



February 3, 2026

To: Kansas Legislature  
House Committee on Education

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Subject: Opponent testimony of House Bill 2488

The University of Kansas School of Medicine Office of Admissions has utilized a mission-aligned framework promoting a data-driven, holistic approach to the evaluation of applicants to the medical school for the last two decades. This framework follows the national best-practices of the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) and aligns to the Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME) medical school accreditation standards. This framework has allowed the medical school to be above or on par with national peers for USMLE testing checkpoints and acceptance into graduate medical education positions (residency match rates). The mission-aligned foundation of applicant review allows for “the best assessment of an individual’s competencies by considering their experiences, attributes, and academic metrics to select applicants who will best contribute to the program’s unique goals, learning environment, and the practice of medicine. By practicing holistic review, admissions committees consider the “whole” applicant, rather than disproportionately focusing on any one factor.” (AAMC, Using MCAT Data in 2026 Medical Student Selection). The LCME standards also require that admissions policies, selection criteria, and ultimate selection of applicants fall under the purview of faculty governance, specifically, a formally constituted admissions committee where most of the voting membership is comprised of faculty members. As such, the Office of Admissions conducts its activities in alignment with the KU School of Medicine Admissions Committee for policies, procedures, and criteria.

The KU School of Medicine’s primary mission is to recruit and retain a student body of primarily Kansas residents or those with significant Kansas ties who are likely to remain in Kansas to serve the health care needs of Kansas communities. Applicants must demonstrate they are qualified to meet the rigors of a medical career in multiple domains: academic achievement, as reflected in MCAT scores and course grades; possessing an understanding of medicine at a local, national, and global level from clinical exposure; altruism in action, through longitudinal community service; the commitment to professionalism, as indicated in their interactions with peers, patients, faculty, and their community; and the ability to extrapolate from past experiences to shape their future behavior in a career as a physician. Lastly, applicants must convey their understanding of the SOM mission to serve the health needs of Kansas communities and articulate their personal goals to align with that mission.

The Office of Admissions works in tandem with the Office of Medical Education and Office of Continuous Quality Improvement to monitor the components of the MD program for compliance with accreditation

standards and ensure alignment with the KU Medical Center vision to improve the lives and communities in Kansas and beyond through innovation in education, research, and health care. Each entering class is closely monitored and assessed against data-driven metrics, including national benchmarks. The AAMC has compiled ten years of MCAT validity studies to evaluate whether the exam is fair, meaningful, and used appropriately. The AAMC research also examines how undergraduate GPAs and MCAT scores combined predict medical student performance (AAMC, Using MCAT Data in 2026 Medical Student Selection). KUSOM matriculants MCAT performance is on par with peer institutions across the nation, with the KUSOM matriculant average total MCAT score of 509 (ranking at the 77<sup>th</sup> percentile of all MCAT takers), compared to the average total score for all U.S. MD program matriculants of 512 (ranking in the 84<sup>th</sup> percentile of all MCAT scores) for the entering classes of 2025-26. KUSOM's academic thresholds (undergraduate GPA and MCAT score) for automatic consideration for an interview have increased for the first time in 20 years to strengthen mission alignment, and ensure applicants invited to interview demonstrate the academic readiness necessary for success in a rigorous medical curriculum.

Once matriculated, performance assessments include passing United States Medical Licensing Exam (USMLE) Step 1 on the first attempt; progression to year three on time or within one extra year; clerkship National Board of Medical Examiners (NBME) subject exam scores and clerkship passage USMLE Step 2 Clinical Knowledge (CK) scores from the first attempt; passing Step 2 CK on the first attempt; performance across pre-clerkship courses; and graduation from medical school in four or five years. In addition to the dedication to continuous quality improvement, the KU School of Medicine also undergoes a comprehensive, peer-reviewed evaluation by the LCME every eight years. The LCME is recognized by the U.S. Department of Education as the accrediting agency for medical education programs leading to the awarding of an MD degree. This accreditation is a voluntary, peer-reviewed process designed to confirm the quality of an established medical education program. Schools must be accredited by the LCME for students to be eligible to sit for United States Medical Licensing Examinations, match to a residency program, or acquire a medical license to practice in most states. This dedication to systematic program evaluation and improvement demonstrates that KU School of Medicine has consistently met and maintained the high degree of excellence needed to align with the AAMC best practices and the standards of LCME accreditation, and the results are visible in action through our graduates who work tirelessly to serve the state of Kansas populations, regardless of race, gender, socioeconomic status, political affiliation, religious affiliation, and other categories.

The Office of Admissions and the Admissions Committee incorporate continuous quality improvements as recommended, and facilitates data-driven, holistic approach to the selection and matriculation of medical school candidates. The process upholds the necessary rigor, while expanding opportunities for academically prepared and deeply committed candidates who will serve the health care needs of Kansas communities. In addition to the assessment and matriculation of exceptional applicants, the Admissions Office offers comprehensive premedical programming to prepare applicants across Kansas for medical school admissions, in alignment with the Admissions Committee. The impact and effectiveness of premedical programming is evident in the long running Scholars in Health pipeline program, the annual Premedical Student Conference, regular Open House events, and application preparation focused webinars. The Office of Admissions and Admissions Committee recognize that admissions decisions are a matter of public trust and institutional responsibility to the State of Kansas in admitting and educating the physicians who will care for all in Kansas.

In conclusion, the KU School of Medicine Office of Admissions upholds rigorous academic standards of excellence while expanding opportunity, and ensuring we enroll students who are both academically prepared, professionally grounded, and deeply committed to advancing the health for the people of Kansas.