



**Unified School District 217**  
**P.O. Box 167**  
**Rolla, Kansas 67954**

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Before the House Committee on Education

By Jason LaRue, President  
Board of Education,  
USD217 Rolla, KS

Dear Chairman Thomas and members of the committee:

House Bill 2224 proposes extension of the required number of days of school for students. After discussions with District administration, educators, and parents, the Board of Education for USD217 Rolla, KS opposes this bill. It is our opinion that passage of this bill would not be in the best interest of our district in general and our students in particular.

Without evidence of science based research revealing positive results of a longer school year, the additional burden placed upon students would be just that, a burden. Many students across this state work part time jobs to earn a little extra income. This income can sometimes be building block that a student uses to transition into a next phase of life whether that be college, a trade school, or straight into the job market. We are aware that education does not just happen inside a school building. Many life lessons are learned when students are able to work and interact outside the district. An extension of school days could limit the abilities of students who have the need or desire to work outside of school.

The extension of a school year would also be financially burdensome on the districts themselves. Many school districts, especially small rural districts, are facing financial hardships that would only be exasperated by an extension of the school year. Teachers and administrators should expect, rightfully so, additional compensation for the added amounts of work. Additional costs would also include food, utilities, fuel, and additional maintenance costs. In a time when many districts are already forced to make tough decisions on staffing levels, these added costs could have devastating results.

We all benefit from our children being well educated. As an entity tasked with overseeing the education of the children of our district, we are open to change that provides our students with the best opportunities for a bright future. With that outlook in mind, the Board of Education for USD217, Rolla, KS opposes passage of HB2224.

Respectfully,  
Jason LaRue, President  
USD217, Rolla, KS