



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 477		DATE: 1/22/2025	
COMMITTEE: Elementary and Secondary Education			
TESTIFYING: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: AMANDA COOPER		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: amandacooper99@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: In-Person	SUBMIT DATE: 1/21/2025 10:06 PM	
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			

Thank you for your time and consideration of HB 477 this session. My name is Amanda Cooper and I am Missouri born and raised. I'm a graduate of MU with teaching certifications for birth through 6th grade. I am also a mother of a child with autism. When our first born was two years old he was a wiz on my iPhone and seemingly having a strong grasp of certain areas of knowledge. When visiting his pediatrician with my husband he was able to tell her the names of all of the different musical instruments on a poster; he knew them because he saw them on a television show (we think). Our pediatrician was the first to tell us that this and other characteristics were part of Autism Spectrum Disorder, and also shared with us that he would struggle with other areas significantly. At age four he was enrolled in preschool and we completed a parent referral for concerns related to autism. He qualified for special education. After we moved from St. Charles to Wentzville we learned they had an Autism Specialist and she observed our son, took notes, and was a part of his IEP team. At this time while our son was intellectually performing well he had challenges with things most of us take for granted each day; he needed speech services, handwriting and shoe tying were challenges, he could converse with an adult at length about a topic of his choosing, but struggled to have a basic conversation with a peer, he also needed help with emotional regulation and sensory processing. Our son's IEP team was adamant that he needed specific services through his IEP for his educational autism and they included our parent concerns in the IEP and IEP Meetings as valued participants. In 2019 we moved to mid-MO. Nine days into the school year, the special education director at his new school told us that she was going to decrease his minutes significantly based on a phone call with his prior district. We were told that the minutes could be added back later if he didn't continue to show improvement. When our school district went virtual due to COVID the IEP team notified us that minutes would be further cut due to us choosing MOCAP (the virtual learning option), even though progress was not supportive. We shared that we did not agree due to lack of progress and were encouraged by the special education director to sue the district essentially saying they would do what they want. We were shocked...but did not give up on getting help for our son. We were denied a facilitated IEP and successfully mediated our concerns against the district. In the meantime, we went through the process of getting a medical evaluation which identified and autism diagnosis and auditory processing disorder. Unfortunately, the school district continued to cut minutes and services ultimately replacing his IEP with a "beefed up" 504 plan that contained 33 separate accommodations. The "problem" we were told was that our son, while having significant challenges in many areas, is intelligent and able to get good grades on standardized tests with accommodations in place. We moved out of this district but stayed in mid-MO and continue to advocate for our son. Our son is now 13. We are very blessed while spending hundreds of hours reviewing reams of documents provided by school districts, laws, and education requirements, we were able to afford to have expert advocates by our side, I expanded my education through a course specializing in advocacy for special needs children, and we've paid for

occupational therapy and other services for more than 5 yrs. Not everyone is as blessed in their education and finances. HB 477 does not solve all problems, but it will make a meaningful improvement and would certainly reduce some of the challenges that we faced when LEAs makes decisions without information and data, without considering the child's needs, and without including the parent as a meaningful part of the IEP Team. Thank you for your time.



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: ANDY RIBAUDO		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 12:00 AM	
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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: ANGELA RENE JONES		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: arjones31@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/21/2025 7:40 PM
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I worked for three years in a HS and three years in a middle school offices. I saw a LOT. Then our youngest daughter got sick, and I saw a whole other side. Not a gracious one either.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: ARNIE C. "HONEST-ABE" DIENOFF-STATE PUBLIC ADVOCAT		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: arniedienoff@yahoo.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 10:56 PM
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I am in Support of this Bill allowing for Jointly Agreed "Individualized Education Program (I.E.P.)" to be entered into by the Parent and Teaching Staff. Allowing Parents or Guardians the right to visit any programs. There needs to be give an taken by both sides and the parents need to consider what is in the best-interest of the child. This Bills also allows for Parents to Appeal and have a Hearing about any disagreements of the I.E.P.



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: BOBBI JO DAUGHTERY		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: bjdaughtery@icloud.com	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 1/21/2025 8:10 PM
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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: CANDICE ROBB		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: candice.rob79@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 1/21/2025 9:53 PM

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As a parent, I know that I am a valuable member of my children’s IEP teams. I have unique knowledge of my children and their needs. Public school educators are overworked, overwhelmed, and they have to keep a lot of plates in the air. They care about kids, but their focus is by default spread over a large number of children. Without parents at the table to advocate for their children, important details can be overlooked in planning. For example, my son’s proposed IEP a few years back included a counting goal for Mathematics. He did not and does not need Math support. He certainly knew how to count. The goal, as written, would have pulled him from his least restrictive environment (the general education classroom), to the self-contained sped room to work on a skill he didn’t need- in isolation from his neurotypical peers. When in fact, as his parent, I knew that he needed exposure to peers and practice working in a group much more than help with counting. His doctors had told me as much. I did not consent to the math goal-the team had to scrap it. It is my belief that this was a general goal included because the plan was not individualized for my son. It was detrimental to our son’s unique needs. Not every school listens to the parents and allows their input. I’m grateful my son’s school did. This consent law will ensure that more parents are heard and allowed to provide meaningful input and participation into their children’s IEPs. Children should not be moved arbitrarily to separate buildings, placements, etc...in a different year, a different Missouri school, tried to propose moving my son to another building mid-year. This would be convenient for their staffing. This would have been so detrimental to our son and our family. We knew our stay-put rights, and we were prepared to advocate accordingly. Parents who don’t know their rights, or don’t have wherewithal to advocate, wouldn’t necessarily know how to keep their child from being moved. Requiring parental consent takes the guesswork out for parents and gives them more autonomy over their child’s educational placement. It’s so important that parents are allowed to see the proposed placements and services. Some school districts won’t even make parents aware of what placements are available. I believe this deprives parents of informed consent. Missouri parents are valuable team members, and this bill will allow their IEP participation to be more impactful.



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: CHRIS FAUGHN		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: zzfaugc@msn.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/21/2025 7:26 PM	
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I support HB 477 for parental consent.



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: CHRISTINA INGOGLIA		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:		SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 12:00 AM
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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: CRYSTAL HOFFMAN		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: crystalhoffman@icloud.com	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 4:00 PM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			

I support this bill because it prioritizes a parents role in critical decisions about their child's individualized education program (IEP). It ensures that schools must obtain explicit parental consent for significant changes, additions, or reductions in services, empowering parents to have a clear and active voice in their child's education. This bill also guarantees parental rights to visit proposed programs or classrooms, ensuring transparency and informed decision-making. By safeguarding parental involvement and consent, it strengthens the partnership between families and schools to best meet the needs of children with disabilities.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: CRYSTAL HOFFMAN		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: crystalhoffman@icloud.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 4:00 PM
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I support this bill because it prioritizes a parents role in critical decisions about their child's individualized education program (IEP). It ensures that schools must obtain explicit parental consent for significant changes, additions, or reductions in services, empowering parents to have a clear and active voice in their child's education. This bill also guarantees parental rights to visit proposed programs or classrooms, ensuring transparency and informed decision-making. By safeguarding parental involvement and consent, it strengthens the partnership between families and schools to best meet the needs of children with disabilities



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: CYNTHIA RAMSEY		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: cynthiarramsey@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/21/2025 7:08 PM	
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I want to share my experience with the impact of Parental Consent for IEPs. My son had an IEP through Early Childhood and attended preschool in our district. At what I thought was a regular IEP meeting, I was presented with a document that the school staff said was required for his IEP to transition into Kindergarten. They read down through the information and kept asking me if I had anything to add. I felt blindsided. I didn't expect any of this, I didn't know what it would mean for my son and I asked why I wasn't included in preparing the document. The school staff told me I could add my comments in the meeting. I told them I wasn't prepared to do that and needed time to research and understand. They told me I could have 30 days. Two weeks later, I received Certified Mail that I had to sign for. The envelope included a Notice of Action terminating Carson's IEP effective the date of the meeting, and a note at the bottom of the document from the meeting stating quote "mother said she has nothing to add" I felt like someone had forged my name. I didn't know the school could make this decision without any legitimate input from me, and without my express consent. Why did I have to sign to implement his IEP and sign to get the envelope through Certified Mail, but not to end the services that he needed? I had no idea that, even though they said 30 days, I only had 10 days and they could make the decision without me regardless of the timeline. In the months following, I felt ignorant and helpless. I should have been told I only had 10 days. I also should have been told they didn't need my consent to move forward. I never imagined adjourning that meeting meant walking away from my opportunity to advocate for my son. A parent of a public school student is required to sign for anything from a cough drop to a field trip, but not changes to an IEP. Parental Consent, as presented in this bill, would have fostered an opportunity for further discussion, for everyone to work together and for my voice, as a parent advocating for my child, to be heard.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: DEBBIE WADE		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: k.d_wade@yahoo.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 12:38 AM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.		

As a former Special Education Teacher, a mom, and a grandma, I support this bill. Parents have the right to be 100% involved with decision-making regarding anything to do with their child.



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: DIANE DRAGAN		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: diane@draganlawfirm.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 12:33 PM	

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Giving parents even a tiny bit more control of their child's education is important. Having sat through dozens of meetings for my own children and hundreds of meetings for other children, the Parent voice is the weakest voice at the table. Schools too often make decisions based on staffing, scheduling or building resources that are not in the best interest of a child. When a Parent asks for records or data to support a recommendation, it is often not timely provided. When I tried to STOP an ineffective service for my child and agreed to pay for outside support in that area, SSD refused to give my voice any weight. They refused to stop the service requiring me to file Due Process for my three children. The refusal to listen to my voice and act in my child's best interest cost the districts over \$100,000 in fees. My initial request was to save them money and resource by stopping the service. Had I had a right to disagree with the implementation of that piece of the IEP, I could have spared my children lost time in SPED, spared SPED costs for the district and saved the district a lot in attorney fees. This is not an isolated issue. A case with a similar fact pattern is currently pending in federal court for a client of mine. I know the opposition wants you to believe this bill will result in more litigation- that is simply not true. Increasing the Parent voice and listening to the person who knows the child the best will decrease litigation. A school district that is required to give Parents decision making appropriate weight will see a decline in filings and litigation. Parents who feel heard and supported by their district do not file Due Process or state complaints. They send thank you notes and gift cards.



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: EARL SIMMS		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: esimms@paraquad.org	ATTENDANCE: In-Person	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 10:22 AM	
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 477 Thank you, Chairman Lewis and members of the House Elementary and Secondary Education Committee for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 477 today. Also, thank you to Representative Oehlerking for sponsoring this crucial bill. My name is Earl Simms, and I am the Public Policy and Advocacy Manager at Paraquad, a St. Louis base center for independent living. Our mission focuses on promoting equity and independence for people with disabilities through services, education, and advocacy. As one of the oldest and largest independent living centers, Paraquad emphasizes that over 50% of our board and staff are individuals with disabilities, making us experts in disability policy. This extends to children, who are entitled to a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) via an Individualized Education Program (IEP). The IEP, developed within 30 days of eligibility, includes annual goals, progress measurement, inclusion strategies, accommodations, and transition plans for students 16 and older, requiring annual reviews. IEP meetings are complex and emotionally charged, leaving parents, who are often not education experts, at a disadvantage. Notably, while a signature is required for the initial IEP, subsequent updates do not legally necessitate parental consent. This means that even if parents disagree, the IEP can proceed unless a due process complaint, which is costly and time-consuming, is filed. This system grants school districts significant power over a child's educational path, including changing schools or classrooms, often without adequate accountability. We've seen cases where children, like one of our participants, are repeatedly moved without regard for their educational stability, which can be detrimental. HB 477 aims to foster a more collaborative IEP process, ensuring parental input isn't just a formality but a fundamental part of decision-making, enhancing educational outcomes by strengthening the partnership between parents and schools. Thank you again for considering my testimony and I ask that you pass HB 477.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: ELISE MOORE		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: elise.olivia@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 12:48 PM
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I am writing to express my strong support for HB 477. As a parent of a child with a disability, I believe this legislation is crucial to ensuring that parents are involved in the decision-making process regarding their child's education. This bill will foster better collaboration between schools and families empowering parents to participate by sharing their perspective. We would have benefited from this bill greatly when discussing placement for our son. I've testified for this bill in the past and will continue to do so.



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: EMERY CHARLIE WAKEFIELD		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: Utahraptor9000@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 1/21/2025 11:57 AM
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This bill finally provides guardians a way to have true input into IEPs and will probably reduce the instances of child complaints and due process in Missouri. We can strengthen parental choice inside the public schools with this bill.



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: ERIN KEITH		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: joshuanerin@msn.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 3:25 PM	
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Hello. My name is Erin Keith, parent of 3 children who have attended Columbia Public Schools (1 graduate, 2 in high school.) My youngest has been on an IEP since starting his school journey at age 3, due to autism. I'd like to place my emphatic support of HB477 in favor of Parental Consent. During the many years of special education with my son, we've had a wide variety of experiences. Some fantastic, couldn't imagine it smoother.. and some devastating. I'm happy to answer questions about our experiences if needed, but at any and all points of our journey, I would have welcomed a bill like this one. The parent is often the only consistent member of the IEP team from preschool through graduation. They are also uniquely situated as the only member of the team with full knowledge of the student in other pertinent facets of their life (home, therapy, medical, community, etc). Their expertise - the expert on their child - makes them an invaluable part of the IEP team.Despite that, as it sits now, the school has the final say in everything. Consent is not required from parents in large changes to the IEP. If a parent disagrees, they have only 10 days before it goes into effect anyway. The only way to stop this is filing for due process, which is costly for families - monetarily, emotionally, time, and sometimes in the way the student is seen by the school.Parental Consent would allow parents to be closer to an equal member of the team. Only with the full team working together towards collaboration can the student receive what they need. I urge you to support this bill for Missouri's students.Thank you,Erin Keith



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: FREDRICH CRUSE		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: fcruse@cruselaw.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/21/2025 8:06 PM
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This bill is important for those who are unable to learn using traditional methods



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WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: HANNAH SATTERWHITE		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: ST. LOUIS ARC		TITLE: ADVOCACY AND INDIVIDUAL NAVIGATOR	
ADDRESS: 1177 N. WARSON RD			
CITY: SAINT LOUIS		STATE: MO	ZIP: 63132
EMAIL: hsatterwhite@slarc.org	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 11:16 AM	
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St. Louis Arc supports families and individuals with disabilities in the greater St. Louis region, including children with IEPs. We believe this bill will empower families to have a voice in the IEP process. Therefore, we would like to express our support for this bill.



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WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: HEATHER LYTLE		PHONE NUMBER: 636-949-2425	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: FAMILY ADVOCACY & COMMUNITY TRAINING		TITLE: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR	
ADDRESS: 2240 BLUESTONE DRIVE			
CITY: ST. CHARLES		STATE: MO	ZIP: 63303
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 12:00 AM	
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BILL NUMBER: HB 477		DATE: 1/22/2025
COMMITTEE: Elementary and Secondary Education		
TESTIFYING: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: HOLLY STUREK		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: h.sturek2018@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 8:30 PM
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This bill will allow parents and guardians to have a say and a place at the table in an iep meeting. It will potentially lower the need for litigation within school and it will ensure parents have the ability to really do what is necessary and needed. IEPs are supposed to be reviewed annually by a team, there's always generally more school personnel and any other personal there ever than the guardians. We need to the even the playing field and ensure that guardians feel confident that what they think and feel matters in the iep process and decisions made in IEPs fully consider the guardians points of view and input. Furthermore, school personnel always have the upper hand because it's the school that put together the meeting and date time, and the drafted iep. Give parent and guardians a reasonable expectation to fight for what they need. And please make sure you tell your congressman and woman too!



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: JACOB WILCOTT		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 12:00 AM	
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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: JAMES C OWEN		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: jamescoven55@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 10:08 AM
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I am the father of a grade school child with autism and ADHD. When schools implement an IEP, the parents need to be involved and consent to the school's plan.



