



Dr. Brent Yeager, Superintendent

Olathe Public Schools

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House Bill 2451 Government resources and ballot questions.

Opponent

Written

January 22, 2026

Chairman Proctor and Members of the House Elections Committee:

Olathe Public Schools oppose HB 2451. We appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony on HB 2451, which prohibits the use of local assets in support or opposition of state constitutional questions or ballot initiatives. In short, HB 2451 infringes on local decision-making on questions of importance for municipalities (including school districts) and their citizens and attempts to restrain the content of information that should be made available to the public.

The law focuses on the election or defeat of a state or local political candidate and HB 2451 adds State constitutional amendments and local ballot questions.

The bill contends school districts must "promote or oppose" state or local questions in a "neutral manner" and "neutral information," but only on the official government website. The bill's use of "neutral" is abstract and ripe for conflict and litigation. The second section restricts the ability to "conduct or authorize" mass communications via "flyers, physical signage and statements posted on social media." These issues are of the greatest importance related to bond issues to address new construction and upkeep of existing facilities.

The bill is ambiguous and likely results in misinterpretation. A local unit of government by necessity is responsible for explaining, detailing, and presenting a proposed ballot question for example. "Neutrality" itself is probably debatable related to a ballot question for example. Is a levy for a new school, gymnasium, or playground not described by its benefits, efficiencies, and contribution to the operation of local government? Could that description be rebutted by potential critics who argue the language is "not neutral"? The designation can be subjective.

We support our elected school board and administration's capacity to truthfully and accurately explain ballot questions and trust our communities' capacity to evaluate a non-partisan and political decision based on the needs for new or repaired facilities, enhanced security, or other resources. An accurate and detailed description of a project and its benefits is not propaganda.

HB 2451 imposition of limitations are unnecessary, unless there is consistent evidence of local school boards' misuse of the process, that warrant some consideration of change. We do not believe there is and thus respectfully request the Committee oppose this bill.

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



We appreciate the opportunity to testify.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "B. Yeager", is positioned above the printed name.

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