over to deciding that education was important enough that he now wants to become an elementary education teacher. He now works at the school as a Para during his college years and loves what he does and loves "his kids". This would not have happened had he not attended Central Christian and had the emotional support and the teachers building his confidence. The safe environment was just what he needed to flourish!

Son #2 will graduate this year – I had tried for years in the public school system to get him assistance with his dyslexia – and received very little help. As a middle school student, he struggled to read – he literally felt stupid. The teachers just kept pushing him through without really teaching him. In 8th grade he began at Central Christian. Over the next 2-3 years he completed literacy training that was not available to him before. I am happy that he now reads very well and has the confidence to continue to higher education next year.

Daughter – Child #3 – In the 3rd grade was being bullied to the point of coming home in tears many times. After being violently shoved on the bus knocking her head on the window by one girl and then within a week getting basically a death threat (YES as a 3rd grader) from another we HAD to do something different! Her emotional well-being was at risk. I could not allow that to continue. Again, at Central Christian she has found friends and teachers that provide a safe and kind environment. She will graduate from 8th grade this year and young lady full of life that can accomplish anything she decides to! As you can see my 3 kids have been helped tremendously by being in a private school. I had wanted to have them many years before and simply could not – however we made many sacrifices to make it happen. I have friends who simply can't make it happen and their kids will pay that price. They will lack confidence – they will never know what its like to know that they are loved and safe at school. They will not get the academic help that they need to thrive.

You can change this by supporting this bill!!! And I ask you to please do so! We want our children to grow and be productive assets to our communities – our state and our wonderful country. Parents having the choice to send them to the school that best fits them is not only in the child's best interest but also our state's best interest!

Thanks for taking the time to reach and consider supporting our choice!!

Respectfully from a concerned parent,

Glenda Yoder

My family has been in Kansas since 1998. I wish I would feel comfortable and excited about my sons attending public school in Wichita (USD 259).

For the duration of my son's life I have pursued a world class education for them. After 2 disastrous years of public school, 5 years ago, I chose to place them in Trinity Academy. They have excelled and will be a citizen any state or republic would crave.

The cost of all of this has been born to me alone. I have averaged approximately 10,000 dollars per year for our son's education. By the time they finish school I will have expended approximately 200,000 dollars in tuition alone. This, just to ensure their education prior to college. The State of Kansas, by certain estimates, spends in excess of 50% of its budget on educating students, of which my son's education has received little of. This bill would rectify in a small amount some of that shortfall.

I know politics today is viewed through many lenses. I know there are constituencies that advocate strongly against my position. I believe in funding the greater good. However, in this particular situation, it appears disingenuous to continue to charge my family for a product I have little interest in purchasing. Schools in Kansas lack a mechanism to hold them accountable, this bill would be a step in the right direction. Thank you all for broaching this first step and I look forward to any opportunity this bill may take in becoming state law.

Sincerely,

Kendal Moore

I support SB 128, we have chosen private school because the smaller class size accommodates our children's unique emotional and educational needs.

Thank you,

Stephanie Cowgill

My three children, ages seven, ten, and twelve attend Central Christian School in Hutchinson, Kansas. We chose private education because we were concerned with the direction of public education in Kansas and throughout the nation. My wife and I were both educated in public schools, but it was important that we also put our children in an environment where they could learn and speak about their faith openly, and where they would have limited early exposure to radical progressive ideology that is contrary to the development of their education and the healthy development of their faith. We have been incredibly blessed to be able to afford to have our children attend a private school, but we know that most Kansas parents desiring the same experience for their children simply cannot afford access to private education.

Our experience with private education at CCS has been profound. Our children have been able to learn and thrive in an environment without being forced to learn while being subjected to a slanted liberal agenda. They've learned traditional subjects and have been taught using classic curricula that objectively introduces the information they need to learn to thrive in higher education, their future careers, and generally in life. The subjects are often taught from a faith-based perspective that are congruent with our family's beliefs, but they our children also given the freedom to decide their own ideology and critically think about their faith.