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WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: JAYME		PHONE NUMBER: 660-414-5220	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: UNFINISH3D PIECES		TITLE: COMMUNITY EDUCATION DIRECTOR UNFINISH3D PIECES	
ADDRESS: 781 MEADOWBROOK CIRCLE			
CITY: MOBERLY		STATE: MO	ZIP: 65270
EMAIL: jaymeclevenger3@gmail.com		ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 12:59 AM

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Elementary and Secondary Education Rep. Ed Lewis and Rep. Brad Banderman Reference: HB 477 - Parental Consent for IEP's January 21st, 2025 Rep. Ed Lewis, Rep Brad Banderman, and distinguished committee members, Thank you for the opportunity to provide you with a testimony on House Bill 4777, Parental Consent for IEP's. Let's start by acknowledging the pivotal role parental consent plays in a IEP, as it unlocks the full potential for our children's futures and empowers them to thrive. Establishing an educational environment in which students can grow in should be and should always be a top priority. One of the many elements to creating this thriving educational environment is providing parents and educators an equal platform for making crucial decisions regarding students' education. It's essential to remember that parents are the "experts" of their child, while educators specialize in teaching this child. As both parties play vital roles in developing a student's IEP, unfortunately, the current education system often holds more power than the parents in decision-making regarding their own child. This dynamic presents challenges amongst the parents and educators that carry on long after the IEP meeting. Having an IEP meeting that is centered around transparency, collaboration and communication today rarely occurs but when it does, this particular child succeeds in their educational environment. Collaboration is crucial in an IEP meeting because it allows all relevant stakeholders, including parents, teachers, therapists, and administrators, to share their perspectives and expertise to create a comprehensive and individualized education plan (IEP) that best suits the student's unique needs, ensuring everyone is on the same page and working together to support the child's success. Once again, this poses a challenge for any of us who are knowledgeable that the other party holds greater decision-making authority over our own child. Going forward, it is essential that each of you thoroughly review and consider my top three concerns and how these changes will positively impact our students, student's families and the educational environment in which our students learn in. 1.) Parents require a more amicable alternative to due process proceedings to invoke a stay-put when parents and educators disagree with the school's proposed placement modification. Due process proceedings entail substantial expenses for both families and educational institutions, potentially jeopardizing relationships. Granting parents genuine consent rights regarding placement modification establishes a framework for meaningful collaboration. 2.) When school staff propose a completely remove a service within conducting a thorough re-evaluation or tapering off the service to ensure maintenance of skills, parents have limited recourse to address this issue without engaging in a stressful and costly dispute process and outside evaluations. 3.) House Bill 477 aims to establish equilibrium in the power dynamics at the IEP table, enabling parents to make informed decisions regarding their consent to proposed changes. Currently, schools propose changes without parental

input, which are implemented within 10 days, and parents in Missouri must file a Due Process to contest these changes. Knowing you are your child's expert, ask yourself how you would feel if you were in a scenario in which a Missouri school district possesses greater authority and decision-making power over YOUR child than you do? The question above brings real and raw feelings that are real and a reality to many. Unfortunately, this scenario is happening every day to numerous children throughout the State of Missouri. As a Family Advocate and business partner with a local nonprofit, Unfinish3d Pieces, I have to explain to them that because their child has a disability and our state laws have failed parents, your child's school districts has more rights over your child's education's decision-making than you do. That is a hard knot to swallow!! Sincerely, Jayme
Clevengerj@u3p.org 660.414.5220



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: JOSEPH CANCHOLA		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: canchoj@aol.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 3:16 PM
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I support this bill because it prioritizes a parents role in critical decisions about their child's individualized education program (IEP). It ensures that schools must obtain explicit parental consent for significant changes, additions, or reductions in services, empowering parents to have a clear and active voice in their child's education. This bill also guarantees parental rights to visit proposed programs or classrooms, ensuring transparency and informed decision-making. By safeguarding parental involvement and consent, it strengthens the partnership between families and schools to best meet the needs of children with disabilities.



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: JOSHUA WILCOTT		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 12:00 AM	
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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: JULIA CHANEY FAUGHN		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: berettajulia@hotmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/21/2025 7:20 PM	
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We need to have bills that protect the rights of children and also support parents and caregivers who are sincere about the best interest of their children. Too many disabled children are being denied services or even placed in dangerous schools where they suffer abuse because parents do not have the right to consent to services, or even placement. Due process is expensive and can cost parents up front \$30,000 or even up to \$100,000. This bill helps teachers, support staff and students by encouraging teams to develop the best plan for students. When students have the needed supports in place under special education law everyone has better results. That was the original intent of the law when it started in 1975. I hope special interests groups who typically file court briefs in opposition to children do not discourage you in making the right choice for our families and children.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: KATHLEEN M. BASI		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: kathleenbasi@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 7:08 AM
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I am writing to ask for your support at today's hearing on HB 477, parental consent for IEPs. I am a parent of a 17-year-old daughter with Down syndrome, and one thing I have learned in these many years participating in her IEP processes is that parents need to feel their opinions and ideas are valued. This bill is an important step to making that a reality universally in the state of Missouri. Thank you, Kathleen Basi Columbia, Mo.



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: KELSEY BELL		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: kalittle2005@hotmail.com		ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/21/2025 10:10 PM
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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: LARA WAKEFIELD		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: wakefieldconsultationservices@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: In-Person	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 10:54 AM	

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My name is Dr. Lara Wakefield. I'm a Speech Language Pathologist who worked in public schools for 15 years until around 2009. After that, I started a private practice Advocacy consulting business to assist parents with understanding the confusing process of special education. I can say that over the past 30 years, I've been able to sit on "both sides" of the IEP table and this allows me to have a unique perspective that most people don't have. I spoke to my colleagues who work in special education about HB476. This is a group of around 50 professionals in Missouri. All of the special education teachers and related services providers support HB 477. I spoke to 3 special education administrators about the bill and these were a few of their concerns and my answers to them. I wanted to share this with you, in case you have others administrators bringing these concerns to your committee about the bill:

1. Interim Placement: "Didn't DESE remove the term Interim Placement from the State Plan?" No. The term interim placement is still used by MO DESE and can be found in use on their website and referenced in the state plan in Regulation XVI at the bottom of page 152. DESE uses this term as an adjective and it is not one of the placement categories inside an IEP. In other words, interim placement would not be a checkbox on a Model DESE form or drop down option in an app used by a school district for the placement section on an IEP. I see that the bill is using this term similarly, as more of an adjective and not proposing it as a placement category.

2. Amendment IEPs: "Will it be difficult for schools to keep track of a lot of amendment IEPs?" I have not seen evidence of that. In my advocacy practice over the past 15 years, with 400 clients in Missouri, there are only about 10 students on average each year, who have multiple amendment IEP meetings due to dispute issues. And remember, I have skewed sample of 400: These are all families who are having difficulties communicating with their school districts. So, even in my skewed sample, there are only about 10 per year who may have 2-3 extra meetings in addition to the annual IEP. These amendment meetings are usually 20-30 minutes long and the school staff easily keep track of these in their software systems. Occasionally, one of these amendment IEPs may take an hour, if we are discussing a change in a behavior intervention plan. I've never seen school staff have an issue with keeping track of those, because their software and procedures keep the most up to date version. Also, the parents will have the most recent copy as well.

3. Amendment IEPs affecting teacher shortage: "Will the amendment IEPs cause stress and lead to a teacher shortage?" I have not seen any research or evidence that amendment IEPs are a direct cause of teacher burnout or attrition. When I was working in public schools as an SLP with a caseload of 70 students, attending a few extra amendment IEP meetings did not affect my burnout. What affected my burnout was the lack of support from special education administrators and principals related to accessing basic things I needed to do my job such as: a) no secure file cabinet, no key to my office, no table or chairs for my students, and no supplies; b) no responses to my emails or calls from my administrators about questions I had c) no reliable access to a computer; d) no protected planning

time, e) no air conditioning unit in my office when the room temp hit 95 degrees for 20 days; and f) no professional development that actually applied to my job. When I talked to my colleagues in special education, they say it has remained the same today. That the burnout factor is more related to lack of support from their administrators, and not due to attending a few extra IEP amendment meetings for 1 or 2 students. Thank you for your time in considering this information. Sincerely, Lara Wakefield



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WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: MANDY NOLAN		PHONE NUMBER: 636-288-7685	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: FAMILY ADVOCACY AND COMMUNITY TRAINING		TITLE: COMMUNITY ADVOCACY LIAISON	
ADDRESS: 2240 BLUESTONE DR.			
CITY: ST. CHARLES		STATE: MO	ZIP: 63303
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 12:00 AM	
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WITNESS NAME		
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:		
WITNESS NAME: MARILYN MCCLURE		PHONE NUMBER: 913-210-1200
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: SPECIAL EDUCATION PARENT'S ADVOCACY LINK LLC DBA THE IEP CENTER .COM		TITLE: FOUNDER, ADVOCATE
ADDRESS:		
CITY: PLEASANT HILL	STATE: MO	ZIP: 64080
EMAIL: iep@iepcenter.net	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 9:39 AM
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Dear Honorable Committee Members, Currently, typical parents of students with IEPs don't realize an option exists to not consent; HB 477 provides a form to empower the parent, child and allows for pursuit of consensus with school district in hopes of insuring appropriate services are made available. When an agreement not reached, HB477 allows for mediation as an option that has been shown to be effective especially when multiple, on-going issues are outstanding and the parties can seek resolution with immediacy (under thirty days), provided that both parties agree to mediate. I have assisted many families with mediation where brainstorming resulted in new opportunities for the student, unlike typical IEP meetings.HB477 includes an opportunity for the parent to preview a proposed program; this is imperative especially when a child is to be the first student in a newly created "program". Please end the heartaches of struggling parents. About 13% of all public school parents are involved with IEPs. . Please pass HB477. Thank you. Marilyn McClureFounder, Advocate Special Education Parent's Advocacy Link LLC dba theiepcenter.com



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: MARY ELAINE PHERIGO		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: elaine5472@hotmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 1/21/2025 8:40 PM
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It is my belief that local educational agencies should be required to obtain written or electronic parental consent when changes are made in regard to an IEP, prior to the occurrence of the changes.



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: MARY FITZGERALD		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: mfitzgerald1809@yahoo.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/21/2025 2:49 PM	
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			

I am a resident of Kirkwood, Mo. I am in favor of HB 477. I'm a former special educator and have supported our son during the IEP process for 11 years. There have been many times in IEP meetings when my husband and I disagreed with the IEP plan and requested changes that would benefit our son. They were denied. It felt like our voice didn't matter. He got a new case manager every year. We know our son better than anyone, we are the constant advocate through 13 years of school. What a difference it would have made if the team had to actually consider our input in the IEP process and collaborate on solutions. We advocated in IEP meetings for reasonable services and accommodations to be included and implemented and were routinely denied. In fourth and fifth grade he needed to be in a different class from the bully, the principal said no. He needed IEP goals for learning to respond to bullying without making threats, they were denied and he got several ISS. He needed appropriate support in math and ESY so he could advance more than one grade level in seven years. He needed OT to learn skills for self-regulation and shoe tying. He needed assistive Technology so he could record class lectures and make study guides, this was denied. He needed school staff to follow his IEP with fidelity, show us the IEP data and provide accommodations. He needed staff in High School to respond when students called him retarded. He didn't feel safe in High School, left after one semester and stayed at home for two years as a virtual student with zoom support services. Although we asked, the district didn't provide any school refusal support and refused to increase social work minutes. During his last IEP meeting the district team wrote the IEP so he would have to go back in the building to get any support services. It felt like the IEP was pre determined, in fact our input changed nothing and I left the IEP meeting early. If we had parent consent they would have had to consider our input and provide therapy for school refusal. We had to spend thousands of dollars in lawyer fees, go to stay put and due process. We spent thousands on private therapy for school refusal, Math tutoring, OT and Language therapy. Now the district due process settlement pays for his small private school. When parents and students are denied a voice and choice in the IEP process there are lifelong emotional and financial costs. He was so far behind in math he needs extra semesters of High School. His career choices are limited, he is looking at community college programs that don't require math. There are costs to the state too. The district had to pay their lawyer fees, and several years of expensive private school tuition. When parents have choice and voice and consent in an IEP team true collaboration happens, everyone benefits, especially the student. A collaborative IEP team is a wonderful experience. HB 477 will ensure we parents have a voice and choice and consent for every IEP. Please approve HB 477



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: MARY SKILJAN		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: mollyskiljan@me.com		ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 11:00 AM

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Parents should never be forced to relinquish their rights to make decisions for their children. Our daughter qualified for Speech services in the spring of 2022. In the fall of 2022, she qualified for reading and writing services due to her Dyslexia, Dyslgraphia, and lack of progress. Although, Pattonville School District and the Special School District told my husband and I that we were part of our daughter's IEP team, that was a lie. They ignored our requests to use an evidence, structured, systematic literacy program. They forced our daughter to received reading services every day, Monday-Friday for 40 minutes a day, for two years. We enrolled our daughter in a private tutoring program so she could work one-on-one with a tutor in an evidence based, structured, systematic reading program for kids with Dyslexia and Dysgraphia. The PSD/SSD authorities refused to achnowledge that she was receiving outside tutoring. They refused to include it in her IEP. Unfortunately, we had to file due process to get the school district to stop. Had we declined reading services, we would have been forced to decline all services and accommodations and our daughter would have been treated like she did not have multiple disabilities. Not only was she removed from her class and lost valuable instructional time, she received ineffective services from SSD using SPIRE, a program they do not approve. When they used SIPPS, they taught her lessons she had already mastered. When I told them she had already mastered these lessons, based on the assessments they gave her, the SSD reading teacher, Mrs. Stevens, SSD Area Coordinator, Mrs. Smalls, and the Rose Acres principal, Dr. Crnko, all refused to even look at the assessments or acknowledge our concerns during a meeting. No school district, principal, teacher, area coordinator, superintendent should be able to force kids into anything that is against their will or the will of their parents.



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WITNESS NAME		
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:		
WITNESS NAME: MATTHEW THOMPSON		PHONE NUMBER: 314-833-5111
REPRESENTING: KIDS WIN MISSOURI, WINTON POLICY GROUP		TITLE:
ADDRESS: ONE CAMPBELL PLAZA, SUITE 101, BLDG. A		
CITY: ST. LOUIS		STATE: MO
		ZIP: 63139
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 12:00 AM
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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: MELINDA OSWALD		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 12:00 AM	
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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: MICHELLE RIBAUDO		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 12:00 AM	
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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: MICHELLE VOGT		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: hullm198@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/21/2025 8:39 PM
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As parents of a child with special needs, we are strongly in support of this bill. There is little that is more disheartening regarding our child's education than to find out the school has deviated from our child's agreed upon IEP without parental discussion, consent or notification. This bill needs to pass to help ensure the most vulnerable population of children are receiving the education they deserve and need.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: MILDRED CHANEY		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: mildredsuechaney@yahoo.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/21/2025 10:20 PM
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As a retired spec ed teacher and grandparent, we need to help these children and support this bill



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COMMITTEE: Elementary and Secondary Education			
TESTIFYING: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: MINDY GUZMAN		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: minnieguz13@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 1/21/2025 4:18 PM
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I, Mindy Guzman, a mother to a 'low' functioning autistic, sixteen-year-old sophomore, I agree with continuing with the other goals in the IEP as the disagreement is on the road to resolve. Our children cannot be put on the back burner because the school system won't conform to a parent wishes for their child's IEP.



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TESTIFYING: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: MIRIAM GALAN		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: miriamsmille23@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/21/2025 11:16 PM	
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My Name is: Miriam Galán Mother of two beautiful children with ASD, advocate for families of neurodivergent children, Founder of Azul Esperanza a support group for latino families. I am writing today as a mother, an advocate, and a community leader who has worked tirelessly to support families navigating the complexities of the special education system. My personal experience raising two autistic children, one of whom is non-verbal, has given me a deep understanding of how critical parental involvement is in the creation and implementation of an IEP. Currently, when parents disagree with an IEP, it can still be implemented without their consent after 10 days. This leaves families feeling powerless and creates unnecessary conflict, especially for those who may already face systemic barriers, such as language, cultural differences, or limited access to legal resources. During this time, children's educational needs often go unmet, further widening the gaps they already face. Support for HB477: HB477 represents a critical step toward equity and collaboration in the special education process. Requiring written parental consent for initial placements, placement changes, and IEP revisions ensures that families have a meaningful voice in decisions that directly impact their children's education. This bill also recognizes that even when disagreements occur, continuity of services must be preserved while issues are resolved. As a mother, I believe this is essential. No parent should feel sidelined in a process designed to support their child. Without parent consent, families are left feeling excluded, and trust between schools and parents deteriorates. HB477 restores balance by ensuring that schools cannot unilaterally make decisions without parents' approval, empowering us to be active participants in shaping our children's future. This bill aligns with my core belief that when parents and schools work together, the outcomes for children improve dramatically. Families like mine deserve to feel respected and included in every step of the IEP process. My own journey has shown me how important it is to advocate for what our children need, but it has also highlighted the barriers many families face when their voices are ignored. I strongly urge you to support HB477 and ensure that all children, regardless of their abilities, have access to an educational environment where their needs are met and their families are valued. Sincerely, Miriam Galán



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TESTIFYING: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: NICOLE TUPUA		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: nicoletupua@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 3:58 PM
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I am the Mother of a HS Son currently on an IEP in Vancouver , Wa - I fully support this bill .



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TESTIFYING: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: PENNY CANCHOLA		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: canchola1958@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 3:45 PM	
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We need your help submitting written testimony by the end of the day to create a new law in Missouri. I have attached sample testimony that you can just copy and paste for ease. We have a goal of getting 10 people to testify on behalf of Gunner, Travis and I. Why is this important to us? Travis has already testified, and I cannot because of work. However, this bill is being spearheaded by MoDE and organization we've been associated with for a few years. This bill would have stopped exactly what happened to Gunner. The school would not have been able to "override" us as parents and change his placement and services that we had paid thousands of dollars in special advocates to get put in place for him to begin with. Read the bill to know what it actually says. It's only 2.5 pages. The bold print is what we are wanting to add to existing law. Click [HERE](#) to read the bill. Check you are an individual, and in support at the top1. Submit online testimony in support of HB 477 (even if you plan to be there in person). You can use the same words from your emails to committee members, but what you submit in written testimony will be public record, so make sure you edit anything that needs to be private. Click [HERE](#) to submit testimony*After you submit you will need to go into the email you used and verify that you testified.*Sample #1 Copy Paste this OR write your own. Sample #1 Chairperson and members of the committee, thank you for allowing me to submit testimony today. While I am not a parent of a child with disabilities, I have a family member with a disability, and I've seen the challenges families face in ensuring their children receive the supports they need. This bill is about protecting students and safeguarding their access to appropriate services and placements. Changes to an IEP or placement can have a profound impact on a child's ability to succeed, and it's essential that these decisions are made with full parental involvement. Requiring consent not only ensures that students receive the supports they need but also fosters a partnership between families and schools to create the best outcomes for the child. This bill is a crucial step in protecting the rights of students and empowering parents to advocate for their children. Thank you. Sample #2 I'm here to express my strong support for this bill because it ensures that families are fully included in important decisions about a child's education. Requiring parental consent for significant changes to services or placements protects students and fosters collaboration between parents and schools. This bill is a necessary step to ensure that every child receives the support they need to succeed. Thank you for considering this legislation. Sample #3 Chairperson and members of the committee, thank you for allowing me to testify today. I fully support this bill because it strengthens the partnership between families and schools by requiring parental consent for critical decisions about a child's education. This safeguard ensures that students receive the appropriate services and placements they need to thrive while giving parents a clear voice in the process. This legislation is an important step in protecting students and fostering trust within the education system. Thank you for your consideration. Sample #5 I support this bill because it prioritizes a parents role in critical decisions about their child's individualized education program (IEP). It ensures that schools must obtain explicit parental consent for significant changes,

additions, or reductions in services, empowering parents to have a clear and active voice in their child's education. This bill also guarantees parental rights to visit proposed programs or classrooms, ensuring transparency and informed decision-making. By safeguarding parental involvement and consent, it strengthens the partnership between families and schools to best meet the needs of children with disabilities.



