



Testimony before the House Committee on Education  
in opposition to

**House Bill 2166 - Requiring personal financial literacy courses for high school graduation.**

by

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Chairman Huebert and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to speak today. I am here today as a parent of three public school children and as a representative of Game On for Kansas Schools.

**Game on for Kansas Schools** is a nonpartisan grassroots effort among Kansans who share a belief in high-quality public education as a right of all Kansas students. We advocate for Kansas public schools to ensure our teachers, principals, superintendents, and school board members have the resources necessary to deliver quality education to all Kansas students. We inform communities across the state about issues and legislation affecting their students, and our membership extends statewide.

I am here today to oppose House Bill 2166 because the members of Game On believe

- graduation requirements, standards, curriculum and how the curriculum should be implemented falls under the authority of the state Board of Education and local boards of education, not the legislature.
- mandating a specific course for high school juniors and seniors will have unintended consequence for the students and districts.

To be clear, we support having robust, thorough, meaningful financial literacy education in our schools. We are pleased that Kansas has long recognized the need for personal financial literacy and has had K-12 financial literacy standards for more than a decade. It is the particulars of this bill to which we object.

### **Board of Education Authority**

We object to this bill because we believe it is the responsibility of the Board of Education to develop academic standards, guidelines and objectives, not the legislature. This bill usurps the role of the Board of Education. While we agree the financial literacy topics enumerated in this bill are valuable, we believe it is correct and makes better sense to leave the specifics of which financial literacy topics are taught to the Board of Education and how the information is delivered to local school districts. School districts must retain the authority and the flexibility to deliver required information in the way that works best for their district and their unique population of students. Mandating a course be taken universally for a prescribed amount of time during a particular grade reduces district flexibility and can have unintended consequences for students.

### **Unintended Consequences**

Our second objection to this bill concerns the students themselves. We believe requiring a semester-long course on financial literacy and limiting it to the 11th or 12th grade is an unnecessary restriction and will have an unintended consequences on student schedules. Many junior and senior students take AP courses, pursue IB diplomas or enroll in challenging career tech programs. These students have full schedules. Adding another required course in their junior or senior year could mean they can't, for example, participate in band - a year long course that enriches their personal, social and academic life. Another concern those of us with high school students have is that the junior year, in particular, is known to be the most rigorous. Students often don't have room in their schedules for much of anything beyond their required courses. For example, My son, Ian, is an IB student and has six core courses. He is left with one elective hour to

pursue all other academic interests which include creative writing, school government and forensics. Thankfully, in my district, students can elect to take the required financial literacy course as a sophomore, which my son did. Sophomores, have more elective slots available so it made sense for Ian to take financial literacy as a sophomore, knowing he was going to take the IB curriculum. If this current legislation had been in effect, Ian would have not been able to make the choice he did to balance his academic requirements and other academic interests.

This bill could also present staffing and scheduling problems for smaller districts.

As parents and Kansans, we all want our students to be well-informed about the financial responsibilities they will face when they graduate. The members of Game On support and encourage the Board of Education to enrich the curriculum with financial literacy materials and standards. We support financial literacy education in our schools but we are asking the members of this committee not to support this bill.