

Solomon Moore

Licensed School Counselor, Licensed Professional Counselor

Wichita, Kansas

[solomon-91@hotmail.com](mailto:solomon-91@hotmail.com)

(620) 240-0924

HB 2420-Requiring school districts to obtain parental consent prior to providing certain school-based mental health services to a student.

Hearing: 1/22/26

Subject: Opponent-Written only

Chairperson and Members of the House Committee on Education:

I am writing today to formally oppose HB 2420. While the intent to involve parents in their children's lives is a goal shared by all educators, the specific mandates within this Bill create significant barriers to student safety, undermine professional ethical standards, and jeopardize the mental well-being of Kansas students.

The American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Ethical Standards recognizes the legal rights of parents, while also protecting the student's right to a safe, confidential space for growth. HB 2420 disrupts this balance by requiring written consent prior to providing Tier 2 or Tier 3 interventions. This mandate can inadvertently force a breach of trust before a therapeutic relationship is even established, making students less likely to seek help for sensitive issues. Schools are often the first and only place where students feel safe to vocalize internal struggles. Research indicates that in states with rigid mandatory parental consent laws, there is a measurable decrease in students receiving help for mental health services. By adding a bureaucratic layer of verbal and written notification (and consent) for any intervention "designed to influence emotional, behavioral, and social functioning," we risk turning away students during the critical window when an issue is emerging but before it reaches a crisis threshold. Licensed school mental health professionals in Kansas—including school counselors, social workers, school nurses, and school psychologists—are not casual observers. They are highly trained specialists who hold advanced degrees and have completed hundreds of hours of supervised clinical internships. Their training specifically covers:

- Crisis intervention and risk assessment
- Ethical decision-making and legal boundaries
- Recognizing signs of abuse, neglect, and trauma

Strict adherence to HB 2420 would prove detrimental in several common scenarios:

- Initial Disclosures of Abuse: A student may come to a counselor to test the waters regarding trauma at home. If the counselor must contact the parent for consent before the student feels safe to disclose, the student may remain in a dangerous environment

out of fear.

- Stigma and Privacy: Students struggling with distress often fear their parents' immediate reaction. Without the ability to have an initial conversation with a professional, these students frequently retreat, allowing their conditions to worsen.
- The Gray Area of Distress: Not every mental health struggle is a suicide risk, but many can rapidly escalate. Delaying a conversation to wait for a response leaves a student in acute distress, unsupported during their most vulnerable time.

The Kansas State Department of Education's (KSDE) Comprehensive School Counseling Program underscores the importance of delivering timely, developmentally appropriate, and equitable services to all students. Policies that restrict school counselors' ability to respond promptly undermine student safety and add to the stressors already overwhelming our school system.

I want to state clearly that educators and school mental health professionals want to partner with families. We believe in transparency and the vital role of the parent as the primary guide in a child's life. However, an effective partnership is built on trust, not on mandates that treat a supportive conversation like a legal liability. I urge the Committee to consider the unintended consequences of HB 2420 and to trust the highly trained, licensed professionals and educators already serving our Kansas children. Please do not move this Bill forward.

Respectfully,

Solomon Moore, Ph.D., LSC, LPC, NCC