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: REBECCA HARDWICK		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: rebecca.hardwick@live.com	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 12:57 AM
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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: ROBERT MARTIN		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: robdog7379@yahoo.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 7:43 PM
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I support this bill because it prioritizes a parents role in critical decisions about their child's individualized education program (IEP). It ensures that schools must obtain explicit parental consent for significant changes, additions, or reductions in services, empowering parents to have a clear and active voice in their child's education. This bill also guarantees parental rights to visit proposed programs or classrooms, ensuring transparency and informed decision-making. By safeguarding parental involvement and consent, it strengthens the partnership between families and schools to best meet the needs of children with disabilities.



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TESTIFYING: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: SUMMER POE		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: summersheperd92@icloud.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/21/2025 11:05 AM
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As parents, we have a right to stay informed and be involved throughout the entire process of our child's education and wellbeing outside of our homes. It is not ok for adults who are not raising these children to be able to make decisions about their wellbeing and care without the parents informed consent. We would not allow this with typically developing children, so why would we do this for special needs children?



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: TAMATHA DENISE LUECK		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 12:00 AM	
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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: TAMATHA LUECK		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: tamatha.d.lueck@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: In-Person	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 5:06 PM	
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I attended today's hearing in person. However, due to time constraints, I abbreviated my testimony. Therefore, I am submitting the entire text of my testimony into the record in written form. Thank you for the opportunity to speak on this bill. My name is Tamatha Lueck and I live in Phelps County. I was a public school educator for 28 years teaching German and/or French to children in Lafayette, Laclede, Greene, and Phelps counties. I left the classroom to pursue a career in special education advocacy, but today I am here to speak to you as a parent. I am the mother of a thirteen-year-old child who has Autism Spectrum Disorder, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, Generalized Anxiety Disorder, and Auditory Processing Disorder. He attends public school in Phelps County. My son has utilized both Section 504 Plans and Individualized Education Programs (or IEPs) to access his free appropriate public education. The special education process can be confusing and overwhelming, even for someone like me with a background in education. However, I believe adding the step of mandatory parental consent is vital for several reasons: First, this bill will not only benefit Missouri's children and families, but it will also benefit Missouri's public schools. When parents and schools work together, the special education process moves faster and the outcomes will better suit the child's needs leading to more effective use of the district's resources. Second, I believe this bill would level the playing field between the local educational agency (or LEA) and the family. While a parent is a mandatory member of the IEP team, he or she is only one out of five voices with the other four coming from the LEA. Parental consent will elevate the parent to equal status on the team. Third, our children spend seven to eight hours every day at school. They require specially designed instruction to access their education. While we need to respect the knowledge and experience of all members of the IEP team, who knows better than me what my child needs to be successful? Finally, this bill is common sense. Can a medical practitioner make a decision about a child's care without parental consent? No. Then why should an LEA be able to make decisions about our children's education without our consent? In closing, I truly believe in my heart that all stakeholders will benefit from this bill. We are not asking for carte blanche. We only ask for the courtesy of parental consent when significant changes are going to be made to the educational programs of our children. Thank you for your time. I appreciate the opportunity to speak on this bill.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: TARA ARNETT		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: taraearnett@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/21/2025 1:39 PM
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I would like to speak in support of HB 477. I have a son with nonspeaking autism who is a sophomore in high school. This bill would have most helped us when my son entered kindergarten. My son is extremely smart, very easy going (especially considering his diagnosis and limitations) but is unable to speak with any consistency or reliability. Due solely to his inability to speak, he was immediately placed in the most restrictive environment before he ever entered kindergarten. In this most restrictive environment, he has never been offered curriculum anywhere near grade level. At the time, I fought as best as I knew how because I didn't believe it was the right placement. But I didn't know enough then and the fighting I did wasn't enough. I have since never been able to get him moved to a less restrictive environment. Even though we've recently been able to work towards new ways to communicate with him and he shows us that he can do complex math in his head, he tells us school is patronizing to him and that he longs for a change in how he is treated in school. I often think that if only I had the power to create a more collaborative placement in kindergarten, he would maybe have been given a better chance. Instead of taking field trips to day programs now b/c "that's where he will likely be." Please vote yes and support this bill.



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: TIMOTHY FABER		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:		SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 12:00 AM
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WITNESS NAME			
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:			
WITNESS NAME: TRACEY BLOCH		PHONE NUMBER: 865-230-0177	
REPRESENTING: MISSOURI DISABILITY EMPOWERMENT FOUNDATION		TITLE: EXECUTIVE AND LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR	
ADDRESS: 1205 ELLA CT			
CITY: ROLLA		STATE: MO	ZIP: 65401
EMAIL: tracey@moempower.org	ATTENDANCE: In-Person	SUBMIT DATE: 1/21/2025 9:13 PM	
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My name is Tracey Bloch and I am here today on behalf of Missouri Disability Empowerment Foundation. MoDE Foundation seeks to empower children with disabilities and their caregivers through educational advocacy. By federal law, parents are required to be meaningful participants of their child's IEP team. There are many districts in Missouri where parents have collaboration with the team and they work together to finalize the IEP for their child. When mid-year changes need to be made, the parents are notified and agreement is sought. I have had two children with IEPs, one has recently moved to a 504. I have never faced a situation where a change was made without discussing all the options and working together to choose the most appropriate ones. I cannot imagine having it any other way. Unfortunately, that is not how it works for all school districts. MoDE Foundation receives calls from parents across the state who were not given the same consideration to be collaborators. They have been notified of a significant change that may not even have anything to do with their child's needs or achievement. When this happens, parents have no veto power and only 10 days before the change is implemented. There are safeguards in place for parents such as filing due process, but that is very costly and burns bridges with your district. If we can avoid this being the first thing parents have to do in a disagreement, it would be better for everyone involved. Making the IEP process a collaborative effort is the best way to make this happen. When a change is proposed, it is written into a document called a Prior Written Notice. At the top of the form is a note saying, "consent is NOT REQUIRED for these actions to be carried out." The middle of the form is where the proposed changes are listed with reasons for the change. At the bottom of this document is a signature box where it again says, "Consent NOT REQUIRED for action to be carried out." I do have the option to sign this form in agreement and waive the 10-day waiting period for the changes to be implemented, but if I do not agree, my non-signature will not matter. This bill is in its 4th year. This exact version of the bill unanimously passed this committee and the Senate Education Committee last year. Over these years, we have heard from school districts, special education teachers, parents, students, advocates, attorneys, and service providers. We've amended language to address concerns. What you see in this bill today has been vetted. Improvements that are worthy of mention: 1. The bill now says that a parent who does not consent cannot later hold the district responsible for things they did not consent to. 2. There's also language clarifying that long-term suspensions for disciplinary reasons that result in a change to that child's IEP are NOT subject to parental consent. I've had someone tell me they felt that this bill de-values the educators and service providers who are experts in their field. This bill seeks to do the exact opposite. We fully recognize the expertise that they have for what they do, but this bill seeks to also recognize the parent/guardian for the expertise they have in what they do. This is not about parents controlling the IEP, it's about parents being considered an expert in their own child

and using that expertise to collaborate with special educators. Thank you for your time.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: TRAVIS COX		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: Travis.cox1979@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 11:15 AM
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As a parent, I know firsthand how crucial it is to be actively involved in decisions regarding my child's education, especially when they have unique needs. This bill ensures that parents are informed and have a say in any significant changes to their child's individualized education program. By requiring consent for placements, service changes, or reductions, it creates transparency and strengthens trust between families and schools. Additionally, the right to visit proposed programs gives parents confidence in the decisions being made. This bill is a vital step in honoring parental rights and ensuring the best outcomes for children with disabilities. Thank you.



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: WALTER CHANEY		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: bigwalt1982@yahoo.com		ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/21/2025 7:24 PM
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I support this bill because it helps families.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: ADAM NELSON		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: adamdaronelson@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 8:25 AM

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Speaking as a Process Coordinator of a School District who has a caseload of over 150 students, this Bill is introducing a precedence that will only continue to make the jobs of those working to be advocates for the population of students that need support the most harder. We are already living in a litigious society where so much red tape has been added to the compliance standards that often the educating of students feels secondary to the work it takes to make sure the paperwork has every piece of required documentation. I absolutely agree that parents and families should have a large say in the education of their student, but they are a piece of that team and in this bill you are sending and degrading message to many professionals who have given years of service and continual education to this profession. I am viewed as a person who is supposed to be the expert in this field and guide the WHOLE team in making the best decision for the student, even when others disagree, including the parent. This Bill treats myself, a 22 year education veteran who has spent all of it in the Special Education setting, and others like me as a slap in the face. Additional concerns to the bill include:- With the existing special education teacher shortage as it is, we worry this requirement of keeping track of additional stipulations not agreed upon will lead to more special education teachers to leave the field, worsening the shortage and impacting the ability to provide services to children.- Since school districts are responsible for developing and implementing IEPs that ensure FAPE (Free Appropriate Public Education), we have concerns about the feasibility of this new requirement if parents are allowed to consent to certain recommendations but not others. Parents should not be allowed to pick and choose what services they want for their child when the experts have determined what is necessary in delivering the appropriate special education services in the correct placement of students to ensure FAPE.- Allowing parents to make the decision on placements, removals, changes, additions, or reduction of services could be a hardship on students. The development of an IEP is a team decision made based on data . LEA's have Federal and State guidelines they are required to follow. Parents refusing to provide consent could lead to students not being in the least restrictive environment or receiving the needed support to make progress. LEA's are Federally required to provide progress on the IEP to ensure FAPE is provided. This is not conducive to good instructional practices and could have a negative impact on students. - Allowing "partial consent" will result in isolated decision making. At this time, IEP decisions are team decisions. The LEA cannot make isolated decisions, nor should the parent make them . - Requiring the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to adopt a parental consent form is redundant. There is currently one in place which is called Prior Written Notice. Legislation should not mandate forms and the content. I believe this bill is being introduced in bad faith and has not been vetted properly to ensure the best for our student who need support the most. I ask you to strongly oppose this bill and vote no. Kind Regards, Adam Nelson



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: AMANDA FORD		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: amandaford@nixaschools.net		ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 8:39 AM

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1. "If the parents and local educational agency fail to reach an agreement on the child's individualized education program within ten business days but reach an agreement on certain IEP services or interim placement, the child's current agreed upon IEP shall be amended to include such areas of agreement until the areas of disagreement are resolved, and the local educational agency and the parents shall include an addendum in the IEP that specifies the date by which the areas of disagreement shall be resolved. If the areas of disagreement are not resolved by the date specified in the addendum, the local educational agency or the parents may request a 30 dispute resolution option under subsection 7 of this section." a. It has been clarified in the Missouri State Plan there is no such thing as an "interim" placement. This should be removed as it's confusing. Many years ago, there was such a thing in Missouri as an interim placement, but it was over-used by educators by placing children in special education programs on an interim basis when they may not have truly been eligible or when it was believed necessary to remove a child from the general education setting who was misbehaving. These children may or may not have eventually met eligibility. This is not a practice we want to return to as it was not best for students. b. Working on amendments will become terribly confusing for both parents and special educators. You might have many things in an IEP not agreed upon and in multiple amendments, and other things in the IEP itself that are agreed upon. It will be hard to keep track of this. c. With the existing special education teacher shortage as it is, we worry this requirement of keeping track of additional amendments not agreed upon will lead to more special education teachers to leave the field, worsening the shortage and impacting the ability to provide services to children. 2. A placement change should be allowed, without parental consent, when it is determined necessary by the student's IEP team or an administrator to protect the safety of students or staff. 3. Requiring a parental IEP consent when there is a reduction or addition of 25% or more is not in the best interest of the student. IEP teams in other states who have this requirement are careful to keep their calculations under 25% so as not to trigger this. This may interfere with the provision of FAPE. 4. Since school districts are responsible for developing and implementing IEPs that ensure FAPE (Free Appropriate Public Education), we have concerns about the feasibility of this new requirement if parents are allowed to consent to certain recommendations but not others. Parents should not be allowed to pick and choose what services they want for their child when the experts have determined what is necessary in delivering the appropriate special education services in the correct placement of students to ensure FAPE. 5. In larger districts, not all services are provided in every school. For example, a district may have a large number of elementary schools, so self-contained programs are strategically placed in select schools, not uniformly across all buildings. A potential issue arises if a parent consents to services but not to a change in placement—would this require that every school have all placement options available? If so, it could lead to substantial costs, including the need for additional teachers, paraprofessionals, and space in schools, which are already in limited supply. 6. Allowing

parents to make the decision on placements, removals, changes, additions, or reduction of services could be a hardship on students. The development of an IEP is a team decision made based on data. LEA's have Federal and State guidelines they are required to follow. Parents refusing to provide consent could lead to students not being in the least restrictive environment or receiving the needed support to make progress. LEA's are Federally required to provide progress on the IEP to ensure FAPE is provided. This is not conducive to good instructional practices and could have a negative impact on students. 7. Allowing "partial consent" will result in isolated decision-making. At this time, IEP decisions are team decisions. The LEA cannot make isolated decisions, nor should the parent make them. 8. If parent visits to special education classrooms prior to placement are required to take place after regular school hours, it will require teachers to work outside their regular working hours. This also creates additional burdens on teachers and may lead them to leave the field of special education. 9. Requiring the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to adopt a parental consent form is redundant. There is currently one in place which is called Prior Written Notice. Legislation should not mandate forms and the content. 10. We believe this bill will have negative impacts on students with disabilities. a. We have concerns the outcome of this bill will increase litigation against families, which is not good for students. b. Managing multiple amendments within a student's IEP could become confusing and challenging, and have a negative impact on the instruction. c. The bill's emphasis on parental consent for specific IEP components raises concerns that parents might request additions that are not necessary for the student's progress, conflicting with the requirements to provide a free appropriate public education (FAPE).



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 477		DATE: 1/22/2025	
COMMITTEE: Elementary and Secondary Education			
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: AMANDA GIBSON		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: agibson@stjschools.org	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 8:57 AM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			

As a special education process coordinator in a public school in Missouri, this bill concerns me. I have many parents/guardians that do not attend IEP or special education meetings. I agree with parental consent with initial and re-evaluations, along with initial services, but I do not agree with the other changes to an IEP. We will have students that do not get updates that they need because the parents will not attend to sign for the changes. The removes all special education power from the school into the parent's hands, instead of it being a team decision.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 477		DATE: 1/22/2025	
COMMITTEE: Elementary and Secondary Education			
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: AMANDA HUNTSMAN		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: ahuntsman2@ner4.k12.mo.us		ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 9:35 AM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

The following statements are just a few reasons I am opposed to HB 477:It has been clarified in the Missouri State Plan there is no such thing as an “interim” placement. This should be removed as it’s confusing. Many years ago, there was such a thing in Missouri as an interim placement, but it was over-used by educators by placing children in special education programs on an interim basis when they may not have truly been eligible or when it was believe necessary to remove a child from the general education setting who was misbehaving. These children may or may not have eventually met eligibility. This is not a practice we want to return to as it was not best for students. Working on amendments will become terribly confusing for both parents and special educators. You might have many things in an IEP not agreed upon and in multiple amendments, and other things in the IEP itself that are a greed upon. It will be hard to keep track of this. A placement change should be allowed, without parental consent, when it is determined necessary by the student’s IEP team or an administrator to protect the safety of students or staff. Since school districts are responsible for developing and implementing IEPs that ensure FAPE (Free Appropriate Public Education), we have concerns about the feasibility of this new requirement if parents are allowed to consent to certain recommendations but not others. Parents should not be allowed to pick and choose what services they want for their child when the experts have determined what is necessary in delivering the appropriate special education services in the correct placement of students to ensure FAPE.Allowing parents to make the decision on placements, removals, changes, additions, or reduction of services could be a hardship on students. The development of an IEP is a team decision made based on data . LEA’s have Federal and State guidelines they are required to follow. Parents refusing to provide consent could lead to students not being in the least restrictive environment or receiving the needed support to make progress. LEA’s are Federally required to provide progress on the IEP to ensure FAPE is provided. This is not conducive to good instructional practices and could have a negative impact on students. I believe this bill will have negative impacts on students with disabilities. a. I have concerns the outcome of this bill will increase litigation against families, which is not good for students. b. Managing multiple amendments within a student’s IEP could become confusing and challenging, and have a negative impact on the instruction.c. The bill's emphasis on parental consent for specific IEP components raises concerns that parents might request additions that are not necessary for the student's progress, conflicting with the requirements to provide a free appropriate public education (FAPE).