I wholeheartedly believe that SB 128 is an game-changing bill that, if passed, would alter the trajectory of education in Kansas due to allowing access to private education, without the strictures and liberal political agendas that are so easily advanced and forced upon students and faculty in public schools. Additionally, as standardized test score data comparison has made clear for years, the quality of education that greater access to private schools would facilitate will benefit our state now and for generations to come. I served on the board of trustees, as well as the fundraising, scholarship, and endowment association committees at our school for eight years. Although I am most familiar with the market for private education in Reno County, my understanding is that there is a strong demand for private education in Kansas given the rapidly changing public school environment. It's very evident that there has been a strong demand by many parents to transition their children to private schools so they can have more control over the subjects they are exposed to. Nonetheless, in most cases the parents lack the financial means.

SB 128 would provide a powerful gateway for thousands of Kansas parents to be empowered to allow their children to attend private schools throughout Kansas and be able to make the same decision that our family made. Many families currently in private schools are barely able to continue to afford to send their kids due to inflation and changing economic conditions, and there are many hard-working parents that would make the transition if they had the financial incentive. I believe that SB 128 would bolster the operating revenue for private education through increased enrollment, further attracting better teaching talent, and providing a robust market for educators and administration to work in schools where their passion aligns with their beliefs. I believe the passing of this bill would be a catalyst for the rise in private education, where there is a far higher level of operational efficiency, further taking burden off the public school system and potentially creating the opportunity for efficiencies in public education as well.

Thank you for taking the time to review this message. If I may provide additional support or information, do not hesitate to reach out.

Respectfully, Michael Wyatt, Hutchinson

Please find my letter of support for SB 128. We are a family who sends one child to a private school and we homeschool the other child. This bill would tremendously help our family. Thank you for your consideration.

Kind regards,
Kristen Spear
Wichita family

I am in full support of Senate Bill 128. As parents of 4 children we value high quality, non-woke education. Currently our tax dollars are going to support beliefs and indoctrination not consistent with our Christian values. As parents we have the right to choose the education that aligns with our family values.

I know politics today is viewed through many lenses. I know there are constituencies that advocate strongly against my position. I believe in funding the greater good. However, in this particular situation, it appears disingenuous to continue to charge my family for a product I have little interest in purchasing. Schools in Kansas lack a mechanism to hold them accountable, this bill would be a step in the right direction. Thank you all for broaching this first step and I look forward to any opportunity this bill may take in becoming state law.

Sincerely,
Brandon and Maggie Wheeler

I am a lifelong Kansan. I was born in Kansas and always attended public school, (at the time the school was in Baileyville KS. I wish I would feel comfortable and excited about my daughter attending public school in Topeka, I do not. For the duration of my daughter's life, my husband and I have pursued a world class education for her. It is our desire to have our daughter raised in a Christian environment, so we chose to place her in the Topeka Catholic Schools. Currently attending Most Pure Heart of Mary. I am confident with the foundation she is building, she will be a Citizen any state or republic would crave.

Our cost of her education is approximately \$2500 per year. We are fortunate that a portion of the amount we tithe to our church offsets the total cost of \$5,000. By the time she has finished school we will have expended approximately \$33,000 dollars in tuition alone. This, just to ensure her education prior to college. The State of Kansas, by certain estimates, spends in excess of 50% of its budget on educating students, of which my daughters' education has received little of. This bill would rectify in a small amount some of that shortfall.

I know politics today is viewed through many lenses. I know there are constituencies that advocate strongly against my position. I believe in funding the greater good. However, in this particular situation, it appears disingenuous to continue to charge my family for a product I have little interest in purchasing.

Schools in Kansas lack a mechanism to hold them accountable, this bill would be a step in the right direction. Thank you all for broaching this first step and I look forward to any opportunity this bill may

take in becoming state law.

Sincerely,
Jada M Stolzenburg

