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HB 2420 Requiring parental consent prior to providing any school-based mental health service to a student
Opponent - Written only

Monday, January 19, 2026

Members of the Kansas Legislature House Committee
Kansas State Capitol
300 SW 10th Ave
Topeka, KS 66612

Dear Members of the House Committee,

As a veteran educator of 22.5 years, I am writing to respectfully express my opposition to House Bill 2420 as is written, currently under consideration by the Kansas Education House Committee.

While I fully support the involvement of parents in their children's education and well-being, this bill would create unnecessary barriers for students to access critical school-based mental health services. Research shows that many students struggle with anxiety, depression, trauma, and other mental health challenges that can significantly impact their ability to learn and thrive.

Schools are often the most accessible and trusted place where struggling students can receive timely support or referrals, especially for families facing barriers. Numerous times I have worked with students in conjunction with their parents/guardians, teachers, and mental health professionals to make school—and life—a better environment for them to both live and learn.

Requiring explicit parental consent before a student can receive certain services may discourage vulnerable children from seeking help due to fear, stigma, or complex family dynamics. Not all students feel safe or comfortable sharing their mental health needs with caregivers immediately — and delaying assistance can exacerbate emotional distress, behavior problems, and academic difficulties. In some cases, mental health issues are identified first by trained school personnel, and restricting timely intervention could result in harm.

By imposing rigid consent requirements, this bill could unintentionally undermine early intervention and harm student well-being. Professional school employees may not help a child in need in fear of the retribution this bill exhibits; in fact it undermines their professionalism the state of Kansas requires of our educators. This could leave our most precious asset, our children, to maneuver alone through the difficulties that adolescence naturally presents.

Additionally, schools and school mental health professionals already operate under existing ethical protocols designed to protect student privacy and safety while involving families appropriately. It's important that legislative efforts strengthen — not hinder — the ability of schools to support students holistically.

Protecting the mental health of Kansas students should be a top priority. I urge you to reconsider HB 2420 in its current form and pursue solutions that enhance, rather than restrict, student access to essential mental health care.

Thank you for your attention to this important issue and for your service to the people of Kansas.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Andrea G. Rairden". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name and title.

Andrea G. Rairden
Former 7-9 English/Language Arts Educator, 13 years
Former 9-12 Licensed School Counselor, 8 years
Current 7-12 Assistant Principal, year 1