

February 12, 2022

Chairwoman Kristey Williams and Committee Members
Room 546-S, State Capital
Topeka, KS 66612

RE: HB2662 Parent Bill of Rights

Dear Representative Williams and Committee Members,

My name is Mandy Merando. I am a Title I teacher at USD 249 Frontenac Schools. I am writing in opposition to HB2662 also referred to as the Parent Bill of Rights.

There are several components of this bill that cause me concern. The first part of the bill lists various rights that parents should have. These include things such as access to curricular materials and access to meetings. In actuality, parents already have access to most of these items. All they have to do is seek them out by engaging with their child's teachers or the district. Passing a blanket policy is not the right approach.

I am concerned with the mandate of posting all teaching materials online. This requirement appears to be an unfunded mandate that will cost teachers and districts a considerable amount of both time and money. I also feel that posting materials and activities online would cause issues with copyright laws. I know that the publisher of our reading program would not allow their materials to be added online for anyone to retrieve and use at their leisure without purchasing the program.

The restrictions this will most likely put on the act of teaching are incredibly disturbing. There is an art and a science to teaching. The science is often thought of as the skills that teachers employ during the course of the day to get the material delivered to the students. The art, though, is the nuance of connecting with students. It is the teacher who can glance at a room of children and see who understands and who doesn't. This bill, in my opinion, will hinder the art of teaching. For example, an elementary teacher may decide at the last minute that her/his students need another day of practicing the times tables or have extra time to experiment with the water cycle. But, because these curricular materials were not posted on the website for parents to review, these extra practices or added experiments can't be done.

I urge you to oppose HB2662 on the grounds that 1) parents already have access to most, if not all, of the rights as outlined in this bill, 2) this is an unfunded mandate that will take needed resources from schools, and 3) these requirements will obstruct the flexibility, spontaneity, and artistic nature of teaching.

Sincerely,

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