

**Written Opponent testimony before
House Committee on K-12 Education Budget
On
HB 2662 - the parents' bill of rights and academic transparency act
By John Sturn Ellinwood Public Schools USD 355 Board of Education Member
February 15, 2022**

Madam Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is John Sturn and I live in Ellinwood. I am a board of education member of Ellinwood Public Schools USD 355. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on HB 2662.

I oppose HB 2662 for the same reasons that I suspect many who have responsibility for educating our children will describe to you:

- Our teachers and their instructional support staff would be forced to spend time satisfying the demands of this bill instead of helping our kids.
- Nothing in this bill would encourage our teachers to continue teaching or for anyone to enter teaching. It would require our teachers to maintain a lawsuit-ready online defense of their teaching.
- Our schools welcome parent involvement. For many years our teacher-parent online portal has included the actual lesson materials.
- The decisions that the members of our community make about the education and upbringing of our children better serve our students than the dictates and mandates in this bill.

In nine years of service on the Ellinwood school board, the number of patron complaints that I have had about academic transparency is zero. The number of complaints that I have had about the moral or religious training of our students is zero. The number of complaints about accessing their child's records, about being informed of and inspecting curriculum, about being able to address the board during public comment periods, about teachers distorting education with bias or personal prejudice, about violating professional integrity and constitutional rights is zero.

Probably no statute is totally void of benefit or totally filled with harm, but for our community, this bill is close.

I ask that all education bills be developed with the direct input of the Kansas Association of School Boards. In publicly available records, all Kansans elect all local school board members who approve all KASB committee members who oversee the hiring of all KASB staff who implement policy directions approved by all local school board delegates. When a KASB representative sits in front of your committee, that representative has a validity from Kansans that no one in the political lobbying world could imagine having in their wildest dreams.

The theoretical drivers for this bill are not unknowable. The Department of Education can survey through our local school districts and quantify any deficiencies in the areas that this bill describes. Districts with actual problems can address them. The true need or lack of need for this bill can be determined. I see this as a much better reflection of our Kansas heritage of common sense than to take any action favorable to this bill. I urge the committee to give the subject of this bill the study it merits.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments.