

Date: 2-13-2024

To: Kansas Senate Education Committee

Re: Testimony Opposing Senate Bill 437.

Greetings, I appreciate the work that the Senate is doing to support the education of students in the State of Kansas. I am submitting a written opposition to Senate Bill 437. The bill appropriates 100 million dollars to fund the "Kansas Education Enrichment Program" to pay for educational expenses that could include funds for private school, home schools with limited accountability for outcomes. Public funds should not fund private entities, that do not support "All Students". The bill should be specific to the intention of investment, the qualifying guidelines and the accountability processes to ensure success.

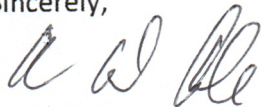
Public education serves ALL students without discrimination of economic status, disabilities, race, religion, gender. I am a product of product of public education, my children are products of public education, and my grandchildren will attend public education. Public schools are the backbone of rural Kansas.

- In 2023, 9 out of 10 KS high school students graduated from high school — an all-time high.
- In 2022-23, KS high school students earned 5,590 professional credentials, a 128% increase since 2009.
- The 2023 state assessments showed the highest math scores since 2017, long before Covid.

I am currently in my 9th year serving on the USD 506 Labette Board of Education, 9th year serving on the SEK INTERLOCAL 637 Board of Education and have served 5 years as the Region 3 Vice President on the KASB board of directors.

Thanks again for the work that is being done to better serve students in Kansas.

Sincerely,



Kevin Cole

kcole@usd506.org