

March 9, 2023

Senate Education Committee

Written Testimony in Opposition to House Bill 2236

Chair Baumgardner and Members of the Committee:

The Shawnee Mission School District (SMSD) appears today in opposition to House Bill 2236. HB 2236 correctly affirms a parent or guardian's right to take the most active role in their children's education. We support those rights and have policies in place that form the foundation of the productive interaction between parents, teachers, administrators, and elected board members.

However, House Bill 2236 does not take into consideration several factors related to curriculum which are important for the students' education and the future for which they are preparing. School districts have very clear and well-articulated standards for individual courses of study. Public schools must have the freedom to address how to convey the required information, and are obligated to fulfill state law regarding the specifics of what constitutes college and career ready education.

Parent or student objections need to be in the context of seeking some understanding of what a reasonable accommodation would be. That currently takes place through conversation with the teacher and the administrators. Under this legislation, if a parent refuses reasonable accommodations, that decision could impact that child's academic progress and performance. Moreover, an individual's objection could disproportionately impact the curriculum and material used for instructional purposes, to the detriment of a majority of students. As written, the bill skips over what have here-to-fore been highly effective processes to address these concerns, and has the potential to impact the curriculum's objective of helping all our students achieve.

If I can provide any additional information or answer questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

David A. Smith, Chief of Communications

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