



Mark Desetti - Testimony
House Corrections and Juvenile Justice Committee
February 2, 2017
House Bill 2048

Mr. Chairman, members of the Committee - KNEA is happy to stand in support today of House Bill 2048.

KNEA has served for nearly 20 years as a provider of training on bullying in schools, a training program that goes into sexual harassment and signs of abuse in the middle school grades. The materials we use, "Quit it," "Bullyproof," and "Flirting or Hurting," were developed at the Wellesley College Center for Research on Women and are based on strong research foundation. We have been proud to provide training in using these lessons all across Kansas.

In conjunction with the Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services – now known as the Department of Children and Families – we have long been distributing the Guide to Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect in Kansas and we often provide training in reporting child abuse and neglect which includes the signs of child sexual abuse.

It seems to us perfectly logical that training in recognizing and reporting child sexual abuse is a natural extension of efforts to combat other behaviors – bullying and sexual harassment – that harm children and make the educational process challenging for children.

The only suggestion we would have for this bill is make it more effective by amending section 1, subsection (b)(1) to expand the training and education to all school employees.

(1) Training and education for ~~teachers~~ *all school employees* in order to assist with ~~teacher-employee~~ awareness of issues regarding child sexual abuse, including knowledge of likely warning signs indicating that a child may be a victim of sexual abuse. Such training and education shall be provided as part of the school district's existing professional development program under K.S.A. 72-9601 et seq., and amendments thereto; and

Combatting negative behaviors whether it is bullying, sexual harassment, or abuse demands the involvement and effort of all of us. And if we save just one child from sexual abuse because a school administrator, a teacher, a paraprofessional, or the custodian was the one to first notice and report the signs, then the effort was well worth the time and investment.

Thank you for the opportunity to be here today and we look forward to assisting in the development of materials and implementation of training in any way we can.