

January 24, 2023

K-12 Education Budget Committee
Representative Kristey Williams and Committee Members

RE: Support House Bill No. 2030

Dear Madam Chairwoman and Committee:

Thank you for allowing me this opportunity to address this committee on the matter of House Bill No. 2030 concerning the ability of nonpublic school students to enroll part time in public school and participate in nonpublic school activities. My name is Hannah Self and I ask you to join me in supporting this bill.

Our family began homeschooling ten years ago and have participated with a homeschool sports league beginning when our eldest child entered middle school. At the beginning of this school year, as that same child was entering high school, she expressed interest in an elective class and corresponding extracurricular activity that were available through our school district of residence. It should be noted said extracurricular activity is not governed by Kansas State High School Activities Association (KSHSAA) or subject to its regulations. Knowing that enrollment in one public school class would not make her eligible to participate with the public school sports programs, I felt comfortable moving forward with pursuing enrollment in this one class with our school district of residence. The school district superintendent was very welcoming and supportive of our family's choice to participate in this one elective class and activity based on what we felt was best for our child.

Only when I began the yearly registration process with our homeschool sports league did I discover that our daughter would not be allowed to take any classes on campus. Per the eligibility forms for the homeschool sports league, "Students taking one course on campus at a KSHSAA-member public or private school are not eligible to compete in KSHSAA event. Participation in such events will jeopardize the ability for (homeschool sports league) to compete against KSHSAA-member schools." Upon further investigation with the athletic director of the homeschool league and an assistant executive director for KSHSAA, I was directed to the approved school application through KSHSAA's website which allows this and other non-member schools to participate in KSHSAA sanctioned activities. This application states: "It is understood students from other KSHSAA member schools may NOT participate for our Approved School. Failure to follow this expectation will result in immediate (directly copied and pasted from application) revocation of Approved School status."

This led us to look at whether our daughter could take the elective class virtually through our school district, still participate in corresponding extracurricular club (again, a non-KSHSAA sanctioned activity) and continue to participate in the homeschool sports league. KSHSAA finally consented that she could take a virtual class through our school district as long as she was not on campus for her class. The governing body for the corresponding extracurricular activity, however, does not include virtual classes in their education model as outlined in the organization's state constitution.

The bottom line is our daughter could remain with our homeschool sports league, take a virtual elective, but be exempt from participating with the corresponding extracurricular activity. She could opt to take one class on-campus, participate in the extracurricular activity, but be unable to participate in sports with the homeschool league or the public school district. The final option, at that time, was to enroll her

in the one desired elective class on-campus, also “fully” enroll in a Kansas State Department of Education approved virtual school, be allowed to participate in the elective’s corresponding extracurricular activity and participate with the public school districts sports teams. When researching virtual school options, though, we found some would not allow her to be enrolled in the one class on-campus and be enrolled with the virtual school which would satisfy the KSHSAA virtual student eligibility policy. The result for our student was that she started the school year with a mix of in-person classes and virtual classes through our school district of residence which allowed her to participate in the elective class, its corresponding extracurricular activity and sports with the public school district.

My hope in being here today is to make you aware of the imbalance of access to activities due to the current KSHSAA regulations. If a student does not meet the enrollment eligibility requirements to participate in public school sports, they should be able to participate with the nonpublic school activities and participate fully with respect to the competition schedule of the nonpublic school organization. Families should be able to choose what they feel is best for their student in terms of classes and activities as reflected by where they choose for the majority of a student’s enrollment to occur, be that public or nonpublic school.

Thank you for your consideration and I hope you vote to support House Bill No. 2030.