



House Education Committee
HB 2119 – Student Empowerment Act
Proponent Testimony - Written Only
Dr. Tad Nuce, Superintendent
Date: 8 February 2021

Chairwoman Williams and Members of the Committee,

My name is Dr. Tad Nuce, the Superintendent of Berean Academy in Butler County. Please support HB 2119, which provide parents greater financial freedom to choose the best educational option for their children (all while saving the state money).

While leading a Christian school in Dubuque, Iowa, I saw firsthand the benefit of that state's school choice programs, which provided financial aid for low and low/middle-income families so that they could afford to send their children to private schools. This program created a healthy competition in many communities, which forced public schools to work harder to keep their students enrolled (parents now had the ability to choose). It also promoted greater diversity among private schools, while also providing low-income families the ability to send their children to safer schools (often better neighborhoods, stronger, faith-based, anti-bullying programs).

I also have friends leading private schools in Wisconsin who have been amazed at the positive response they have experienced there thanks to that state's school choice programs. Families who have wanted to send their children to private schools were finally able to do so. The students have thrived and for a fraction of the cost that the state's public schools would have needed to educate them.

It is often stated that private schools are not accountable to anyone. This is untrue in several ways. First, every parent holds us accountable with their checkbook. If they are not satisfied, they send their children to a different school. Second, many private schools in Kansas are accredited with educational associations. For example, Berean Academy is accredited with the Association of Christian Schools International. I would add that I have visited a number of Christian schools as part of accreditation teams with ACSI, and I have yet to visit one whose average student achievement test scores were not well-above average. This is not surprising because of increased parental involvement, safer learning environments, and the motivation of administration and teachers to please our customers (parents).

While these proposals may not be popular with public school boards or teacher unions, having choices is almost always better. The wealthy and upper middle-class already have the ability to choose; please make the ability to choose an option for low income and low/middle-income families.

Sincerely,

Tad R Nuce | Ed. D.
Head of School
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