



**KANSAS ASSOCIATION
OF SCHOOL BOARDS**

Serving Educational Leaders, Inspiring Student Success

www.kasb.org

Oral Testimony in Opposition before the
House Federal & State Affairs Committee
on
HB 2460 – Firearms Safety Education Programs in Public Schools
by
Rob Gilligan, Governmental Relations
Kansas Association of School Boards
February 6, 2018

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee:

As we understand the bill, while not compulsory on school districts to offer a Firearms Safety Education Program, it does require the State Board of Education, to develop a curriculum based solely on the two programs highlighted, and if local boards wish to offer such program, if must follow the state curriculum. (The bill reads: “If a board of education elects to provide firearm safety education, such instruction shall be in accordance with the guidelines established by the state board of education...”)

The KASB Delegate Assembly has adopted the following statement:

2. Curriculum Authority: A district’s curriculum should be established by the local board of education, not by state statute, as long as the district meets state accreditation requirements. KASB opposes efforts to directly or indirectly limit the board’s ability to determine curriculum, library and other instructional materials.

There are currently no limiting factors to districts’ implementation of firearms safety programs, in fact in many communities, district facilities serve as the location for these programs including, but not limited to the Eddie Eagle Gunsafe program as well as the Kansas Wildlife & Parks Hunter Safety Program and possibly others.

While the two programs identified in the bill are recognized as great programs, having the legislature dictate to the State Board of Education which programs should be used in developing curriculum is concerning and oversteps the responsibilities set forth in Kansas Statute.

In addition, the bill also says such programs “shall be offered so as to ensure that all students are provided the opportunity to take the course.” We are unclear what this means. Unless the program was required of all students, presumably some students might have to make choices among electives. Furthermore, it is possible some parents or students may not want to participate in such a course.

Therefore, we would suggest that the provision requiring that local programs conform to state guidelines be removed and the provision on requiring all students the opportunity to take the course be clarified or removed. If these issues are addressed, we would have no objections to the bill.