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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BILL NUMBER: HB 477		DATE: 1/22/2025
COMMITTEE: Elementary and Secondary Education		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: AMANDA SOMMER		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: asommer@warrensburg6.org	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 8:56 AM

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Since school districts are responsible for developing and implementing IEPs that ensure FAPE (Free Appropriate Public Education), we have concerns about the feasibility of this new requirement if parents are allowed to consent to certain recommendations but not others. Parents should not pick and choose what services they want for their child when the experts have determined what is necessary in delivering the appropriate special education services in the correct placement of students to ensure FAPE. Requiring the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to adopt a parental consent form is redundant. There is currently one in place which is called Prior Written Notice. Legislation should not mandate forms to be used and the content of these forms.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 477		DATE: 1/22/2025	
COMMITTEE: Elementary and Secondary Education			
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: AMIE THORNSBROUGH		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: athornsborough@spsr6.org	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 8:02 AM
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As a special education teacher in the state of MO, I completely oppose this bill.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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COMMITTEE: Elementary and Secondary Education			
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: AMY BELLMANN		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: bellmanna@universityacademy.org	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 8:12 AM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

Working on amendments will become terribly confusing for both parents and special educators. You might have many things in an IEP not agreed upon and in multiple amendments, and other things in the IEP itself that are agreed upon. It will be hard to keep track of this. Since school districts are responsible for developing and implementing IEPs that ensure FAPE (Free Appropriate Public Education), we have concerns about the feasibility of this new requirement if parents are allowed to consent to certain recommendations but not others. Parents should not be allowed to pick and choose what services they want for their child when the experts have determined what is necessary in delivering the appropriate special education services in the correct placement of students to ensure FAPE.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 477		DATE: 1/22/2025
COMMITTEE: Elementary and Secondary Education		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: AMY CHITWOOD		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: achitwood@nfranklin.k12.mo.us	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 9:37 AM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

I am writing in opposition to HB 477. My name is Amy Chitwood and I am the Special Education Director of the New Franklin R-1 school district in New Franklin, MO. We are a small district that staffs three special education teachers and serves approximately 60 special education students. I am testifying against HB477 due to the negative impact it will have on students receiving special education services. Allowing parents to make the decision on placements, removals, changes, additions or reduction of services could be a hardship on students. The development of an IEP should be based on student data and the input provided by all members of the IEP team. I have concerns about the new requirement if parents are allowed to consent to certain recommendations but not others. Parents should not be allowed to pick and choose what services they want for their child when the experts have determined what is necessary in delivering the appropriate special education services in the correct placement of students to ensure FAPE (Free Appropriate Public Education). The additional paperwork burden that will come with potential multiple amendments to a single IEP document will be detrimental to special education teachers and staff. There is already a significant shortage of special education teachers with a high level of burnout. Adding more meetings and paperwork will contribute to a higher burnout rate and cause more teachers to leave the field of special education. In addition, if parent visits to special education classrooms prior to placement are required to take place after regular school hours, it will require teachers to work outside their regular working hours. Our district has struggled in recent years to fill our special education staff. Placing even more paperwork and time demands on teachers will only intensify this difficulty as special education teachers leave the field. As a result, students with the highest learning needs suffer as caseloads become larger due to teacher shortages. In summary, I am opposed to HB 477. The development of an IEP document should occur within the IEP team setting. No member of the IEP team should have the ability to unilaterally make decisions. This practice will negatively affect a student's ability to receive a Free Appropriate Public Education.



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: AMY SWOFFORD		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: amy.swofford@mjays.us		ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 7:22 AM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			

As a special educator and process coordinator, my goal is to facilitate decisions that serve the best interests of each individual child. A bill such as this takes the team decisions out of the equation and likely will end up sacrificing what is best educationally for the children of Missouri. The potential for increased litigation against families will negatively impact parent/district relationships and again, that sacrifices the children's best interests. If families then feel negatively about districts and schools, that will increase student's negative feelings and they will not be as engaged at school. DESE already has effective policies and procedures in place to protect parents, students, and districts. This bill will only stand in the way of that and will have damaging consequences for Missouri's special education systems. Please, let us as educators do what we do best, what we have spent countless hours studying and practicing, so that Missouri's children are served in the most appropriate way for the individual. We really do care and parents are already involved in the process when DESE regulations are followed properly.



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TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: AMY TUCKER		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: amy.tucker@raypec.org	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 12:13 PM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.		

As someone deeply invested in supporting students with disabilities and the educators who serve them, I am deeply concerned about the unintended consequences of Missouri HB 477. This bill introduces provisions that could disrupt the delivery of special education services, create confusion, and add unnecessary burdens on both families and educators. Having spent years as a special education teacher and administrator and advocating for practices that truly benefit students, I see several critical flaws in this bill that would ultimately harm the very individuals it aims to support.

1. The Confusion Around “Interim Placement” The Missouri State Plan no longer recognizes “interim placement,” a decision made years ago to prevent its misuse. I remember when interim placements were overused, with children placed in special education settings without proper eligibility determination. This led to children being removed from general education unnecessarily, particularly for behavioral reasons, sometimes without ever meeting the criteria for special education. Reintroducing this outdated and harmful concept risks repeating past mistakes and is not in the best interest of students.

2. Complexity of Multiple Amendments The idea of creating amendments for areas of agreement while leaving disagreements unresolved is impractical and confusing. As someone who has facilitated professional development on writing IEPs, I’ve seen firsthand how challenging it can be to ensure clarity and consistency in these documents. Adding layers of amendments would make it nearly impossible for educators and families to track what’s agreed upon and what’s not, leading to confusion that ultimately impacts the services a child receives.

3. Special Education Teacher Shortage I work closely with educators, many of whom are already overwhelmed by the demands of the job. Adding the burden of tracking multiple IEP amendments would be a breaking point for some, further worsening the special education teacher shortage. I’ve heard countless stories from teachers who leave the profession not because they don’t love teaching, but because the administrative demands make it impossible to focus on their students.

4. Parental Consent and Partial Agreement Concerns Requiring parental consent for changes, such as a 25% or greater adjustment to services, could unintentionally create a loophole that hinders student progress. I’ve observed in other states that IEP teams often manipulate calculations to avoid triggering these requirements, which is counterproductive and detracts from the focus on what students truly need.

Allowing parents to consent to certain parts of an IEP while rejecting others undermines the collaborative nature of IEP development. While parental input is crucial, I’ve seen how fragmented decision-making can prevent children from receiving the comprehensive support they need. Federal and state guidelines are designed to ensure FAPE (Free Appropriate Public Education), and isolated decisions threaten this process. Parents already have established avenues to address disagreements with decisions made by the school district. Allowing parents to selectively consent to certain parts of an IEP undermines the expertise of educators and the collaborative process. In many cases, this approach could directly conflict with the recommendations outlined in the evaluation report, which is

based on data and identifies the services the student requires to succeed. 5. **Challenges in Placement Decisionso** In larger districts, not every school can offer every type of specialized service. For example, self-contained programs are strategically placed to maximize resources and meet student needs. I've worked with districts where parents' refusal to accept placements has led to logistical challenges, such as needing to create duplicate programs at significant cost. This is unsustainable and diverts resources from other students. 6. **Negative Impact on Studentso** I've seen the transformative power of a well-implemented IEP. However, when parents refuse to consent to critical components, it puts students at risk of not receiving the support they need to succeed. Decisions like these can result in children being placed in environments that don't meet their needs or failing to make progress toward their goals. As someone dedicated to ensuring FAPE for all students, this is deeply concerning. 7. **Burden on Educatorso** Requiring teachers to accommodate parent visits outside of regular school hours is another example of how this bill burdens educators. I've spoken with many special education teachers who already feel stretched thin, and additional responsibilities like this will only push more out of the profession. This is a disservice to both students and educators. 8. **Redundant Requirementso** Missouri already has a robust process for parental consent in the form of Prior Written Notice. Mandating a new form and process only adds bureaucracy without improving outcomes for students. 9. **Increased Litigation Riskso** The emphasis on partial consent will likely lead to more disagreements and, ultimately, litigation. I've seen how adversarial relationships between families and schools can drain resources and distract from what truly matters: the student's progress. **Conclusion** Missouri HB 477 has good intentions, but it introduces measures that complicate IEP development, burden educators, and disrupt team decision-making. As an educator who has worked closely with fellow educators and families, I know that effective special education relies on clarity, collaboration, and a focus on what is best for the student. This bill undermines those principles. I urge lawmakers to reconsider these provisions and focus on policies that support educators, simplify processes, and ensure positive outcomes for students with disabilities.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 477		DATE: 1/22/2025	
COMMITTEE: Elementary and Secondary Education			
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: ANGEL LABBE		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: alabbe@bsd124.org	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 9:27 AM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			

As the Special Education Secretary for the district I work for I see the burden that is already placed on Special Education teachers and Process Coordinators. Allowing parents or families to cherry pick which services they agree upon for their student is not in the student's best interest and creates an additional burden with writing amendments and tracking all of the IEP information very confusing. Our Special Education teachers and Process Coordinators work hard to ensure that students are appropriately placed in programs that meet their individual needs. We want to ensure that students have the services that best meet their individual needs and proper placement is key to making this happen.



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WITNESS NAME			
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WITNESS NAME: ANGELA ROGERS		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: Japarogers@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 3:26 PM	
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			

I am writing as I have significant concerns regarding the effect of this bill on positive educational outcomes for some of our most at risk students. Before I share my concerns, I want to share with you my qualifications and experiences. I have a Bachelors Degree in Psychology and Masters Degree in Special Education. I carry certifications in Mild Cross Categorical Special Education K-12 and Elementary Education 1-6. I am a 23 year veteran special education teacher. I have taught grades K-9 in a variety of settings including resource, self-contained and co-taught. For the last 9 years I have held the position of Process Coordinator and have supported special education teams in 10 different schools across my district as well as students detained in our Juvenile Justice Center. For each of my years as a Process Coordinator, I have reviewed some 500 IEPs each year (so 4500 IEPs for the past 9 years). I know the ins and outs of special education intimately. I am worried that this bill as written, will delay the provision of a free and appropriate education to some of our most at risk students. It undermines the IEP team and the professional work that special educators do everyday. The purpose of an IEP meeting is to discuss a student's current functioning and make data driven decisions with input from all team members in order to develop programming that best meets the needs of the student in the least restrictive environment. Parental participation is an important part of this process and they have rights and protections which allow them to meaningfully participate in these discussions. However, when disagreements occur, it is left up to Local Education Agencies (LEAs) to propose or reject actions, such as changes in services or programming, that are in the best interest of the child based upon the expertise of the educators who know and work with child. LEAs are already required to provide a written notice of such changes to parent for consideration. Parents already have procedural rights to express disagreement of such actions. Requiring parental consent of changes indicated in this bill only bogs down an already complicated process and delays the provision of FAPE to students. The development of an IEP is a team decision made based on data. LEA's have State and Federal guidelines they are required to follow. Parents refusing to provide consent to supports and services experts have deemed necessary only hurts students and is counterintuitive to the requirement set forth that LEAs provide FAPE. It's simply not a good instructional practice or good for students. I personally have been part of hundreds of IEP meetings. The large majority of those run smoothly with all team members providing input and coming to agreement on programming that best meets the needs of the child. However, when disagreements have occurred, educational experts have listened, considered, made changes, and discussed educationally sound reasoning with data why recommended changes are being proposed. Some of these meetings have lasted 8-10 hours across multiple days in an attempt to make sure the parent feels heard and reach consensus. These are difficult cases sometimes involving children who are causing harm to other students and staff and significantly disrupting the learning environment. In one such case a student had bitten a teacher so hard to cause permanent nerve damage; in another broken another student's nose. These weren't single incidents either, but a

pattern of aggression across multiple months and often years. What are districts supposed to do if keeping such students in the current environment puts staff and other students at risk? I've also been part of meetings when parents have wanted to keep students in a more restrictive environment despite data showing the student is being successful. Should we deny students access to general education opportunities and peers? However, as I mentioned, these cases are rare. In my 23 years and thousands of IEPs I have either been personally part of or reviewed I can only think of about 5 families who have refused to provide consent. I ask you to carefully consider whether this bill is really needed or if the current procedural rights are sufficient.



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: ASHLEY CONOVER		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: stevenson611@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 8:27 AM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			

As an educator who has been working in special education for 17 years, I have seen a huge shift in the demand placed on teachers and the negative impact this has had on education as a whole. Based on my understanding, to pass this bill would require school districts to implement a new IEP while continuing the previous IEP in the circumstances outlined. It is my opinion that this will not only cause confusion and pose risks in the student not being served appropriately due to multiple IEPs in place, it would also place considerably more focus on paperwork vs teaching, creating more overwhelm and demand for teachers who are already struggling to keep up. Furthermore, it would appear that this approach takes the "team" decision factor out of the IEP team equation and creates a greater likelihood for division between school staff and parents when two IEPs must be implemented due to inability to reach agreement. Students suffer when there is division between school and home. Student education suffers when teachers become bogged down by additional obligations, especially those that appear redundant and pose more problems than solutions.



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TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: ASHLEY SHADWICK		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: ashadwick@nfranklin.k12.mo.us		ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 9:48 AM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			

A placement change should be allowed, without parental consent, when it is determined necessary by the student's IEP team or an administrator to protect the safety of students or staff. Since school districts are responsible for developing and implementing IEPs that ensure FAPE (Free Appropriate Public Education), we have concerns about the feasibility of this new requirement if parents are allowed to consent to certain recommendations but not others. Parents should not be allowed to pick and choose what services they want for their child when the experts have determined what is necessary in delivering the appropriate special education services in the correct placement of students to ensure FAPE. Allowing parents to make the decision on placements, removals, changes, additions, or reduction of services could be a hardship on students. The development of an IEP is a team decision made based on data. LEA's have Federal and State guidelines they are required to follow. Parents refusing to provide consent could lead to students not being in the least restrictive environment or receiving the needed support to make progress. LEA's are Federally required to provide progress on the IEP to ensure FAPE is provided. This is not conducive to good instructional practices and could have a negative impact on students. Requiring the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to adopt a parental consent form is redundant. There is currently one in place which is called Prior Written Notice. Legislation should not mandate forms and the content.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: AUTUMN BAKER		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: autumnjbaker4@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 7:38 AM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.		

1. "If the parents and local educational agency fail to reach an agreement on the child's individualized education program within ten business days but reach an agreement on certain IEP services or interim placement, the child's current agreed upon IEP shall be amended to include such areas of agreement until the areas of disagreement are resolved, and the local educational agency and the parents shall include an addendum in the IEP that specifies the date by which the areas of disagreement shall be resolved. If the areas of disagreement are not resolved by the date specified in the addendum, the local educational agency or the parents may request a 30 dispute resolution option under subsection 7 of this section." a. It has been clarified in the Missouri State Plan there is no such thing as an "interim" placement. This should be removed as it's confusing. Many years ago, there was such a thing in Missouri as an interim placement, but it was over-used by educators by placing children in special education programs on an interim basis when they may not have truly been eligible or when it was believed necessary to remove a child from the general education setting who was misbehaving. These children may or may not have eventually met eligibility. This is not a practice we want to return to as it was not best for students. b. Working on amendments will become terribly confusing for both parents and special educators. You might have many things in an IEP not agreed upon and in multiple amendments, and other things in the IEP itself that are agreed upon. It will be hard to keep track of this. c. With the existing special education teacher shortage as it is, we worry this requirement of keeping track of additional amendments not agreed upon will lead to more special education teachers to leave the field, worsening the shortage and impacting the ability to provide services to children. 2. A placement change should be allowed, without parental consent, when it is determined necessary by the student's IEP team or an administrator to protect the safety of students or staff. 3. Requiring a parental IEP consent when there is a reduction or addition of 25% or more is not in the best interest of the student. IEP teams in other states who have this requirement are careful to keep their calculations under 25% so as not to trigger this. This may interfere with the provision of FAPE. 4. Since school districts are responsible for developing and implementing IEPs that ensure FAPE (Free Appropriate Public Education), we have concerns about the feasibility of this new requirement if parents are allowed to consent to certain recommendations but not others. Parents should not be allowed to pick and choose what services they want for their child when the experts have determined what is necessary in delivering the appropriate special education services in the correct placement of students to ensure FAPE. 5. In larger districts, not all services are provided in every school. For example, a district may have a large number of elementary schools, so self-contained programs are strategically placed in select schools, not uniformly across all buildings. A potential issue arises if a parent consents to services but not to a change in placement—would this require that every school have all placement options available? If so, it could lead to substantial costs, including the need for additional teachers, paraprofessionals, and space in schools, which are already in limited supply. 6. Allowing parents to

make the decision on placements, removals, changes, additions, or reduction of services could be a hardship on students. The development of an IEP is a team decision made based on data. LEA's have Federal and State guidelines they are required to follow. Parents refusing to provide consent could lead to students not being in the least restrictive environment or receiving the needed support to make progress. LEA's are Federally required to provide progress on the IEP to ensure FAPE is provided. This is not conducive to good instructional practices and could have a negative impact on students.

7. Allowing "partial consent" will result in isolated decision making. At this time, IEP decisions are team decisions. The LEA cannot make isolated decisions, nor should the parent make them.

8. If parent visits to special education classrooms prior to placement are required to take place after regular school hours, it will require teachers to work outside their regular working hours. This also creates additional burdens on teachers and may lead them to leave the field of special education.

