

Danny Zeck
Former School Board Member
(16 years of service)

House Committee on Education

March 22, 2023

Testimony in Support of House Bill 2458

Chairman Thomas and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for allowing me to submit written testimony in support of House Bill 2458. I am currently serving as the District 1 representative on the Kansas State Board of Education, but please note that I am submitting this written testimony as a private citizen. The opinions included in this testimony are my own, and do not reflect the formal position of the state board.

I served on a local school board for 16 years and I know that grappling with a school closure or consolidation issue is one of the most important and most difficult decisions that a local board member is required to make. Although local school board members are well positioned to represent the values, needs, and priorities of their local communities, it is both reasonable and rationale for them to need additional technical support, guidance, and expertise when dealing with the financial and regulatory issues related to school closures and consolidations. The current statutes do not provide sufficient checks and balances between local school board members and citizens in consolidated school districts, and the provisions provided in HB 2458 provide a simple, straightforward, and reasonable solution that protects both the local school boards and the communities they represent.

The proposed legislation will help to minimize conflicts between communities and will help to ensure that citizens and local board members have the checks and balances that are needed to manage school closure and consolidation questions in a neutral and respectful manner.

The solutions outlined in HB 2458 represent what's best for the kids, and it is legislation that local boards, state boards, and state legislatures should all support. Thank you for your time and consideration. We respectfully ask for your support.