



Kansas PTA  
715 SW 10<sup>th</sup> Street, Topeka KS 66612  
[www.kansas-pta-legislative.org](http://www.kansas-pta-legislative.org)

Opponent. [SB 421](#). Enacting \$5,000 civil penalty for violations of personal expression at K-12 schools act.

Written. Senate Education Committee

Hearing. Wednesday, February 4, 1:30 pm, Room 144-S

Vikki Mullins, Kansas PTA President

Cyndie Rexer, Committee Assistant  
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Room 445-S, State Capitol Building

Honorable Chair Erickson and Committee Members,

On behalf of the Kansas PTA, thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony in **opposition to civil penalties of \$5,000 or more** in relation to students' exercise of their rights to speech and assembly as proposed in SB 421.

"Any student or student club or organization that is harmed by a violation of this act or whose rights under this act are violated shall have a private cause of action against the school for declaratory and injunctive relief, monetary damages, reasonable attorney fees and any other appropriate relief. If a court finds that a violation of this act has occurred, the court may award damages in an amount of at least \$5,000 for each violation."

**Kansas PTA supports districts' leadership to protect student speech and recognizes this as an issue for locally elected school boards** to provide oversight ([KS PTA Legislative Priority 1](#)).

Many Kansas school districts already have policies and guidelines in place. As is our common concern with proposed state legislation that oversteps local control, this proposed bill is unnecessary, aggressively inflammatory, and likely contradictory.

Existing district policies seek to protect students' rights to speech and assembly, as well as policy pertaining to prohibition of discrimination, harassment, and retaliation. Students' constitutional right to peaceably assemble are already protected, along with guidelines on time and place to maintain safety, protect from interference to normal school operations and protect all other students from disruption to their instructional time.

Our public schools are the heart of Kansas communities, serving 90% of school age youth. Our teachers and administrators are committed to preparing all kids to thrive in work and in life. Creating opportunities for every child to engage and be successful serves to strengthen the viability of a thriving Kansas future.

Thank you for your consideration. I urge committee members, on behalf of the Kansas PTA, to vote no on use of civil monetary penalty.

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Cc: Angie Gunion, VP of Advocacy  
Devin Wilson, Legislative Liaison  
Mary Sinclair, PhD, Advocacy Team

***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.*