9. Requiring the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to adopt a parental consent form is redundant. There is currently one in place which is called Prior Written Notice. Legislation should not mandate forms and the content.

10. We believe this bill will have negative impacts on students with disabilities.

a. We have concerns the outcome of this bill will increase litigation against families, which is not good for students.

b. Managing multiple amendments within a student's IEP could become confusing and challenging, and have a negative impact on the instruction.

c. The bill's emphasis on parental consent for specific IEP components raises concerns that parents might request additions that are not necessary for the student's progress, conflicting with the requirements to provide a free appropriate public education (FAPE).

11. Below is a charge with possible Fiscal impact to districts if this bill is passed. Bills are sent to districts to determine Fiscal impact, but districts struggle understanding special education and the costs that might take place if the bill is passed. Therefore, we were able to pull this together for your use:

Events that could happen if the bill is passed in 2024-25 SY? What is the potential impact on the District? What is the potential impact on the operating budget of the District?

Additional IEP meetings would need to be scheduled

One 3-hour IEP meeting with staff:

Special Education Teacher \$35/hour
General Education Teacher(s) \$35/hour
LEA Representative/Principal \$50/hour
Speech/Language \$35/hour
OT \$35/hour
PT \$35/hour
Substitute teachers \$30/hour
or pay staff within the building to cover during planned times \$36/hour extra duty
Subs for meeting, potential preparation time and/or paying for lost plan time if recurring. Perhaps also planning meetings.

Gen ed \$105
Spec Ed \$105
Principal \$150
Related Services \$210
Sub \$90
Extra duty \$108
Minimum Total: approximately \$800 per IEP meeting held

Special Education teachers spend additional hours with paperwork - keeping track of all of the consents/amendments

Special Ed teacher per hour This is rough to estimate but a guess might be: SpEd Teacher Salary is \$50,000 and he/she might have 3 (or more) out of a caseload of 16 parents who will not consent to parts of the drafted IEP.

Estimates: ? Hourly Rate \$35? 2 hours to review at least 2 IEPs? 1 hour to make a list of goals to address from multiple IEPs? 5 hours to prepare for additional IEP meetings to come to

Cost \$576 per case manager for additional IEP paperwork agreement with the parent? 1-2 hours to hold an additional IEP meeting. ? Total number of hours of instruction another student isn't getting or that a sub is paid.

15-16 hours per situation.

Special Education Teachers resign/retire/leave the field because they are overwhelmed with keeping up with several IEPs and trying to work through what parent wants and what school proposes

Hiring a new special education teacher

Contract for a special education teacher

Paying for compensatory services due to lack of staff

Price of hiring and inducting a new teacher? \$3,500 - \$25,000 compensatory/private services if teacher is not found

\$72,000 is the approximate cost to hire a new teacher

Extra IEP meetings might keep teachers away from instruction.

Gen Ed teachers kept from their classroom

Admin away from supervisory, safety, and other duties

Cost = priceless!

The impact on lost instruction will be significant from both attending meetings and preparing for meetings. ? Gen Ed Teacher \$35/hr? Special Ed Teacher \$35/hr? (2) Related Service \$35/hr providers (might not get a sub, but then services for students are missed)? (2) Admin \$50/hour \$800 per 3-hour IEP per student

Teachers caseload average 18 students = \$14,400 That is if they have to review each IEP just once. Rarely would one extra IEP get everyone to a consensus

Due Process Plan for 3 full days for all parties to be out of the classroom

Districts have had to pay parent attorney fees to settle. \$400/hour \$90,000 for due process (6 months to hearing)

Parents' lawyer min \$9600, that's just for them being at the meeting.

Mediation Plan for 1 full day for the IEP team to be out of the

At least \$1600 for one day of IEP team out of the building

classroom 3 subs (if found)

Administrators away from their building

Lack of instruction (priceless!)

Facilitated IEP Plan for 1 full day out of the classroom for all team members for each situation with partial agreement on an IEP. Subs will be needed for: ? Gen Ed Teacher \$35/hr? Special Ed Teacher \$35/hr? (2) Related Service \$35/hr providers (might not get a sub, but then services for students are missed)? (2) Admin \$50/hour \$1600 per day of IEP

Lawyer fees for navigating procedures

District may contact an attorney at \$240/hour

Min of 20 hours = \$4800

Special education directors and coordinators assisting case managers in navigating paperwork and changes in law/process

1/2 day training

Subs for teachers/coverage from other teachers in the building/ Admin covering classes if subs cannot be found

\$30/hour

With hours of follow-up to make sure implementation of the IEP is correct

**Additional staff

would possibly need to be hired to handle additional paperwork, coverage, etc. \$100,000 min for additional staff \$30/hour for sub per staff District forced to file due process to meet FAPE \$90,000 per case

A scenario with possible fiscal impacts: A special education teacher has 15 students. The teacher will need to hold an IEP meeting for all 15 students. At each IEP apparent according to this law the parent would need to consent to parts of the IEP. Let's say at one IEP the parent does not consent to one part of the IEP. A form would need to be created and filled out for each area the parent does not agree with. At this time the team:

1. could reconvene at a later date to come to a resolution.
2. The team could decide to file a due process because a child would not receive FAPE if the changes were not made.
3. The rest of the IEP would be implemented. This means a teacher would have the ongoing IEP that was agreed upon, not implementing what the parents do not agree on with the new forms. The amount of time and record keeping of what was agreed with and what was not agreed with is overwhelming. The hours that special Ed teachers would need to keep track of what is agreed upon and what is not is time-consuming. Instead of coming to a consensus and using the current PWN (prior written notice) a new form would need to be created.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 477		DATE: 1/22/2025	
COMMITTEE: Elementary and Secondary Education			
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: BAILEY TENNESEN		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: tennesenb@umkc.edu		ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/21/2025 3:39 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

I am a compliance consultant for the Kansas City region. This bill will not only take time away from our educators for teaching but it could potentially take specially designed instruction away from children who need it most. Having the special education process come to a halt due to obtaining parental consent for each action will slow down our process of providing students with disabilities in their least restrictive environment and providing high-quality education to meet their unique needs. Students will be used as pawns between district and parent disagreements and parents will refuse to sign to make a point to districts that they are in charge vs. doing what is right for our kids education. Our district leaders and educators should be treated as education professionals. Our educators are exhausted and strained and do not have time for one more additional consent form or task that will slow down the special education process further. The amount of forms that special education requires significantly impacts our ability to gain and maintain special education teachers.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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COMMITTEE: Elementary and Secondary Education			
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: BRANDI RITTER		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: britter@spsr6.org	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 8:27 AM	
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			

As an advocate for high-quality education for all children, I want to emphasize the critical importance of respecting the expertise of special education professionals in decisions related to individualized education plans (IEPs) and services for students with special needs. Special education professionals, including teachers, therapists, and psychologists, possess specialized training, experience, and knowledge about evidence-based practices, developmental milestones, and effective interventions. These professionals evaluate students holistically, considering academic, social, emotional, and physical factors to create tailored strategies that address unique needs. While parental involvement is a cornerstone of special education and is protected under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), overriding decisions made by professionals undermines the collaborative process that ensures a student receives the most appropriate services. Here are several reasons why this practice should not be permitted:

Expertise Matters Special education professionals undergo years of rigorous education and hands-on training. Their recommendations are grounded in research and best practices, which may not always align with a parent’s perspective or desires. Allowing parents to override decisions risks compromising the quality of services provided.

Objective Decision-Making Professionals approach decisions with objectivity, relying on data from assessments, observations, and measurable outcomes. While parents bring valuable insights about their child’s day-to-day experiences, their emotional involvement can sometimes cloud objectivity, leading to decisions that may not serve the child’s long-term best interests.

Consistency and Accountability Allowing parents to override decisions could create inconsistencies in how services are delivered and lead to potential inequities in educational settings. Professional oversight ensures that all students receive equitable, high-quality support based on standardized processes.

Collaborative Framework The IEP process is designed to foster collaboration between parents and professionals. Decisions should emerge from mutual respect and shared goals for the child’s success. Overriding professional recommendations diminishes this partnership, potentially creating conflict and hindering progress.

Legal and Ethical Implications Decisions made without professional input could violate federal or state regulations, resulting in inadequate services or resources for the student. Professionals are bound by ethical standards and laws to advocate for what is in the best interest of the child. In conclusion, parents are vital members of the IEP team, and their voices should be heard and valued. However, granting them unilateral authority to override decisions made by special education professionals risks jeopardizing the quality and consistency of services. A balanced approach, where professionals and parents collaborate respectfully and equitably, is essential to ensure that every child receives the education they deserve.



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TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: BRENT DOOLIN		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: brent.doolin@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/21/2025 12:31 PM

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Giving veto ability to parents on IEP decisions and requiring due process procedures for districts to make a change to an IEP puts the district in jeopardy of not being able to meet the needs of students.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: CARLA HARRISON		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: charrison494@hotmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 9:16 AM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.		

I am writing to you to encourage you to oppose HB 477. I have worked in Missouri schools for over 31 years in a variety of roles all within the special education field. I have worked at a variety of grade levels and in 6 districts. Through all of this time I have experienced many changes in the field of education in general and in special education legislation, standards, and practices. So I feel I can speak with a great deal of experience when I state that HB 477 is bad for all students, families, and schools. The proposed legislation, as currently written, would require parental consent for changes in programming or services that is not required by federal legislation. Parents, under federal guidelines, already have methods for exerting parental control through signed, written consent or refusal. Parents already must provide signed, written consent for a student to be initially placed in special education at all. Parents also have the right to remove their child from special education services upon their unilateral decision through a revocation process. So, the point about the need for signed consent for initial placement is redundant as this is already a requirement in federal and Missouri statute. Once parents have consented to services, any change in those services, including adding or removing services, service minute changes of any amount, and changes in placement require the district to provide the parent with a prior written notice 10 days prior to any proposed change being implemented so that the parent may object to the proposal. If the parent objects, the changes are not implemented until a resolution occurs and the team is in agreement. Yes, if the parent does not object the changes may be implemented without a signature once the 10 day window has passed but the parent has been informed in writing (at minimum – if not in person) of the changes being proposed. These changes are team decisions with input from a group and not unilateral decisions as are being proposed by this bill. In essence this bill is proposing that parents have a unilateral line item veto for any individual portion of the IEP being developed by the team. In doing so, it negates the team process and increases the divide between parents and schools. The proposed method of handling such disagreements places school districts and teachers, not just special education teachers, but all staff members working with that student, in a precarious legal situation and increases the financial costs for the school district significantly. The proposed “interim” IEP simply means that all staff members working with that student, will have increased demands to keep track of all of the amendments and changes to ensure that agreed upon portions are implemented without delay and with fidelity while items still being arbitrated are not implemented. Staff are already overwhelmed by the number of demands and expectations placed on them and are leaving the teaching profession so adding this additional burden, above and beyond that of the federal guidelines and when it has such a potential to negatively impact parent/school relations, is unwarranted. Further, under the proposed bill the IEP team would have to conduct multiple meetings and/or utilize the due process system to resolve the conflict and come to a final decision. An estimate of \$200 to \$300 per hour per IEP meeting is, in my experience, an underestimate of the actual cost. This estimate simply of the manpower involved in the actual meeting

does not include the time preparing for the meeting or addressing the necessary steps after the meeting. Further this figure assumes a minimum of staff in attendance at the meeting which, in my experience, is seldom the case in a meeting where there are disagreements. So, meetings lasting many hours with multiple staff members out of the classroom would become the norm. This impacts the education of all students in the building. It would require multiple substitutes to cover classes, assuming any substitutes could be obtained, and adds the burden, yet again on teachers, to prepare for a substitute. While these are just a few of my objections with this proposed bill, I will simply conclude that this bill goes beyond the federal statutes. This increases paperwork burdens on teachers and districts. It further will place families and districts into even more adversarial roles and positions, further eroding the parent/school relationship. It would force districts into the untenable role of either not providing a free, appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment to students, as required by federal and state statute, or taking an adversarial role in dealing with such parental objections. The costs, both financial and in instructional services to students, would impact families, taxpayers, students, and staff. I strongly oppose this bill in intent and wording. If your goal is to give parents a bigger voice and to improve parental collaboration in the education of their student, this bill is not the method to achieve that outcome.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: CAROLYN BLECHLE		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: carolyn.blechle@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 3:55 PM	
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			

I am writing in opposition to HB477. I am a speech-language pathologist at a primary school in Missouri, therefore I often see parents at the beginning of their special education journey and I am often a part of their journey from interventions to evaluations to IEPs. I am in opposition for several reasons. The special education process is a very confusing one for both educators and especially for families. The requirement of parental consent for changes, the possibility of implementing part of an IEP but not others and the need for frequent amendments will make it extremely difficult for the whole team to be on the same page. That is too many moving parts to let parents and staff know that one day they have to do XYZ with a student and the next day it could be different. This also seems very difficult to document on the staff's side of things, which I think will lead to more miscommunication and unhappy families. The time it takes to complete paperwork. Special educators are already bogged down with paperwork due to high caseloads, extreme behaviors and required paperwork. Adding this type of documentation and management is a ridiculous expectation on top of what is already required. The workload of special educators and the rise of people leaving the profession from burnout. I don't think this needs much in depth explanation, but the more asinine tasks given to staff, the less staff you will have. Likely increase in litigations surrounding IEPs. There will be more disputes because there will be more differences in understanding and miscommunications, which leads to more easily made mistakes. Let special educators be the professionals that they are. We have the best interest of students in mind and sometimes that needs to take precedence over the parents having control over everything. Some parents are not involved and don't send back signatures. I used to have to send two meeting invitations every time and have two attempts at an IEP and the parents didn't show up. They barely signed paperwork. In some districts, this will be impossible. Please consider these points when reviewing HB 477. Thank you.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: CATHERINE THOMAS		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: thomasca22@yahoo.com		ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 9:46 AM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

The word interim would indicate we could place a student for a period of time before he actually qualifies. Too many amendments can be messy and confusing when looking at the IEP. This is so much extra work placed on the teachers some teachers will leave the profession with this additional work placed on them. We already do necessary amendments, but they are not extensive. Parents should not be able to pick and choose services which are not required and needed by the eligibility and FAPE. Visits after school put a burden on teachers. They have responsibilities outside of the school day. We already have a shortage of teachers and this would not help keep people in the profession. Special Education teachers already do a lot of work outside of the school day for their multiple lessons and IEP prep and revision. Forms of consent are not necessary, because we already have the form of Prior Written Notice.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: CHRISTA BRAY		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: christabrayhoward@gmail.com		ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 9:06 AM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			

Allowing parents to make the decision on placements, removals, changes, additions, or reduction of services could be a hardship on students. The development of an IEP is a team decision made based on data. LEA's have Federal and State guidelines they are required to follow. Parents refusing to provide consent could lead to students not being in the least restrictive environment or receiving the needed support to make progress.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: CHRISTINA CORNICK		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:	STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: ccornick@steelville.k12.mo.us	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/21/2025 9:14 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

Good evening, I am a Special Education Director and I have spent my entire career (24 years) in Special Education. I have significant concerns about this bill and the damage it can do for students if it were to pass. 1. A placement change should be allowed, without parental consent, when it is determined necessary by the student's IEP team or an administrator to protect the safety of students or staff. Sometimes the least restrictive environment is a change of placement. These changes can be scary for parents, but if handled correctly, are usually successful with communication between ALL stakeholders. 2. Requiring a parental IEP consent when there is a reduction or addition of 25% or more is not in the best interest of the student. IEP teams in other states who have this requirement are careful to keep their calculations under 25% so as not to trigger this. This may interfere with the provision of FAPE. Do we really want to resort to forcing our teachers into playing a numbers game? 3. Since school districts are responsible for developing and implementing IEPs that ensure FAPE (Free Appropriate Public Education), I have concerns about the feasibility of this new requirement if parents are allowed to consent to certain recommendations but not others. Parents should not be allowed to pick and choose what services they want for their child when the experts have determined what is necessary in delivering the appropriate special education services in the correct placement of students to ensure FAPE. We do not get to choose treatments for what ails us in a hospital. We rely on the expertise of the physicians and specialists. The staff who are educated and trained to determine what treatments our bodies need to be made healthy. Why would we put the educational decisions in the hands of parents who may not have the education and training to make those decisions for children? If they wish to make those decisions, do they not have the right to homeschool their children? 4. In larger districts, not all services are provided in every school. For example, a district may have a large number of elementary schools, so self-contained programs are strategically placed in select schools, not uniformly across all buildings. A potential issue arises if a parent consents to services but not to a change in placement—would this require that every school have all placement options available? If so, it could lead to substantial costs, including the need for additional teachers, paraprofessionals, and space in schools, which are already in limited supply. 5. Allowing parents to make the decision on placements, removals, changes, additions, or reduction of services could be a hardship on students. The development of an IEP is a team decision made based on data. LEA's have Federal and State guidelines they are required to follow. Parents refusing to provide consent could lead to students not being in the least restrictive environment or receiving the needed support to make progress. LEA's are Federally required to provide progress on the IEP to ensure FAPE is provided. This is not conducive to good instructional practices and could have a negative impact on students. 6. Allowing "partial consent" will result in isolated decision making. At this time, IEP decisions are team decisions. The LEA cannot make isolated decisions, nor should the parent make them. 7. Requiring the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to adopt a parental consent form is redundant. There is currently

one in place which is called Prior Written Notice. Legislation should not mandate forms and the content.



