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**February 14, 2022**

**Written Testimony to House K-12 Education Budget Committee  
Honorable Chair, Representative Kristey Williams**

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Room 286-N, State Capitol Building

**Oppose [House Bill 2690](#) – Merit Pay**

Hearing: Tuesday, February 15, 2022, 3:30 PM Room 546-S

Honorable Chairman Williams and Committee Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony on [HB 2690](#) merit pay bill. The Kansas PTA applauds and shares your concerns for students' reading proficiency at an early grade level. The predictive validity of reading proficiency by 3<sup>rd</sup> grade for high school graduation and post-school success is well grounded in educational research. The PTA fully supports comprehensive early childhood and early learning programs to help prevent and close learning gaps as early as possible ([see Priority 4](#)). **While Kansas PTA supports the goal, we are opposed to the proposed response outlined in HB 2690** for the following reasons:

- **The State Board of Education (SBOE), with the support and expertise of the Kansas Department of Education (KSDE), is granted general supervision of public schools.** Kansas PTA values these roles and responsibilities identified in the Kansas Constitution in relation to public education. Our professional educators are best positioned to recommend strategies and solutions in the face of educational challenges, including overcoming barriers to literacy which is one of the longest standing education goals globally. This bill, however, appears to generate policy recommendations from the Kansas legislature that do not reflect any input from the SBOE. ([Priority 1 – Kansas Constitution](#))
  - **The application of for-profit merit-based pay incentives has been dismissed as not-replicable, ineffective, and potentially harmful when considered for a non-profit, public education model.** This corporate tool in a K-12 setting is more likely to disrupt critical collaboration required to provide all students the opportunity to succeed. Kansas PTA instead supports efforts to attract and keep educators, including state funding for teacher mentoring, professional

development and other evidenced-based programs and policies that promote quality instruction as recommended by state and local boards of education ([Standing Position – Supporting Educators](#)).

- **High-density at-risk weighting** should be retained, as recommended by the SBOE and KSDE. This weighting directs resources to schools with students most likely to arrive at school with learning challenges. This weighting in the school finance formula supports the predictability and reliability of resources for educators working to meet the needs of at-risk learners. ([Priority 2 – Investing in Public Education](#))
- **Kansas PTA supports investment in quality early learning**, such as the Kansas legislature's decision to fund all-day kindergarten and support the early identification of dyslexia. PTA supports increased support pre-K programs, Parents as Teachers, and such to provide opportunity for every Kansas child to be prepared to succeed in school. Children who enter school kindergarten-ready are more likely to experience academic success and to require fewer resources to achieve state education standards. ([Priority 4 – Early Childhood](#))

Thank you for your time and consideration. We urge you to vote NO on HB 2690 and instead support the process of collaboration between the State Board of Education and the Kansas legislature to explore and generate solutions to this very important challenge.

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#### **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.*