



Testimony before the Senate Education Committee

in opposition to

Senate Bill 496 – AN ACT concerning education; relating to schools and school districts; establishing the parents’ bill of rights.

by

Judith Deedy, Executive Director Game On for Kansas Schools  
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Madam Chair, Members of the Committee:

[Game On for Kansas Schools](#) is a nonpartisan grassroots effort among Kansans who share a belief in high-quality public education as a right of all Kansas students. We advocate for Kansas public schools to ensure our teachers, principals, superintendents, and school board members have the resources necessary to deliver quality education to all Kansas students. We inform communities across the state about issues and legislation affecting their students, and our membership extends statewide.

At the outset, we state that our members are largely parents. We support parent rights in the realm of public education. We also appreciate that this bill does not include a number of provisions in HB 2662. However, we question the necessity of this bill. We do not take issue with multiple of these sections other than noting they are already law or practice and don’t need to be legislated. We object to creating an appearance that our schools are not already doing these things. We object to Section 1(c)(5) in that we support our local boards placing reasonable restrictions on the conduct of participants in school board meetings. We have seen unacceptable behavior and school board meetings used to share inaccurate information and support appropriate limits on both.

We object to 1(c)(6) to the extent that it seeks to change immunization laws in Kansas. We support appropriate immunization requirements and don’t think changes to important public health policy should be buried in a bill in the K-12 Education Budget Committee. For the record, we believe immunization requirements are essential to protect the wellbeing of our children.

We note that our school districts are already required to comply with the Civil Rights Act of 1964, but we believe these sections are included as a baseless accusation that such violations are occurring in our schools. We find it particularly troubling that the civil rights act is being used to attack DEI initiatives which seek to make sure every child has a sense of belonging at their school.

We are wary of the optics of this bill. We believe it may be used to accuse opponents of opposing parent rights. To be clear, most of us are parents, and we support parent rights, but we cannot support this bill. We urge you to vote no on this bill.