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TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: CHRISTINA POGGAS		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: c_ridgley@hotmail.com		ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 7:40 AM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

As a Special Education educator for 18 years, I am in opposition to this bill because it is detrimental to the education of students with disabilities. The IEP team is composed of the essential people who know most about the student. Each of these individuals have a different perspective on the child because they interact with them in different ways. Allowing certain team members to have ultimate control over the child's education, when they are not the expert in education, will have a negative impact on what is best for the students. The majority of educators, just like the majority of parents, are working toward a goal of what is best for students. This may not always look the same to the educators and parents, so we should allow the experts, in this case educators, to make the best, data driven, informed decision. There are strict guidelines that special education staff must follow already, and adding one more piece will be incredibly detrimental to what is best for students. Additionally, there is already a shortage of special education teachers and staff, how will this help to draw good, qualified teachers to Special Education? It won't, period. It will be a detriment to students.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: CHRISTINE CHAMBERLAIN		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: cjb565@gmail.com		ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 8:54 AM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

I believe this bill will have negative impacts on students with disabilities.a. We have concerns the outcome of this bill will increase litigation against families, which is not good for students. Allowing “partial consent” will result in isolated decision making. At this time, IEP decisions are team decisions. The LEA cannot make isolated decisions, nor should the parent make them.b. Managing multiple amendments within a student’s IEP could become confusing and challenging, and have a negative impact on the instruction. In addition, this could potentially continue to foster the existing special education teacher shortage due to the requirement of keeping track of additional paperwork beyond special education staff current workload. Amendments not agreed upon will lead to more special education teachers to leave the field, worsening the shortage and impacting the ability to provide services to children to meet FAPE.c. The bill’s emphasis on parental consent for specific IEP components raises concerns that parents might request additions that are not necessary for the student’s progress, conflicting with the requirements to provide a free appropriate public education (FAPE). Since school districts are responsible for developing and implementing IEPsthat ensure FAPE (Free Appropriate Public Education), we have concerns about the feasibility of this new requirement if parents are allowed to consent to certain recommendations but not others. Parents should not be allowed to pick and choose what services they want for their child when the experts have determined what is necessary in delivering the appropriate special education services in the correct placement of students to ensureFAPE.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 477		DATE: 1/22/2025
COMMITTEE: Elementary and Secondary Education		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: CINDY GAMMON		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: gammonc@carthagetigers.org	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 3:25 PM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.		

Restrictions in this bill may cause IEP Teams to write IEPs only to comply with the 25% threshold and not in the student's best interest. Prior Written Notices already account for some of the reasoning or proposals included in the bill. Data drive decisions made in the IEP. One member of the team should not designate the LRE of the child. The additional paperwork and regulations do not necessarily provide additional protections for students; however, they do provide additional work on already overburdened staff.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 477		DATE: 1/22/2025	
COMMITTEE: Elementary and Secondary Education			
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: CONNIE D. FRENCH		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: frenchconnied@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 9:26 AM
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I only want to submit my opposition.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 477		DATE: 1/22/2025	
COMMITTEE: Elementary and Secondary Education			
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: CRISTINA HEET		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: cheet@fulton58.org		ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 8:28 AM

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. A placem ent change should be allowed, without parental consent,when it is determ ined necessary by the student’s IEP team or anadm inistrator to protect the safety of students or staff.3. Requiring a parental IEP consent when there is a reduction oraddition of 25% or m ore is not in the best interest of the student. IEPteam s in other states who have this requirement are careful to keeptheir calculations under 25% so as not to trigger this. This m ayinterfere with the provision of FAPE. In larger districts, not all services are provided in every school. For exam ple,a district m ay have a large num ber of elem entary schools, so self-containedprogram s are strategically placed in select schools, not uniform ly across allbuildings. A potential issue arises if a paren t consents to services but not toa change in placem ent—would this require that every school have allplacem ent options available? If so, it could lead to substantial costs,including the need for additional teachers, paraprofessionals, and space inschools, which are already in lim ited supply.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 477		DATE: 1/22/2025
COMMITTEE: Elementary and Secondary Education		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: CYNTHIA WISE		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: cynthia.wise10@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 6:54 AM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.		

Since school districts are responsible for developing and implementing IEPs that ensure FAPE (Free Appropriate Public Education), I have concerns about the feasibility of this new requirement if parents are allowed to consent to certain recommendations but not others. Parents should not be allowed to pick and choose what services they want for their child when the experts have determined what is necessary in delivering the appropriate special education services in the correct placement of students to ensure FAPE. The feasibility of this new requirement if parents are allowed to consent to certain recommendations but not others. Parents should not be allowed to pick and choose what services they want for their child when the experts have determined what is necessary in delivering the appropriate special education services in the correct placement of students to ensure FAPE.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 477		DATE: 1/22/2025	
COMMITTEE: Elementary and Secondary Education			
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: DANIELLE ANDERSON		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: mizzouchic@gmail.com		ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 8:38 AM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			

As a parent of two children with disabilities, a 19 year special education professional, and a current Special Education Director, I am opposition to HB 477 for a variety of reasons. First, as a parent, as much as I want to make sure my child's IEP is best for them, I cannot imagine enforcing my opinions on plan decisions if they were not based on something I haven't had training on our extensive school data to back up those opinions. I would never presume to tell another professional such as a doctor, dentist, coach, or government representative what they can and cannot do without having the training or data to back up that decision. Making decisions based on the internet, recommendations from other inexperienced parents, and emotions are not effective decisions and could have short and long-term consequences for the child's educational growth. Second, as a professional, allowing parents to unilaterally make the decision on placements, removals, changes, additions, or reduction of services could be a hardship on students. The development of an IEP is a team decision made based on data . LEA's have Federal and State guidelines they are required to follow. Parents refusing to provide consent could lead to students not being in the least restrictive environment or receiving the needed support to make progress. LEA's are Federally required to provide progress on the IEP to ensure a free and appropriate public education is provided that is as inclusive as possible for that student. This is not conducive to good instructional practices and could have a negative impact on students.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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COMMITTEE: Elementary and Secondary Education			
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: DANIELLE SHOEMAKER		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: danielle.shoemaker@lebanon.k12.mo.us	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 7:26 AM	
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			

. "If the parents and local educational agency fail to reach an agreement on the child's individualized education program within ten business days but reach an agreement on certain IEP services or interim placement, the child's current agreed upon IEP shall be amended to include such areas of agreement until the areas of disagreement are resolved, and the local educational agency and the parents shall include an addendum in the IEP that specifies the date by which the areas of disagreement shall be resolved. If the areas of disagreement are not resolved by the date specified in the addendum, the local educational agency or the parents may request a 30 dispute resolution option under subsection 7 of this section." I feel with the existing special education teacher shortage as it is, I worry this requirement of keeping track of additional amendments not agreed upon will lead to more special education teachers to leave the field, worsening the shortage and impacting the ability to provide services to children. Allowing "partial consent" will result in isolated decision making. At this time, IEP decisions are team decisions. The LEA cannot make isolated decisions, nor should the parent make them. Requiring the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to adopt a parental consent form is redundant. There is currently one in place which is called Prior Written Notice. Legislation should not mandate forms and the content.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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COMMITTEE: Elementary and Secondary Education		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: DAVID HEROD		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: davedherod@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 9:04 AM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.		

Thank you for your time. I am deeply concerned about HB 477, as it poses significant negative impacts on both students and special education staff. Allowing parents to make decisions on placements, removals, or changes to services could create hardships for students. The development of an IEP is a collaborative team process based on data, guided by Federal and State regulations. If parents refuse to provide consent, students may miss out on the least restrictive environment or critical supports needed for progress. LEAs are federally required to ensure IEP goals are met and that FAPE is provided, but this bill could hinder effective instructional practices and ultimately harm students. This bill also risks exacerbating the strain on our dedicated special education staff. Managing multiple IEP amendments throughout the school year would create confusion, increase workloads, and require additional meetings, leading to burnout. As a former special education teacher and current special education administrator, I witness the extraordinary commitment of our teachers and staff daily. This bill could undermine their efforts and worsen the current staffing shortage, making it even harder to attract and retain qualified professionals. I urge you to consider the potential consequences of HB 477 and its impact on students, educators, and the broader special education system. Thank you for your time and consideration.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 477		DATE: 1/22/2025	
COMMITTEE: Elementary and Secondary Education			
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: DAWNIELLE BAKER		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: dawniellebaker@nixaschools.net		ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 7:54 AM
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I am in opposition. I oppose this as a seasoned (24 years) special educator (teacher and administrator). It would add additional meetings at a very costly rate. This adds additional time and paperwork to the teacher when parents already have 100% access to a teacher. Special education teachers often leave the field due to the overwhelming demands of managing numerous IEPs while navigating the challenges of balancing parent expectations with school proposals. Additional IEP meetings can pull teachers away from instruction, general education teachers from their classrooms, and building administrators from supervisory, safety, and other responsibilities. This leads us to file due process to meet FAPE. As a devoted educator, I work at least 50 hours per week without asking for help/assistance/change. I have recently participated in a lengthy due process that led me to work over 70 hours for multiple weeks at a time, and this pace was not and IS NOT sustainable for educators. This house bill will be devastating to our workforce, teacher families, and the students that we service.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: DIANE PITTMAN		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: dianepittman64@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 8:03 AM
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This would make my job as a special education teacher extremely difficult. Too many versions of an IEP would be impossible to follow for every student on my caseload. At his point in my career, I would chose to retire and leave the field of education.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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COMMITTEE: Elementary and Secondary Education			
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: DONNA PALMER		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: dpalmer@steelville.k12.mo.us		ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 7:16 AM

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Good morning, I am a Special Education Teacher and I have spent my entire career (10 years) in Special Education. I have significant concerns about this bill and the damage it can do for students if it were to pass. 1. A placement change should be allowed, without parental consent, when it is determined necessary by the student's IEP team or an administrator to protect the safety of students or staff. Sometimes the least restrictive environment is a change of placement. These changes can be scary for parents, but if handled correctly, are usually successful with communication between ALL parties involved..2. Requiring parental IEP consent when there is a reduction or addition of 25% or more is not in the best interest of the student. IEP teams in other states who have this requirement are careful to keep their calculations under 25% so as not to trigger this. This may interfere with the provision of FAPE. 3. Since school districts are responsible for developing and implementing IEPs that ensure FAPE (Free Appropriate Public Education), I am concerned about the feasibility of this new requirement if parents are allowed to consent to certain recommendations but not others. Parents should not be allowed to pick and choose what services they want for their child when the experts have determined what is necessary in delivering the appropriate special education services in the correct placement of students to ensure FAPE. Why would we put the educational decisions in the hands of parents who may not have the education and training to make those decisions for children? If they wish to make those decisions, do they not have the right to homeschool their children?4. A potential issue arises if a parent consents to services but not to a change in placement—would this require that every school have all placement options available? If so, it could lead to substantial costs, including the need for additional teachers, paraprofessionals, and space in schools, which are already in limited supply.5. Allowing parents to make the decision on placements, removals, changes, additions, or reduction of services could be a hardship on students. The development of an IEP is a team decision made based on data . LEA's have Federal and State guidelines they are required to follow. Parents refusing to provide consent could lead to students not being in the least restrictive environment or receiving the needed support to make progress. LEA's are Federally required to provide progress on the IEP to ensure FAPE is provided. This is not conducive to good instructional practices and could have a negative impact on students.6. Allowing "partial consent" will result in isolated decision making. At this time, IEP decisions are team decisions. The LEA cannot make isolated decisions, nor should the parent make them. 7. Requiring the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to adopt a parental consent form is redundant. There is currently one in place which is called Prior Written Notice. Legislation should not mandate forms and the content.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 477		DATE: 1/22/2025
COMMITTEE: Elementary and Secondary Education		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: DR. ALEXIS STARK		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: j.alexis.stark@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 10:28 AM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.		

I implore you to please not enact HB477 as written as it will have insurmountable and detrimental affects on our students with special needs across the state of Missouri. The job of the local school district is to provide a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) to any that seek it for their child and HB 477 would certainly muddy the waters. With parents being able to approve of IEPs in a piecemeal fashion, this will complicate the enforcement and enactment of IEPs for students and prohibit districts from providing FAPE, as is their legal obligation to the children they serve. When parents disagree with provisions in the IEP, there are already steps available (like Due Process) that afford parents the right and ability to have their concerns heard. HB 477 will be a wrench in the cogs of these well established practices and only serve to hurt students in the process.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: DR. AMANDA COLEMAN		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: amanda.coleman@raypec.org	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 3:59 PM

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-The justification of this bill appears to be to provide due process rights to parents. However, Due Process rights already exist for parents. Therefore, the actions of this bill do not provide additional rights to parents. Rather, they subvert the professionalism and expertise of special educators, delay services to students, increase educational costs to the district and families, and increase paperwork and meeting requirements on school teams leading to potentially greater impact on special education staffing shortages across the state. Primary concern is with sections 4 (1) and (2) starting on line 22, section 5, section 7.-Interim placement does not exist per the Missouri State Plan. The language is inconsistent with MO special education policy and guidance. -Current practice guides teams to conduct IEP meetings for decisions that involve a change in placement, which could include a 1% percent change and up to a 40% change in the reduction or addition of service minutes. Section 3 (1) (d) calls for consent for the reduction or addition of service minutes by more than 25% creates additional paperwork and process burden on IEP teams that could result in diminished service delivery that interferes with the provision of FAPE or results in increased clerical demands on special education personnel that further impacts special education staffing shortages. -Parents are not educational decision makers and lack the professional expertise to make final judgements and decisions regarding the specially designed instruction needed for students to receive a Free and Appropriate Public Education. -The development of an IEP is a team decision based on data. LEA's have Federal and State guidelines they are required to follow and special education teachers. Parents refusing to provide consent could lead to students not receiving FAPE.LEAs cannot make isolated decisions re: student needs. Parents should also not be granted that authority. -Current practice includes parental consent (Prior Written Notice) for the provision of Initial Services and IEP teams conduct meetings with parents when considering changes in placement. Rather than providing additional rights to parents, this legislation only impedes the expertise of educators, limits or even excludes the decision-making of the educational experts on the IEP team, and reduces student access to services. -This bill has potentially negative impacts on students with disabilities. The outcome of this bill will increase litigation against families and school districts at the expense of the provision of specially designed instruction for students and cost to families, districts, and the State of Missouri. Managing multiple amendments within a student's IEP creates an additional paperwork burden on IEP teams that could have a negative impact on the provision of FAPE.The bill's emphasis on parental consent for specific IEP components raises concerns that parents might request additions that are not necessary for the student's progress, conflicting with the LEA's requirements to provide a free appropriate public education (FAPE).-An outline of the potential fiscal impact follows: 1. More IEP meetings: Meetings beyond teacher plan time mean coverage for regular education teachers which impacts gen ed student's access to their regular education teacher and potential cost to the district to secure substitute teachers. It also impacts student services provided by the special education teacher. Multiple meetings within the scope of reg

ed teacher plan time impacts teacher access to planning and collaboration with subsequently impacts quality of direction instruction to student in the general education setting. Emotional toil to staff, potential impact to teacher recruitment and retention. Districts would need to consider building substitutes (if they can be hired) to cover the need for extra meetings. An additional building sub for every building is a considerable cost. For our district, potentially 12 additional FTEs = \$36,000 per FTE x 12 = \$432,000 annually². Special Education Teachers resign/retire/leave the field because they are overwhelmed with keeping up with several IEPs and trying to work through what parent wants and what school proposes. Significantly disrupts continuity and subsequent quality of services for students with disabilities. Impacts overall staff morale and collective functioning of a school organization. Increases the likelihood of forcing districts to increase reliance on contractual staff. Hourly rate for special education teachers for most contractual agencies is approximately \$80/hr = \$640/day @ 169 days = \$108,160 per employee³. Increase in Due Process. Plan for 3 full days for all parties to be out of the classroom Districts have had to pay parent attorney fees to settle. \$400/hour. \$90,000 for due process (6 months to hearing) Parents' lawyer min \$9600 for the Due Process meeting alone⁴. Increase in Mediation. Plan for 1 full day for the IEP team to be out of the classroom. 2-3 subs (if found) Administrators away from their building. Impact to instruction for all students. Individual Sub pay for our district is \$175/day per substitute teacher.⁵ Facilitated IEPs: Plan for 1 full day out of the classroom for all team members for each situation with partial agreement on an IEP. Subs will be needed for: ? Gen Ed Teacher? Special Ed Teacher? (2) Related Service-no sub given so services for students are missed/have to be made up/impacts staff morale and continuity of services for students ? (2) Admin Daily cost of subs for three teachers at a minimum @ \$175/day x 3 = \$5256. District filing Due Process: \$90,000 per case⁷. Additional Attorney fees for consultation to navigate new procedures: up to \$240/hour.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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BILL NUMBER: HB 477		DATE: 1/22/2025
COMMITTEE: Elementary and Secondary Education		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: DR. JAMIE SMITH		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: jsmithnmo5@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 8:01 AM

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There are special education regulations and processes in place that are already working to support student and parent rights while working to ensure the schools and IEP teams provide FAPE (free appropriate public education). Adding new and additional steps like these will negatively impact the school to home relationship for students. Areas of specific concern include: an increase in confusion about process, greater opportunities to create divisiveness among teams, districts of all sizes will be impacted, and most of all students are caught between adult tension and they miss out on important supports and services as adults work to navigate new dispute processes rather than working through the current system that provides mediation and steps for parents to invoke their parental rights. Districts work hard to support students and work with families in a professional and meaningful manner; please allow the processes as outline under the IDEA continue to guide the times that disputes arise. More specific examples of impact and concern: -This new system may further delay identified supports and services for students and provide parent with more decision-making rights taking away from team as a whole, even with data does not support such a decision. The majority of schools work hard to support teams, including families, through these decisions including tours of new classrooms, programs, or school placement options prior to initiating significant changes. - Allowing "partial consent" will result in isolated decision making. At this time, IEP decisions are team decisions. The LEA cannot make isolated decisions, nor should the parent make them. This may lead to holes in the proposed educational services having a negative impact on student progress and growth. Parents currently work to 'pick and choose' what components of educational programs they want their child to access. A partial consent component will further compromise the input, guidance, and training of our educational staff as they work to help parents better understand the comprehensive plans being proposed to provide FAPE to students. -Paperwork components of special education are already cumbersome. Requiring MO - Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to adopt a parental consent form would be redundant. There is currently one in place which is called Prior Written Notice. Legislation should not mandate forms and the content that will further burden staff with paperwork that keeps educators from direct service with students and further confuses parents.- School districts are already facing teacher shortages, specifically in special education. Creating more opportunity for tension and stress with families, along with an increase in the paperwork components will further dissuade our young educators from becoming special educators. I implore the legislature to help find ways to support ongoing collaboration among schools and families, not provide new opportunities to increase disputes that negatively impact our students.



