

Written Only, Testimony to House Tax Committee

Honorable Chair, Rep. Adam Smith

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Room 185-N, State Capitol Building

Neutral. [**HB 2443**](#) - Providing that certain natural gas storage facilities shall not be classified as public utilities for property tax purposes.

Monday, January 20, 2026, 3:30 pm Room 346-S

Chairman Smith and Committee Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to share written testimony, with concern for the local revenue streams of the school districts in 40 counties across Kansas. While Kansas PTA is sensitive to the challenges of balancing property tax levels, we are cautious about any tax policy that makes it harder to ensure constitutional levels of funding for K-12 public education. This proposed change in classification appears to shift the burden of property tax to local residents and associated state equalization aid demands.

[**Kansas PTA Legislative Priority 2**](#) is focused on the importance of investing in quality public education. Kansas PTA supports constitutionally adequate and equitable funding of the state school finance formulas, both for general education and special education services. Towards this end, Kansas PTA supports a balanced tax policy to ensure that our state has fair and reliable revenue streams to deliver this critical investment in the future viability of our great state.

The purpose of a public school finance system is to provide nearly 500,000 Kansas children equal opportunity to achieve the learning goals and objectives defined by the Kansans Can Vision. As noted in the [Kansas constitution, under Article 6](#), the Kansas legislature is obligated with the duty of *suitable finance*, while the State Board of Education is charged with defining this vision of what Kansas students should know and be able to do upon graduation.

The Kansans Can Vision [definition of success](#): A successful Kansas high school graduate has the academic preparation, cognitive preparation, technical skills, employability skills and civic engagement to be successful in postsecondary education, in the attainment of an industry-recognized certification or in the workforce

Our Kansas public schools stand as the only K-12 system that welcomes all youth, regardless of need and without other special admissions requirement (e.g., specific religious affiliation or family configuration). Public schools comprise the only system that is committed to supporting students regardless of their academic performance. Failing grades do not result in a student being transitioned out but rather initiate more individualized instructional supports, to the extent funding allows. The Kansas public school system is the only K-12 educational institution with public oversight for use of

public dollars, by way of a multitude of requirements for reporting, licensure and safety, as well as the free election of local school board members to oversee governance.

Kansas public school educators continue to rise to the challenges of learning disruptions caused by the global pandemic. Our educators, students and families patiently await full funding of special education, serving students enrolled in public and private schools. Yet, concern is growing as this special education shortfall erodes the restoration of deep cuts to general education funding levels, that just reached pre-2009 recession purchasing power this past school year.

Let's recognize the new 2023 the baseline, monitor progress, and ensure all Kansas kids have equal opportunity to achieve. Note the following, among the Kansas public school students for whom half live in poverty, 17% students receiving special education services, 10% are English language learners and the current class of kindergartners were born when no COVID vaccine was available for infants (KSDE, 2025):

- Record percentage of students graduating high school, over 90%.
- Record number students taking post-secondary courses (40,709) and earning record number of post-secondary credits (333,007).
- Record number AP exams taken (16,652) and passing with score of 3 or above (12,240)
- Over 70% of 3rd graders can not only read, but can identify themes in different texts, differentiate facts from opinion, with supporting evidence.
- Over 70% of 8th graders can not only do math, but can solve multi-step linear equations.

Kansas PTA advocates for tax policy that is fair, balanced and generates a reliable funding stream that meets the actual costs of providing an adequate and equitable public education for all Kansas youth. Thank you for your time and consideration.

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THE PTA POSITION

Kansas PTA is a nonpartisan association that promotes the welfare of children and youth. The PTA does not endorse any candidate or political party. Rather, we advocate for policies and legislation that affect Kansas youth in alignment with our legislative platform and priorities. [PTA mission and purpose](#) have remained the same since our inception over 100 years ago, focused on facilitating every child's potential and empowering families and communities to advocate for all children.