Missouri Alliance *for* Arts Education

SUPPORT • PROMOTE • ADVOCATE

To: Members of the Missouri House of Representatives Education Committeee
From: Phyllis Pasley, Executive Director - Missouri Alliance for Arts Education
Re: Senate Committee Substitute for Senate Bills 4, 42, & 89

The Missouri Alliance for Arts Education (MAAE) opposes the Senate Committee Substitute for Senate Bills 4, 42, and 89 as it is currently written.

MAAE has significant concerns that this Senate Committee Substitute will:

- circumvent local control
- drain financial resources away from serving students
- be inadequately funded
- increase teacher workload
- negatively impact teacher retention
- surpass available local and state-level financial and human resources for implementation of a statewide accountability portal through the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
- have a detrimental overall effect on the public school educational system
- have a subsequent negative impact on Missouri's economic future

MAAE supports parental involvement.

This legislation is disconnected from current educational practice which values, fosters and cultivates parental involvement. Teachers and school leaders have historically worked collaboratively with parents to adjust lesson content to help meet the individual needs of the student.

Encouraging and enhancing existing lines of communication between schools and the communities they serve will strengthen relationships within the community, and help students gain the knowledge and skills they need to succeed.

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## DETAILED TALKING POINTS

MAAE supports the premise of parental involvement in a student's education. Many Missouri schools already have procedures in place for parents to access information listed in the bill. Any parent who wishes to be involved already has the rights outlined in this legislation.

Many Missouri districts have already invested in "parent portals" providing access to information. A legislated, state controlled and mandated system would undercut local control and be a drain on resources to create a new system and maintain it. There does not appear to be any financial allocation to develop and maintain the new parent portal.

The strain on local resources to implement such a state-level mandate could be significant. The human resources, time and financial resources required to create and maintain the parent portal outlined in this legislation will increase the workload on a teacher workforce that is already underpaid, and in short supply. It will also divert resources away from providing needed student educational services. This legislation as written could have a profound negative effect as we work to retain Missouri's teachers and seek new ways to encourage people to enter the educational profession.

There will also be significant strains on state-level resources to implement the parent portal as described in the legislation. We recommend that a discussion with Department of Elementary and Secondary Education staff about the feasibility and costs associated with implementation be held. The information requested is all currently available at the local level.

There are also issues related to copyrighted material. Currently most districts invest in materials to serve their students' learning needs, and lack sufficient resources to purchase additional resources for parents. However, most districts have policies and procedures in place for any parent to work with district employees to gain access to instructional materials, and to adjust lesson content as needed. Teachers and school leaders recognize the value of parental involvement and have historically worked collaboratively with parents to adjust lesson content to help meet the individual needs of the student.

Encouraging and enhancing existing lines of communication between schools and the communities they serve will strengthen relationships within the community, and help students gain the knowledge and skills they need to succeed.

**For reference:**
**This was the written testimony offered by the Missouri Alliance for Arts Education**

The Missouri Alliance for Arts Education has significant concerns about SB 4. Although we support the tenets of parental involvement in their child's education, and support the idea that a teacher has rights which are to be respected, certain language within the bill may have far reaching effects.

In general, Missouri's schools invite parental involvement and work cooperatively with students and their families to meet the needs of each learner to help them succeed.

1. Amendments which may be considered which would require permission slips from parents for students to attend school assemblies may be logistically challenging, overburdening an already stressed system. As written, this legislation could apply to any assembly, including school "pep" assemblies before a game, school concert assemblies, school award assemblies and any gathering of any group which might be labeled an "assembly." If the intent is to protect from "outside entities" perhaps that should be clarified.

2. prohibitions on the collection of biometric data - might extend to audio recordings of a student's changing voice and analysis of the student's vocal range and pitch frequencies.

3. there are several areas of the pending legislation which appear to not be clearly defined, or the means for determining compliance is unclear.

4. the directive to prominently post curricular information for a large number of subjects on a website's "home" page offers a number of challenges, such as determining the level of prominence with a large quantity of information to publish.

5. The Accountability Portal requirement appears to

a. circumvent local control

b. drain financial resources away from serving students

c. be inadequately funded

d. increase teacher workload

e. negatively impact teacher retention

f. surpass available local and state-level financial and human resources for implementation of a statewide accountability portal through the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

g. have a detrimental overall effect on the public school educational system

h. have a subsequent negative impact on Missouri's economic future

Thank you for your consideration.