



# COFFEYVILLE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

## BOARD OF EDUCATION OFFICE

DR. CRAIG A. CORRELL  
615 Ellis  
Coffeyville, Kansas 67337  
[www.usd445.org](http://www.usd445.org)  
Friday, February 19, 21

Testimony of Dr. Craig A. Correll, Superintendent of Coffeyville Public Schools, USD 445.

House Bill No. 2371  
Committee on Children and Seniors

February 22, 2021

Chairwoman Concannon and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify in **support of House Bill No. 2371**. My name is Craig Correll. I am currently in my 13<sup>th</sup> year working in Coffeyville and in my 21<sup>st</sup> year in education.

I am a firm believer in the benefits of a high-quality early learning environment. As an educator, my original goal for early childhood education was to level the playing field for students entering Kindergarten. Through my work as superintendent, I now see the role early childhood education also serves for a community. Serving on the board for our local hospital, as well as an ex-officio member of the board for the Montgomery County Action Council and Chamber of Commerce, I now also view high-quality early learning as a workforce necessity. Businesses need employees who have access to dependable childcare.

We know this access to high-quality childcare is critical for our local employers. In 2015 the Coffeyville Coalition for Early Education (CCEE) was formed. This is a recognized 501(c)(3) organization. The CCEE works in collaboration with a diverse partner base and its members include John Deere of Coffeyville, Community State Bank, Windsor Place, Coffeyville Community College, and Southeast Kansas Community Action Program. This alignment benefits those currently underserved in the Coffeyville community while creating an opportunity for working parents. Through past and current aligned efforts, USD 445 has been able to lay the crucial groundwork for Coffeyville's youngest citizens while at the same time supporting a strong workforce today. High-quality early learning centers build our nation's human capital two generations at a time to break the cycle of poverty. While these business partnerships create an enhanced model for child-care, at times the cost can simply prove too prohibitive for both families and businesses. This results in a reduced workforce in the area due to not having enough slots for children.

Valuing Individuals, Celebrating Learning, Improving Life!  
USD 445 will provide a happy, caring, hopeful environment that will empower children to achieve their greatest potential.

### USD #445 Mission Statement

Building on our culturally diverse community, USD 445 will prepare all students for life-long learning by providing resources for a comprehensive quality education in a safe environment that promotes high academic achievement and responsible citizenship in a global society.



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Coffeyville Community College created an added incentive to provide scholarships to parents of students who attend the USD 445 Early Learning Center. The education exemptions addressed in House Bill No. 2371 will further incentivize parents to further their education or obtain vocational certification. The current child support restrictions which would be removed with the passing of this bill, would remove a major obstacle for single mothers.

I implore you to fully consider this bill and support both our most vulnerable children while affording parents the opportunity to gain valuable skills needed in the workplace.

Sincerely,

Dr. Craig A. Correll  
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