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WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: DR. KARLA ARNOLD		PHONE NUMBER: 816-217-7479	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: MISSOURI COUNCIL OF ADMINISTRATORS OF SPECIAL EDUCATION		TITLE: DIRECTOR OF INNOVATION AND LEARNING	
ADDRESS: 4324 NE 59TH TER			
CITY: KANSAS CITY		STATE: MO	ZIP: 64119
EMAIL: karla.arnold@mo-case.org	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 9:31 AM	
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Good morning. My name is Dr. Karla Arnold, and I am currently the Director of Innovation and Learning with the Missouri Council of Administrators of Special Education. Our non profit organization provides support to special education leaders across our state. I am testifying on behalf of MO-CASE in opposition to HB 477 for several reasons. First, if you are a special education practitioner, upon reading this bill you immediately see it to be very confusing and challenging to truly follow. Having multiple amendments of disagreement within an IEP with confuse both staff and parents. It will negatively impact the ability of the special education teacher in being able to provide sound instruction to the student. Additionally, the special education teacher will struggle with ensuring the IEP is in compliance as there will be multiple amendments and dates to be aware of. All this distracts from the focus of providing instruction to the student and ensuring the student makes progress on all goals and objectives in the IEP - which is the measure we must follow based on the Individual with Disabilities Act (IDEA). Also, this bill bring an "old" term back that was discontinued many years ago by the DESE. The term is "interim placement." This was a term used to allow general education students to be placed into special education classroom prior to being determined eligible for special education In order to see how they might progress in that setting. This violates the confidentiality rights of the student being placed in that setting as well as the confidentiality rights of the other students with disabilities in that classroom. This term needs to be removed from this bill. It is also critical IEP teams are allowed to removed students from school settings who present a danger to themselves, other students, and/or staff, without having to obtain parent consent since this would be considered a change in placement for the student. We currently have laws and procedures in place to protect both the student in question as well as others who might be impacted. It would be detrimental to all if these processes were changed. Additionally, IEP teams currently function as a team that tries to reach consensus on all components of the IEP. At the end of the day, it is up to the school district to ensure, per Federal law, that progress is made on all goals and objectives in the IEP. The district does not have sole authority to make decisions, nor should parents. These decisions truly need to be made by the team. At that time, if the parent does not agree with any of the decisions the team has reached, they have clear rights to dispute resolutions measures which include filing a due process or a child complaint against the district. I thank you for your time. The above are just a few issues of opposition to this bill that MO-CASE has. Please feel free to contact me if I can clarify any or expand upon others.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 477		DATE: 1/22/2025
COMMITTEE: Elementary and Secondary Education		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: EMILY BACH		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: ebach@farmington.k12.mo.us	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 10:08 AM

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As an educator with 27 years of experience and two advanced degrees in my field, this action is not only a threat to the privacy of other students in the special education environment, but it eliminates the autonomy of special education educators. Please do not approve this bill, as it will certainly cause barriers to the educational success of students.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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COMMITTEE: Elementary and Secondary Education			
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: EMILY MEUTH		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: emily.meuth@kirkwoodschoools.org	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 12:01 PM	

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· Working on amendments will become terribly confusing for both parents and special educators. There might be many things in an IEP not agreed upon and other things in the IEP itself that are agreed upon. It will be hard to keep track of this, and will require unreasonable expense in additional staff, training, and oversight. · The added requirement of keeping track of amendments for services that are agreed upon and resolution talks on those that aren't agreed upon, could prove overwhelming for teachers, in light of current conditions. This could exacerbate existing teacher shortages will lead to more special education teachers to leave the field, worsening the shortage and impacting the ability to provide services to children. \$\$\$· A placement change should be allowed, with prior written notice, but without parental consent, when it is determined necessary by the student's IEP team or an administrator to protect the safety of students or staff. · In other states with parent consent for service change requirements (there are only 10), educators have reported that they are careful to keep their proposed changes to service minutes under 25% of the current amount of services so as not to trigger the consent requirements. This may interfere with the provision of FAPE. · Special educators and related service providers are the experts when it comes to service provision and decision making. In addition, the school district is charged with providing FAPE. Allowing parents to pick and choose which services they want for their child may interfere with a district's ability to provide FAPE. · An IEP team may propose that a student's services be increased, which results in a change of placement. The change of placement may require the student to attend another school or site within the district. Scenarios will certainly arise where a parent may agree to the services but not the placement, preventing anything from going into effect, since the services are written to be implemented in the new placement. · Services that are proposed based on data are intended to provide a student FAPE. Parents who will not provide consent for services could cause students to regress or stagnate in their progress if they don't receive the required special education services. · IEP services, while separate, are intended to complement each other and support implementation and progress. Related services are necessary to ensure the student can access and benefit from the special education services. Should a parent refuse to consent to one or more services, the collective power of all of the services is weakened. For example, a student with a Learning Disability in writing may require Occupational Therapy as a related service because they have weak fine motor skills. The OT supports the student's physical ability to write, which will allow him to practice and express the writing skills he's obtaining through special education services. If a parent were to consent to the writing services, but not the OT services, they will make limited, if any progress in writing. · After school parent tours and visits to classrooms occur outside of teacher work hours. Hosting a tour will require administrator presence or payment to staff to stay late. \$\$\$· Requiring DESE to adopt a parental consent form is redundant. There is currently one in place which is called Prior Written Notice. Legislation should not mandate forms and the content. · The proposed bill increases disagreement "touch points" with families, given that they need to consent to

every proposed service change or placement change. The potential for increased litigation is present.
\$\$\$ Additional IEP meetings would be necessary to resolve disagreement when parents refuse to consent. This takes away from instructional time and creates increased costs for subs.



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: ERIN MADES		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: madese@warhawks.k12.mo.us	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 8:50 AM
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As the Special Education Director and parent of a student who had a disability, I believe this bill will have many negative impacts on special education. Allowing an "interim" placement for students when there can not be agreements reached will cause confusion on many levels and is not in the best interest of the child if they do not later receive that service. This bill will also cause an over increase in paperwork and meetings for special education teachers who already additional task beyond what other educators a required. When there are multiple amendments and of the IEP, they are going to become confusing and this is going to affect student progress and negatively impact their education. Special education teacher work hard each day to identify student individual needs and then support those needs to help them make progress while providing a free appropriate public education. We currently have a teacher shortage and asking them to making multiple changes, work extended hours, attend and prepare for multiple meetings, and provide services that students may not need is going to make more special education teachers leave the field. This is going to impact the number of student on teacher caseloads and in teacher classrooms and impact the ability to provide the services needed for properly service our students.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: FAYE TAIT		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: faye.tait@raypec.org	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 12:16 PM

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I feel this Bill is stating that the teachers are not the experts in Education the decision-making ideas.



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: GABRIELLE MARTIN		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: gmartin@monettschools.org	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 7:42 AM	
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Concern 1: by allowing parents to deny individual proposed changes allows for isolated decision making. All decisions by the IEP should be made based on data and as a group with no single person having an outsized veto ability. Concern 2: by having to additionally track with written consent which parts a parent does not agree with along the way instead of the final team decision, the Amendment process becomes more confusing for teachers, LEAs and parents. The confusion may lead to schools avoiding amending IEPs when all data points to changes being needed to continue providing FAPE. Concern 3: dESE has been unable to keep up with changes to laws that affect paperwork forms, for schools that do not already use a paperwork platform such as SpedTrack this will likely result in a gap between the time they are legally obligated to comply and the form being available. If the form is not available well in advance of the implementation date schools will likely be out of compliance for an extended period of time leaving them open to litigation by no fault of their own Concern 4: by requiring a signature for documenting agreements and disagreements on a larger range of changes, parent participation options will need to be limited or changes on what has been determined FAPE will be unnecessarily delayed at various points along the way. I would urge the committee to reconsider this bill and continue to let Missouri rank as one of the highest rated states for special education compliance by the federal education departments.



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WITNESS NAME		
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:		
WITNESS NAME: GAYLE WILLEY		PHONE NUMBER: 314-575-8939
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: MO COUNCIL OF ADMINISTRATORS OF SPECIAL EDUCATION		TITLE:
ADDRESS: 3550 AMAZONAS DR		
CITY: JEFFERSON CITY	STATE: MO	ZIP: 65109
EMAIL: gayle.willey@mo-case.org	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 8:49 AM

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As the Executive Director of the Missouri Council of Administrators of Special Education, and a retired special educator, administrator, and principal, I am very concerned about the impact HB477 may have on our educators and students if passed. The hours that a special educator and a student's team may spend on increased meetings and paperwork will take away from the time a teacher would spend with their students. I have outlined some concerns below:1. Negative Impact on Students with Disabilities

o Only the parts of the IEP that both parents and the district agree upon will be implemented. If there is no agreement on certain parts, the previously agreed-upon IEP is to be amended to include the agreed-upon components until the areas of disagreement are resolved. o

This approach is not conducive to good instructional practice. Managing multiple amendments within a student's IEP could become confusing and challenging, negatively impacting the instruction provided to students with disabilities.o The bill's provisions requiring teachers to work from expired IEPs will lead to situations where there could be outdated IEPs in place for multiple years. This situation is harmful in working to ensure students are progressing.o The bill's emphasis on parental consent for specific IEP components raises concerns that parents might request additions that are not necessary for the student's progress, conflicting with the requirements to provide a free appropriate public education (FAPE).2. Impact on Special Education Teacher Shortage:o

Given the existing shortage of special education teachers, there are concerns that the additional requirements of this bill may lead to more teachers leaving the field, worsening the shortage and impacting the ability to provide services to children.o The bill creates an additional burden on teachers, mandating that they must allow parents to tour programs or classrooms before or after school. This requires teachers to work outside their regular hours.A scenario with possible fiscal impacts:A special education teacher has 15 students. The teacher will need to hold an IEP meeting for all 15 students. At each IEP, according to this law, the parent would need to consent to parts of the IEP. Let's say at one IEP the parent does not consent to one part of the IEP. A form must be created and filled out for each area the parent disagrees with. At this time the team: 1. could reconvene at a later date to come to a resolution. 2. The team could decide to file a due process because a child would not receive FAPE if the changes were not made. 3. The rest of the IEP would be implemented. This means a teacher would have the ongoing IEP that was agreed upon, not implementing what the parents do not agree on with the new forms. The amount of time and record keeping of what was agreed with and what was not agreed with is overwhelming. The hours that special Ed teachers would need to keep track of what is agreed upon and what is not is time-consuming. Instead of coming to a consensus and using the current PWN (prior written notice) a new form would need to be created. Overall, there are apprehensions about the practicality of this bill given the negative impact on special education teachers, and the alignment of the bill with the goals of providing appropriate education to students

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with special needs as mandated by federal law (IDEA). Events that could happen if the bill is passed in 2025-2026 SY? What is the potential impact on the District? What is the potential impact on the operating budget of the District? Additional IEP meetings would need to be scheduled

One 3-hour IEP meeting with staff: Special Education Teacher \$35/hour General Education Teacher(s) \$35/hour LEA Representative Principal \$50/hour Speech/Language \$35/hour OT \$35/hour PT \$35/hour Substitute teachers \$30/hour or pay staff within the building to cover during planned times \$36/hour extra duty Subs for meeting, potential preparation time and/or paying for lost plan time if recurring. Perhaps also planning meetings. Gen ed \$105 Spec Ed \$105 Principal \$150 Related Services \$210 Sub \$90 Extra duty \$108 Minimum Total: approximately \$800 per IEP meeting held

Special Education teachers spend additional hours with paperwork - keeping track of all of the consents/amendments Special Ed teacher per hour This is rough to estimate but a guess might be: SpEd Teacher Salary is \$50,000 and he/she might have 3 (or more) out of a caseload of 16 parents who will not consent to parts of the drafted IEP. Estimates: ? Hourly Rate \$35? 2 hours to review at least 2 IEPs? 1 hour to make a list of goals to address from multiple IEPs? 5 hours to prepare for additional IEP meetings to come to agreement with the parent? 1-2 hours to hold an additional IEP meeting.? Total number of hours of instruction another student isn't getting or that a sub is paid. 15-16 hours per situation. Cost \$576 per case manager for additional IEP paperwork

Special Education Teachers resign/retire/leave the field because they are overwhelmed with keeping up with several IEPs and trying to work through what parent wants and what school proposes

Hiring a new special education teacher Contract for a special education teacher Paying for compensatory services due to lack of staff Price of hiring and inducting a new teacher? \$3,500 - \$25,000 compensatory/private services if teacher is not found \$72,000 is the approximate cost to hire a new teacher

Extra IEP meetings might keep teachers away from instruction. Gen Ed teachers kept from their class Building Admin away from supervisory, safety, and other duties Cost = priceless! The impact on lost instruction will be significant from both attending meetings and preparing for meetings.? Gen Ed Teacher \$35/hr? Special Ed Teacher \$35/hr? (2) Related Service \$35/hr providers (might not get a sub, but then services for students are missed)? (2) Admin \$50/hour \$800 per 3-hour IEP per student Teachers caseload average 18 students = \$14,400 That is if they have to review each IEP just once. Rarely would one extra IEP get everyone to a consensus

Due Process Plan for 3 full days for all parties to be out of the classroom Districts have had to pay parent attorney fees to settle. \$400/hour \$90,000 for due process (6 months to hearing) Parents' lawyer min \$9600, that's just for them being at the meeting. Mediation Plan for 1 full day for the IEP team to be out of the classroom 3 subs (if found) Administrators away from their building Lack of instruction (priceless!) At least \$1600 for one day of IEP team out of the building

Facilitated IEP Plan for 1 full day out of the classroom for all team members for each situation with partial agreement on an IEP. Subs will be needed for: ? Gen Ed Teacher \$35/hr? Special Ed Teacher \$35/hr? (2) Related Service \$35/hr providers (might not get a sub, but then services for students are missed)? (2) Admin \$50/hour \$1600 per day of IEP Lawyer fees for navigating procedures District may contact an attorney at \$240/hour Min of 20 hours = \$4800

Special education directors and coordinators assisting case managers in navigating paperwork and changes in law/process 1/2 day training Subs for teachers/coverage from other teachers in the building/ Admin covering classes if subs cannot be found \$30/hour With hours of follow-up to make sure implementation of the IEP is correct** Additional staff would possibly need to be hired to handle additional paperwork, coverage, etc. \$100,000 min for additional staff \$30/hour for sub per staff District forced to file due process to meet FAPE \$90,000 per case***

Along with these concerns, our organization would welcome the opportunity to work on the wording of this bill to support parent participation as well as protecting the teachers and teams times and finances.



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BILL NUMBER: HB 477		DATE: 1/22/2025
COMMITTEE: Elementary and Secondary Education		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: GINA GIBSON		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: gina_m_gibson@yahoo.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 11:30 AM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.		

