

House K-12 Committee

HB 2048

Proponent Testimony

Birdie Miller – Student

Madam Chair and members of the committee:

Testify today in support of Kansas House Bill 2048.

Madam chair and members of the committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today in support of Kansas House Bill 2048. My name is Kaleece Miller, but everyone calls me Birdie. You can too.

I started kindergarten at a public school in central Topeka. As a kindergartener, I remember being sent out of my classroom and into a reading group with 3rd graders. This really bothered my mom, so she started looking into other schools. She liked Cair Paravel Latin School, and I even spent a shadow day there. But ultimately, we couldn't afford it, even with the scholarship that the school offered.

So, I stayed at my school and skipped a grade in hopes that I might be challenged. I wasn't.

But my mom stayed in touch with the people at Cair Paravel and in 2018 she heard about the ACE scholarship. We applied and I got a scholarship!

Everything was so different at Cair Paravel. I didn't just change schools, I changed worlds. The pace of the day was so much faster, and I was surprised how much the teachers expected.

I was learning so much about history and music and science and grammar, not to mention Latin. I about fell out of my chair the first time I heard our Latin teacher teach a 3rd grade lesson!

I had never been before in a quiet classroom where everyone gave the teacher their full attention when she talked. Everyone around me seemed to want to learn. I had finally found kids who were like me, and it felt so good.

I'm now in 7th grade and my classes are challenging and I'm learning to balance my time with sports and other activities. I work hard, especially in formal Logic, science, and algebra. The school is small, so the teachers all know me, and I know them. They take the time to answer questions and get to know me as a person. I'm a Christian, so learning about the Bible and discussing my faith is important. I love being in a school where I am encouraged to grow closer to God and serve Him with my life.

I feel like I've found the school that is right for me. And I'm grateful for the scholarship that made it possible. I hope you will vote to expand this program, so more families feel free to choose the school they think is the best fit for their children, without worrying that they can't afford it.

