

Good Afternoon Chair Thomas and Committee Members,

My name is Emily Tallman and I am a resident of Topeka. I am here today to speak to you in opposition of HB2236.

HB2236 seeks to allow parents to pick and choose what children are taught in school. On the surface this may *sound* like a fine idea, but this would be a disservice to Kansas children if allowed to pass. The bill states that a parent may object to a lesson if it impairs the *parent's* beliefs, disregarding any beliefs the student may hold, and withdraw the child from the lesson.

K.S.A. 72-3218 states each child shall be provided “sufficient knowledge of economic, social, and political systems to enable the student to make informed choices” and “sufficient understanding of governmental processes to enable the student to understand the issues that affect his or her community, state, and nation”. Withholding, or censoring, students from learning information is *not* protecting them; it actively harms them.

If a parent disagrees with a topic in school, that is an opportunity for the parent to discuss the topic with their child and offer a differing viewpoint. Differing viewpoints are what allows children to make informed choices.

There will always be a different viewpoint than your own, and children will face different ideas in their every day lives. It is our duty to give them the tools to engage in discussions, not hinder them.

I urge you all to not pass HB2236 and allow teachers to teach.

Thank you all for your time. I will stand for questions at the appropriate time.

Thank you,
Emily Tallman

2022 Kansas Statutes

72-3218. Accredited schools; mandatory subjects and areas of instruction; legislative goal of providing certain educational capacities. (a) In addition to subjects or areas of instruction required by K.S.A. 72-3214, 72-3217, 72-3232, 72-3235 and 72-3236, and amendments thereto, every accredited school in the state of Kansas shall teach the subjects and areas of instruction adopted by the state board of education.

(b) Every accredited high school in the state of Kansas also shall teach the subjects and areas of instruction necessary to meet the graduation requirements adopted by the state board of education.

(c) Subjects and areas of instruction shall be designed by the state board of education to achieve the goal established by the legislature of providing each and every child with at least the following capacities:

(1) Sufficient oral and written communication skills to enable students to function in a complex and rapidly changing civilization;

(2) sufficient knowledge of economic, social, and political systems to enable the student to make informed choices;

(3) sufficient understanding of governmental processes to enable the student to understand the issues that affect his or her community, state, and nation;

(4) sufficient self-knowledge and knowledge of his or her mental and physical wellness;

(5) sufficient grounding in the arts to enable each student to appreciate his or her cultural and historical heritage;

(6) sufficient training or preparation for advanced training in either academic or vocational fields so as to enable each child to choose and pursue life work intelligently; and

(7) sufficient levels of academic or vocational skills to enable public school students to compete favorably with their counterparts in surrounding states, in academics or in the job market.

(d) Nothing in this section shall be construed as relieving the state or school districts from other duties and requirements imposed by state or federal law including, but not limited to, at-risk programs for pupils needing intervention, programs concerning special education and related services and bilingual education.

History: L. 2005, ch. 152, § 6; L. 2014, ch. 93, § 32; May 1.