

Thank you for allowing me to address your committee. I am both a parent and an educator. My children were home educated and attended private and public school. Currently, I am an administrator at Maize Virtual Preparatory School.

I understand the intent of this bill. I too am for transparency and parent involvement. There are many parts of this bill that affirm my core beliefs. However, I believe this bill is overreaching and will cause much more harm than benefit.

In our school, like many across the state, we have incredible parents who are devoted to their children's education. It is their partnership that allows us to make sure MVPS students are receiving an excellent education. In our K-8 program, we create an individual program of study for each student. Therefore, we utilize over 800 different books to meet the needs of our students. Our parents help implement lessons using these books, websites, and instructional materials. When a student needs dictates, we may adjust a resource as effective educators do all over the state. Our parents are aware of the materials being utilized. They even help with the selection of these resources as we have multiple curriculum paths.

If HB2662 is enacted, all those materials would need to be placed in a district parent portal. I believe the result of such a portal would have the opposite effect on education than is intended. In our case, teachers would not be able to deviate from a prescribed list of books because managing all the deviations would be an almost impossible task to maintain and monitor. In our school, parents and students would actually be limited because of the red tape involved in getting materials into the portal. Our teachers would no longer be able to respond to learning needs with creative solutions.

I can tell you that teachers are working extremely hard to meet the needs of students. I believe this bill puts up roadblocks for wonderful educators. Could you imagine a group of spectators throwing hurdles, roadblocks, and walls in front of a marathon runner? That is exactly how this bill feels to the educator. How would it feel if in the name of transparency, we asked every member of this committee to make sure that every interaction, website, book, news article used when forming laws be documented and placed on a website? I believe that you would say that it would interfere with your ability to do your job. It is not that educators have anything to hide. It is that this kind of overreaching documentation would greatly impact the job of educating and ultimately our students.

In every system, there are abuses. Those abuses should not be ignored but dealt with. However, creating a bill that would negatively affect the entire educational system is not the answer.

Thank you for time and consideration,

Melinda Holmes