

February 14, 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,

I am Bernadette Roche. I am a teacher in the Shawnee Mission School District. I am also a parent of three students in the USD 232 district. I live in Shawnee, KS. 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 concern for me. First, the rights listed in this bill are rights that parents already have. The state of Kansas, in conjunction with national organizations, already has education standards for all grade levels in all subject areas. Specific curriculum is available by district for any parent who requests it. Most districts have created digital access to daily learning materials due to Covid mitigation measures. If an educator is unwilling to discuss curriculum and instructional practices with a parent, that should be addressed by the immediate supervisor. It is not appropriate for a blanket policy as this bill suggests.

Second, I am distressed when I consider the amount of work, time and effort that will be required by this bill. My work-home balance is stressed. Teaching is not a 40 hour work week, despite what society implies. I am more likely to spend 60 hours a week on planning, grading, documenting, researching, communicating, creating, small group instruction, individual intervention, building relationships, collaborating with others, covering for a lack of teachers and substitutes – the list goes on. Asking teachers to add more to this work load is first redundant and second, asking too much.

Finally, HB2662 devalues the professionalism of educators. I am a veteran educator with twenty-five years in the classroom. I have a bachelor's degree in elementary education, a master's degree in curriculum instruction, and an education specialist degree in building leadership. I am proud to be a highly effective educator. It is a slap in my face to have individuals without education experience tell me how to do my job. Teaching is an art and a science. This bill disregards the art of teaching. Just this week, our building had a false fire alarm. Upon returning to the classroom, I spent fifteen minutes with third graders practicing calming techniques, explaining the ins and outs of a fire system, reassuring students that they are safe, reminding them that as their teacher I will protect them. This is the art of education – identifying student needs in the moment and addressing them. None of this was in my lesson plan for the day. Yet as an artist with a solid background in the science of education, I taught my students what they needed to know in that moment.

Based on the fact that these rights are available to parents and this bill will greatly reduce the skill and value of teaching, I request that you oppose HB2662.

Sincerely,

Bernadette Roche
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