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**February 16, 2022**

**Written Testimony to Senate Education Committee**

**Honorable Chair, Senator Molly Baumgardner**

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Room 445-S, State Capitol Building

**Neutral, with reservations** [Senate Bill 363](#) – Publication of Materials

Hearing: Wednesday, February 17, 2022, 1:30 PM Room 144-S

Madame Chair and Committee Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony on [SB 363](#) requiring school districts to annually publish on the internet a list of training materials and activities used for student instruction and teacher professional development at each school of the school district. Kansas PTA is providing neutral testimony, with reservations. While school efforts to provide clear and relevant information to parents is in keeping with the mission of Kansas PTA, we have a number of questions and concerns for this bill as written. Our questions are presented in order of the bill's components and aligned with the [Kansas PTA legislative platform](#):

- If the expectation is that all public schools provide online access to information, to what extent do all families across Kansas have access to affordable and reliable internet services? Should this later issue of equity be coupled with a bill of this nature?
- Kansas parents currently have access to their children's assignments, district curriculum, grades, K-12 course of study, graduation requirements, attendance, or other personal records. Public school parents can access information about their children online, at school, via the backpack, or engage directly with teachers, principals and school secretaries.

Just this session, all the invited conferees to a January 24, 2022 House Committee hearing on the topic testified that they had no problems accessing their children's instructional materials. ***"I believe BV does an excellent job with curriculum transparency... I can go on the website and see what the curriculum is, they list the novels... if a parent has an objection to a novel, that can be brought up to the school.. I feel informed"*** <https://youtu.be/V7ClwTUbiAY?t=4626> .

This **new regulation in all likelihood will pull teachers away from students and their efforts to facilitate learning recovery and diminish opportunities for personalized instruction**, for a level of documentation that is excessively time-consuming and can otherwise be clarified through

existing procedures and standard parent involvement practices (e.g., online parent portals, contacting the teacher or principal).

- The prescribed means of organizing the posted instructional documents (Sect 1 a) does not appear to be informative to parents, who would have to comb through a vast list of materials that may or may not be relevant to their children, which as noted previously could be otherwise clarified through existing procedures and standard parent involvement practices (e.g., online parent portal, contacting the teacher or principal). Our teachers have been overwhelmed by the global pandemic. Our educators have persistently gone above and beyond awaiting completion of the six-year phase-in of school funding restoration, as critical resources are incrementally returned to their districts and buildings.
- Within our mission to strengthen home-school collaboration and communication, Kansas PTA sees value in local school boards and districts making information about core curriculum materials available online (Sect 1 a)– to the extent copyright protections allow. However, this prescribed list of *“each material and activity that was assigned, distributed or otherwise presented to students in a course for which students received academic credit or at an educational event in which participation of the student body was required”* particularly coupled with financial penalties in related bills is counterproductive at best – when parents can access this information through existing procedures and standard parent involvement practices (e.g., parent portals, contacting the teacher or principal directly).
- Again, within our mission to strengthen home-school collaboration and communication, Kansas PTA sees value in local school boards and districts making general information about prioritized professional development available online (Sect 1 c) – to the extent that copyright protections allow. It may be helpful for more parents and patrons to learn about the ongoing education that our teachers engage in, particularly all the mandatory training which more recently includes dyslexia, suicide prevention and awareness, and bullying prevention. However, documentation of every element of PD such as internal workshops where teachers learn from one another *“a list of all materials used for teacher professional development ...shall be maintained on the school district’s website for at least one year following the school year in which such materials and activities were used”* particularly coupled with financial penalties in related bills is intimidating and counterproductive.

Thank you for your time and consideration. We urge you to vote NO on SB 363 without the identified concerns being addressed in the bill’s current form.

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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.*