



Written Testimony in Support of the Affirming Parental Rights Act – HB 2420

Kansas House Education Committee
Submitted by Truth In Education (TIE)

Submitted by:
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I request that this testimony be included in the record.

Introduction

Truth In Education (TIE) respectfully submits this testimony in strong support of the Affirming Parental Rights Act. TIE is a national, parent advocacy organization dedicated to protecting parental rights, student privacy, and the moral, intellectual, and emotional well-being of children in K–12 education.

This legislation is both necessary and timely. While parental rights are firmly established in Kansas statute and federal law, parents frequently lack knowledge of those rights, and school districts often lack meaningful accountability when violations occur. The Affirming Parental Rights Act addresses this gap by ensuring transparency, consistency, and enforceability.

The Need for Transparency

Kansas law already recognizes parents as the primary authority over the upbringing, education, and care of their children (K.S.A. 38-141). However, TIE regularly hears from parents who discover — often too late — that:

- Non-academic surveys were administered without consent
- Student data was collected or shared without proper disclosure
- Behavioral or emotional screening tools were used without notification
- Healthcare or mental health interventions occurred without parental approval
- Sensitive instructional content was introduced without opt-out options
- Parents were denied access to, or the ability to review and correct, inaccurate or incomplete student records

These violations are rarely intentional; they are most often the result of layered bureaucracy, vendor contracts, grant compliance requirements, or district-level policies that override parental involvement. The absence of a standardized notice of rights leaves parents unaware and unable to protect their children.

The Affirming Parental Rights Document

The bill's requirement that every district provide parents with a standardized, written Affirming Parental Rights document is essential. This provision ensures that:

- Every parent receives equal access to information regardless of income, education, or legal knowledge
- School districts are held to a consistent standard across the state
- Parents can give informed consent rather than after-the-fact objections
- Rights established by law are made visible and enforceable
- Parental consent prior to providing any school based mental health service to a student

This is not a creation of new rights, but an affirmation of existing ones.

Accountability and Enforcement

The enforcement provisions of this bill are necessary to ensure that parental rights are not merely symbolic. The bill establishes:

- A clear complaint and resolution process
- Independent investigation by the local/County District Attorney, and/or the Office of the Attorney General
- Written findings and public reporting without personal identifiers
- Graduated consequences for repeated violations
- Judicial review to protect due process
- A last-resort scholarship option for families when violations persist

Without accountability, parental rights remain political theatre. This bill restores the rule of law by ensuring compliance with existing statutes and constitutional protections.

Constitutional and Legal Alignment

The Affirming Parental Rights Act is firmly aligned with U.S. Supreme Court precedent, including:

- *Pierce v. Society of Sisters* (1925) – Parents have the right to direct the education of their children
- *Wisconsin v. Yoder* (1972) – Parents control the upbringing of their children
- *Santosky v. Kramer* (1982) – Parents have a fundamental liberty interest in the care and custody of their children
- *Troxel v. Granville* (2000) – Parental rights are constitutionally protected
- *Mahmoud v. Taylor* (2025) – Parents may opt their children out of instruction that conflicts with sincerely held beliefs

This bill simply ensures these rights are respected in daily school operations.

Why This Bill Matters Now

Public schools now operate as more than academic institutions. They have become centers for healthcare delivery, behavioral screening, data collection, and digital monitoring. As these roles expand, so too must parental oversight.

Conclusion

Truth In Education urges the Kansas House Education Committee to support the Affirming Parental Rights Act, HB 2420. This bill strengthens trust between families and schools, ensures transparency, and protects children by upholding parents' inalienable rights.

If passed, House Bill 2420 would be incorporated into the Affirming Parental Rights Act. This testimony is submitted in support of the provisions of the Affirming Parental Rights Act and the protections it affords families.

Parental rights are not a special interest. They are the foundation of a free society.

Respectfully submitted,

Rhonda Thomas
Founder and President
Truth In Education

Sources for Legislative Record

U.S. Supreme Court Cases

- Pierce v. Society of Sisters, 268 U.S. 510 (1925)
- Wisconsin v. Yoder, 406 U.S. 205 (1972)
- Santosky v. Kramer, 455 U.S. 745 (1982)
- Troxel v. Granville, 530 U.S. 57 (2000)
- Mahmoud v. Taylor, 606 U.S. 522 (2025)

Federal Law

- Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA), 20 U.S.C. § 1232h

Kansas Statutes

- K.S.A. 38-141
- K.S.A. 72-6312–6320
- K.S.A. 72-6315
- K.S.A. 72-6331–6334

Additional References

- U.S. Department of Education, *PPRA Guidance*
- FERPA Guidance, U.S. Department of Education
- Heritage Foundation, *Parental Rights and the Constitution*
- American Academy of Pediatrics, *Informed Consent in Minors*