



Senate Committee on Education
Opponent Testimony (Written Only) SB 48
February 7, 2025
Submitted by: Dr. Tonya Merrigan, Superintendent
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Chair Erickson and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written opposition testimony for SB 48, amending Kansas education law regarding school district accreditation, introducing stricter requirements for schools to achieve and maintain their accreditation status.

Blue Valley has a student population of more than 22,400 and consistently ranks in the top tier of high performing schools, both in the state and in the nation. (See "Quick Facts" at the end of testimony.)

The primary goal of the Blue Valley district is **to ensure every student attending our schools has the educational programming and opportunities, delivered by quality educators, to allow them to thrive long after they leave our doors.** We embrace every student who walks through our doors and always work to provide them with the tools to succeed.

The Blue Valley Board of Education has a long-standing priority position that states:

The Blue Valley School District supports...decision-making ability on the part of local Boards of Education to efficiently and effectively operate their education systems, and opposes efforts that reduce decision making authority or autonomy of local Boards of Education.

This bill poses a significant threat to the educational landscape in our state. While we understand the importance of maintaining standards in education, we are concerned that SB 48 takes an overly punitive approach by threatening to pull accreditation from any school that fails to comply with all federal and state statutes, rules, and regulations.

Accreditation should be based on the district's ability to meet a certain level of educational standards, and determining accreditation should be the job of the Kansas Department of Education and the State Board of Education, not the legislature.

USD 229 Blue Valley Schools: Quick Facts

K-12 Student Enrollment	21,767	ACT District Composite Average*	22.9
Early Childhood—grade 12 Enrollment	22,450	ACT Statewide Average	19.2
Average Daily Attendance	94.4%	SAT District Average	1357
Graduation Rate	96.7%	SAT Statewide Average	1256
Teacher's with Master's Degree or Higher	76%	*with 91.6 % of graduates taking ACT	