



**Oral Opponent Testimony on
SB 45, Virtual school graduation rate calculations
Senate Education Committee**

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Chair Erickson and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on SB 45. KASB opposes the bill as it is currently written.

KASB's member-adopted legislative policies support the authority of the State Board of Education over matters of accreditation, determining graduation requirements, and other areas outlined in the State Board's constitutional mandate:

Governing Schools

Authority of the Kansas State Board of Education

- We support that goal under the Kansas constitution's charge for intellectual, educational, vocational, and scientific improvement and its balance of responsibilities in Article 6 to entities, each accountable directly to the voters.
- We support general supervision of public schools under the State Board of Education, **including setting standards for accreditation**, learning standards, **graduation**, and licensure.

(Emphasis added). Moreover, KASB members strongly believe that "[t]he same accreditation and accountability requirements must apply to any entity receiving taxpayer dollars for educating children."

SB 45 would exclude from a virtual high school's graduation rate "those students who were enrolled in such virtual school but transferred to homeschooling or a nonaccredited private school in Kansas or another state." Public virtual high schools in Kansas currently calculate

graduation rates on the same basis as brick-and-mortar high schools in their school districts and across the state. Why would we hold virtual high schools to a different standard of accountability and success on behalf of their students than other high schools in the same school district? If the legislature believes that public virtual high schools should not be penalized in calculating their graduation rates for transfer students whose families choose to complete their education in an unaccredited high school or home school, then that change should apply to ***all*** public high schools in the state, whether virtual or brick-and-mortar. If such a change would not be considered beneficial for traditional public high school students, then the standard should not be lowered for virtual high school students in Kansas.

For these reasons, we respectfully request that the committee vote no on SB 45. In the alternative, we request the bill be amended to apply this newly proposed graduation rate calculation to all public schools, virtual or otherwise, in the state.

Thank you.

KASB is a non-profit service organization built on an abiding belief in Kansas public schools. We have put the needs of students and K-12 leaders first since 1917.