I have concerns regarding the proposed HB 477. School districts are responsible for evaluating students to determine areas of disability and then developing and implementing IEPs that ensure all areas of impact are addressed while also ensuring FAPE (Free Appropriate Public Education). If parents are allowed to consent to only certain recommendations that they want, this then becomes a way to pick and choose services rather than addressing the educational needs of the child as a whole. Special education services may be prioritized based on a child's development at the time of the IEP and the recommendations of the experts in each area. They should not be chosen as one might be allowed to do in an outpatient clinical setting. The time spent going through the process of making various amendments can also be confusing to all parties. In addition, the picking and choosing of services and extra time spent to come up with a plan, may impact related services personnel (PT, OT, SLP) with ethical requirements needed for licensure.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: GINNY GILBERT		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: ggilbert@blairoaks.org	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/21/2025 2:20 PM
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All IEP decisions are a team decision and the parent is one part of that team, but not the whole team. A lot of time, effort, and fiscal (tax payer) resource goes into IEP team meetings, evaluation process, data review, etc. To allow the parent to completely derail that and add to the fiscal responsibility of the district is totally wrong and does not serve the best interest of FAPE or IDEA.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: GRETTA GUERIN		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:	STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: gguerin@marionville.us	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 9:05 AM

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Since school districts are responsible for developing and implementing IEPs that ensure FAPE (Free Appropriate Public Education), we have concerns about the feasibility of this new requirement if parents are allowed to consent to certain recommendations but not others. Parents should not be allowed to pick and choose what services they want for their child when the experts have determined what is necessary in delivering the appropriate special education services in the correct placement of students to ensure FAPE. Requiring the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to adopt a parental consent form is redundant. There is currently one in place which is called Prior Written Notice. Legislation should not mandate forms and the content. We believe this bill will have negative impacts on students with disabilities. a. We have concerns the outcome of this bill will increase litigation against families, which is not good for students. b. Managing multiple amendments within a student's IEP could become confusing and challenging, and have a negative impact on the instruction. c. The bill's emphasis on parental consent for specific IEP components raises concerns that parents might request additions that are not necessary for the student's progress, conflicting with their requirements to provide a free appropriate public education (FAPE)



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: GWEN SICKELS		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: gcsickels@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 9:13 AM
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As a process coordinator at a public middle school in Missouri, this bill give sole decision making power to one individual rather than the power of team decisions, involving many experts in a variety of fields that give data and information regarding a child's functioning at school. Services and needs through an IEP are supposed to be TEAM decisions, parents being one part of that team. If this bill passes and no changes can be made unless a parent gives written permission, that is taking the team aspect away from the special education process. If this bill passes, the IEP team is worthless - parents would make all the final decisions when it comes to changes regardless of other team members input. There is currently a 10 day wait period before any changes can be implemented. If a parent disagrees with a proposed change, there is already a process set in place to challenge these proposed changes. What would happen in the event a parent is non responsive? This unfortunately occurs more frequently than many people realize. The team is then stuck, as is the child. Parent are one very invaluable member of their child's IEP team, as are the educators and specialists that work with the child. ALL of these people should be making decisions for the child. When a team decides that an IEP change is necessary for a child, the team is determining that the change is in the best interest of the child. Why would we give parents sole rights in not allowing what is in the best interests of a child?



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: HALEY LYNCH		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: hlynch@afftonschools.net	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 11:52 AM

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Requiring a parental IEP consent when there is a reduction or addition of 25% or more is not in the best interest of the student. IEP teams in other states who have this requirement are careful to keep their calculations under 25% so as not to trigger this. This may interfere with the provision of FAPE. Special education teachers and related service providers are already burnt out due to increased caseloads/class sizes, it seems as though this bill has the potential to add an increased amount of meetings on top of an already incredibly busy meeting schedule for these providers and teachers. With the existing special education teacher shortage as it is, this requirement of keeping track of additional amendments not agreed upon may lead to more special education teachers leaving the field, worsening the shortage and impacting the ability to provide services to children.



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: HANNAH THOMPSON		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: hthompson@agpirates.com	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 12:59 PM
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I am writing in opposition to HB 477 from the special education perspective. These changes will effectively take away the school's ability to best serve the students and allow parents to hand select services. This will lead to increased legal measures with due process and cause a financial strain on districts.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 477		DATE: 1/22/2025
COMMITTEE: Elementary and Secondary Education		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: HEATHER SMITH		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: hsmithslp@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 9:01 AM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.		

Since school districts are responsible for developing and implementing IEPs that ensure FAPE (Free Appropriate Public Education), we have concerns about the feasibility of this new requirement if parents are allowed to consent to certain recommendations but not others. Parents should not pick and choose what services they want for their child when the experts have determined what is necessary for delivering the appropriate special education services in the correct placement of students to ensure FAPE. Requiring the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to adopt a parental consent form is redundant. There is currently one in place, called a Prior Written Notice. Legislation should not mandate forms to be used and the content of these forms.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 477		DATE: 1/22/2025	
COMMITTEE: Elementary and Secondary Education			
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: HOPKINS GREG		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: ghopkins@marionville.us	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 12:12 PM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			

If parent visits to special education classrooms prior to placement are required to take place after regular school hours, it will require teachers to work outside their regular working hours. This also creates additional burdens on teachers and may lead them to leave the field of special education.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 477		DATE: 1/22/2025	
COMMITTEE: Elementary and Secondary Education			
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: JACKIE ROLAND		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: jackie.roland.pt@gmail.com		ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 10:03 AM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

I am a physical therapist who works in the Early Childhood Special Education program, all of my caseload is made up of children who have been evaluated and have met criteria to receive services. This means that they have a significant delay with physical skills. I am in opposition to this bill which would allow a family to choose only services that they would like and ignore perhaps what would be best based on professional opinion. This bill is basically saying that my professional opinion is not valid. Since school districts are responsible for developing and implementing IEPs that ensure FAPE (Free Appropriate Public Education), we have concerns about the feasibility of this new requirement if parents are allowed to consent to certain recommendations but not others. Allowing parents to make the decision on placements, removals, changes, additions, or reduction of services could be a hardship on students. The development of an IEP is a team decision made based on data. LEA's have Federal and State guidelines they are required to follow. Parents refusing to provide consent could lead to students not being in the least restrictive environment or receiving the needed support to make progress. LEA's are Federally required to provide progress on the IEP to ensure FAPE is provided.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 477		DATE: 1/22/2025
COMMITTEE: Elementary and Secondary Education		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: JACLYN GLENN		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: jaclynglenn@ozarktigers.org	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 7:27 AM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

I am a process coordinator for special education and am in direct opposition of this bill. Implementing something like this would not only increase the burden on special educators but would directly affect our students with disabilities. In the last two years I have had to work with multiple "critical shortage" teachers- who aren't even certified in Special Education- due to the teacher shortage in our field. This Bill would undoubtedly increase the amount of teachers leaving special education and the amount of open positions within districts to support our students who exhibit the most substantial need. There are already provisions and processes in place for parents to disagree with LEA decisions regarding IEP team decisions. These decisions must be made on DATA not simply on anyone's (parents or schools) feeling of what is "best" for the student. LEAs are required to follow state and federal guidelines and MUST ensure that decisions regarding placement and services are made objectively and based on the DATA. Allowing parents to "tour" classrooms prior to placement is not feasible. Teachers cannot be expected to stay after school hours, just like we would not expect a doctor to stay after hours, it simply isn't reasonable, or sustainable. Simply put- this Bill would be AWFUL for students with disabilities and our teachers who support them. It will drive out teachers and educators from the field of special education, leaving no one to educate our students with disabilities.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 477		DATE: 1/22/2025
COMMITTEE: Elementary and Secondary Education		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: JAY PATRICK EILERS		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: eilersj@polo.k12.mo.us	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 9:45 AM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

Opposition Statement:The proposed House Bill No. 477, which introduces additional parental consent procedures for changes to a student's Individualized Education Program (IEP), may undermine the best interests of students with disabilities by creating unnecessary delays and barriers in the provision of critical services.While parental involvement in decision-making is important, excessive bureaucratic processes that require parental consent for even minor adjustments to services can disrupt the timely implementation of an IEP. This could potentially delay students' access to the specialized support they need to succeed in school. Students with disabilities often face significant challenges, and swift action in adjusting their educational plans is crucial for meeting their individual needs.Furthermore, the bill's provision that requires parental consent for any changes in service minutes—regardless of the magnitude—could result in disputes that unnecessarily prolong the provision of services. This adds complexity to a process that is already challenging for families, especially those who may struggle to navigate the legal and educational system.Ultimately, the goal of special education should be to ensure that students with disabilities receive a free, appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment. While parents should absolutely be involved in their child's education, this bill risks creating procedural roadblocks that could hinder timely decision-making and disrupt the individualized support that is critical for these students' academic and social development.Sincerely, Polo R-VII Administrative Team



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 477		DATE: 1/22/2025	
COMMITTEE: Elementary and Secondary Education			
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: JENA COBERLY		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: jcoberly@mansfieldschool.net	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 9:15 AM	
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			

I stand in opposition of this bill. As a Special Education Director in Missouri, I am greatly concerned with the HIPPA and FERPA violations we create when we allow parents to "visit" a special education program where other students with disabilities are present. In the world of special education, we talk constantly about the importance of confidentiality. Where is the confidentiality for the students already in the program or for the students whose parents do not want other parents having a front row seat to their child's disability and educational deficits? I do not agree with this and I feel these students deserve to continue to have their privacy and special education placement protected. Not all of our students in special education have severe disabilities. Some have resource time to support reading and hold positions in student council and are athletes. We do our best with scheduling their special education time so that other students don't know they need support. Being in a small town, I can tell you, confidentiality signed by a parent, or not, that students privacy will be breeched and what we've worked so hard to protect for them will be gone. If we allow them to visit after hours, this adds hours onto an already busy schedule for teachers and if you've ever been in a special education classroom, you know that time to lesson plan for multiple students at once is time consuming in itself. I am in opposition of requiring written consent for all aspects of the IEP. Again, coming from a small town, we have several parents who work at the factory here. They are not always available to come in for small changes/amendments and verbal consent is obtained via a phone meeting with them. Also, allowing partial consent will result in isolated decision making, which is not something the LEA is allowed to do, so why would would allow parents? The school district is responsible for FAPE. How can we ensure that if we allow parents to pick and choose? Passing this bill will only increase litigation against families, which will hurt the student and the relationships we work so hard to build with these families. Not only will relationships be strained, but there is a financial component for schools that will be hit with. In addition to this, we are in a unprecedented time where finding and retaining teachers, specifically in special education, is becoming more and more difficult. Asking them to do more and to keep track of what was agreed upon and what was not is even more time-consuming in an already packed schedule. I do not feel we need an additional form when we already have the PWN, This is redundant and just more paperwork. Our teachers are already feeling overwhelmed. Let's get back to letting them focus on student growth and maintaining relationships with families instead of adding more paperwork and causing division with families.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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COMMITTEE: Elementary and Secondary Education			
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: JENNIFER HIGHBARGER		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: plentifleur@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 11:33 AM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			

I oppose bill HB 477 as it does not support the full needs of all the areas a student may qualify for when being evaluated for a disability. If parents are allowed to pick and choose their services it will not ensure FAPE. "Partial Consent" also allows for isolated decision making and IEP decisions are team decisions. If passed it will impact the ability for special education staff and professionals to appropriately support the needs of the students and the ability to carry out the ethical requirements of their profession.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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COMMITTEE: Elementary and Secondary Education			
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: JENNIFER JOHNSON		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: jenjohn712@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 8:22 AM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			

A placement change should be allowed, without parental consent, when it is determined necessary by the student's IEP team or an administrator to protect the safety of students or staff. The IEP team, as a whole, is the decision maker.



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COMMITTEE: Elementary and Secondary Education		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: JENNIFER WELKER		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: jwelker@hannibal60.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 7:15 AM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.		

This proposition removes the concept of team in the IEP team. It is important that all views are considered, especially those of the professionals who are using data to drive their decisions. Allowing the power to be in the hands of only one person or unit threatens that the student will get what is best for them in the school setting.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: JENNY CURTIS		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: jcurtis@hannibal60.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 9:44 AM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

The parents are not seeing the data the educators are seeing. We are trained in this subject matter and I feel a team approach is best.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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COMMITTEE: Elementary and Secondary Education		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: JESSICA MAXWELL		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: jmaxwell@jr2mail.org	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 7:59 AM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.		

This bill would be detrimental to public schools, educators, and students with an IEP. As an educator for 19 years, I am confident that we have the best interest of students in mind. We strive to serve every child well. Many times parents are uninformed and having to have parental consent for every change within an IEP is not feasible. This would delay services necessary for a child. This takes away the knowledge school systems and educators hold. Changes in this bill will negatively impact students, educators, and schools.



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TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: JOANN HOBBS		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: jhobbs@blueeye.k12.mo.us	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 8:38 AM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

1. First it is stated in the proposal that: “If the parents and local educational agency fail to reach an agreement on the child’s individualized education program within ten business days but reach an agreement on certain IEP services or interim placement, the child’s current agreed upon IEP shall be amended to include such areas of agreement until the areas of disagreement are resolved, and the local educational agency and the parents shall include an addendum in the IEP that specifies the date by which the areas of disagreement shall be resolved. If the areas of disagreement are not resolved by the date specified in the addendum, the local educational agency or the parents may request a 30-dispute resolution option under subsection 7 of this section.”a. It has been clarified in the Missouri State Plan that there is no “interim” placement. This should be removed as it’s confusing. Years previous, there was such a thing in Missouri as an interim placement, but it was overused by educators. They were placing children in special education programs on an interim basis when they may not have truly been eligible or when it was believed necessary to remove a child who was misbehaving from the general education setting. These children may or may not have eventually met eligibility. This is not a practice we want to return to as it was not best for students. b. Working on an IEP amendment will become terribly confusing for both parents and special educators. You might have many things in an IEP not agreed upon and in multiple amendments, and other things in the IEP itself that are agreed upon. It will be hard to keep track of this. c. With the existing special education teacher shortage as it is, we worry this requirement of keeping track of additional amendments not agreed upon will lead to more special education teachers leaving the field, worsening the shortage and impacting the ability to provide services to children. Special education teachers have to track many things already and this would only add to the caseload. In smaller districts, some teachers have bigger caseloads and again, will only add to it.2. Second, a placement change should be allowed, without parental consent, when it is determined necessary by the student’s IEP team or an administrator to protect the safety of students or staff. It is the benefit of all: the IEP student, other students, and the faculty and staff. 3. Third, requiring a parental IEP consent when there is a reduction or addition of 25% or more is not in the best interest of the student. IEP teams in other states who have this requirement are careful to keep their calculations under 25% so as not to trigger this. This may interfere with the provision of FAPE. 4. Fourth, since school districts are responsible for developing and implementing IEPs that ensure FAPE (Free Appropriate Public Education), I have concerns about the feasibility of this new requirement if parents are allowed to consent to certain recommendations but not others. Parents should not be allowed to pick and choose what services they want for their child when the experts have determined what is necessary in delivering the appropriate special education services in the correct placement of students to ensure FAPE. 5. Fifth, allowing parents to make the decision on placements, removals, changes, additions, or reduction of services could be a hardship for students. The development of an IEP is a team decision made based

on data. LEAs have Federal and State guidelines they are required to follow. Parents refusing to provide consent could lead to students not being in the least restrictive environment or receiving the needed support to make progress. LEAs are Federally required to provide progress on the IEP to ensure FAPE is provided. This is not conducive to good instructional practices and could have a negative impact on students. 6. Sixth, allowing "partial consent" will result in isolated decision-making. At this time, IEP decisions are team decisions. The LEA cannot make isolated decisions, nor should the parents make them.7. Seventh, if parent visits to special education classrooms prior to placement are required to take place after regular school hours, it will require teachers to work outside their regular working hours. This also creates additional burdens on teachers and may lead them to leave the field of special education. It would also be outside of the regular school day and districts would have to compensate teachers for this time, adding additional costs.8. Eighth, requiring the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to adopt a parental consent form is redundant. There is currently one in place which is called Prior Written Notice. Legislation should not mandate forms and the content. 9. Ninth, I believe this bill will have negative impacts on students with disabilities. Aa. I have concerns that the outcome of this bill will increase litigation against families, which is not good for students. b. Managing multiple amendments within a student's IEP could become confusing and challenging, and have a negative impact on the instruction. c. The bill's emphasis on parental consent for specific IEP components raises concerns that parents might request additions that are not necessary for the student's progress, conflicting with the requirements to provide a free appropriate public education (FAPE).



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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BILL NUMBER: HB 477		DATE: 1/22/2025	
COMMITTEE: Elementary and Secondary Education			
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: JULIE JACOBSON		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: juliejacobson69@gmail.com		ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 8:14 AM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			

I wish to oppose to this bill in its entirety.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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BILL NUMBER: HB 477		DATE: 1/22/2025
COMMITTEE: Elementary and Secondary Education		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: JULIE JASPER		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: juliejasper@joplinschools.org	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 9:05 AM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

I am submitting this statement in opposition of HB 477. As an Assistant Director of Special Education, there are many parts of this bill that are very concerning. First, IEP teams are required to include parents and there are processes in place to ensure their ability to actively participate. The IEP team must ensure that FAPE is provided for the student. Parents having the ability to choose services directly impacts the school's ability to provide FAPE and creates a hostile environment for all parties who should be working together to meet the individual's needs. Second, as I am in a large school district, I have concerns about parents' ability to decline placement changes and not the services with those. We are blessed to have many options regarding placement for students; however, we are not able to provide every program at every building in our district. With a parent's option to veto part of an IEP team decision, our staffing issues would be a nightmare in trying to meet student needs. Staffing concerns are an additional area in which I am in opposition to this bill. We are in a teaching crisis and do not have enough certified special education teachers to fill our needed positions resulting in people being hired on substitute certification. The paperwork needs are already vast in special education, and this bill would require much more time and potential for paperwork nightmares with all the changes when a parent decides they no longer want a particular service. Teachers would leave the field in a much faster manner than we already see based on paperwork, the outside of school hours time commitment to meet all the federal deadlines regarding paperwork, and burn out that would result are too vast to ignore. The fiscal impact on districts is difficult to project, but would include extensive time for staff, potential increased litigation resulting in attorney fees and personnel costs, and teachers leaving the field requiring staffing changes that come with a fiscal cost. Finally, the negative impacts on students as a result of this bill would be extremely detrimental. Instruction will be impacted due to the need for continual meetings and paperwork, there will be an increase in litigation which negatively impacts students, and the provision of FAPE is no longer guaranteed if one member of the IEP team can veto parts of the IEP. Thank you for your consideration of my statement. Students are the reason I work in special education. I would be devastated to see their needs impacted because of legislation that does not take into account all of the things that I have mentioned.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: KAREN DORMEIER		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: dormeierk@foxc6.org	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 11:58 AM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.		

As a dedicated school administrator, I am committed to ensuring that every student, especially those with disabilities, receives the individualized support and services they need to thrive. It is with this commitment in mind that I write to express my strong opposition to the legislative proposal outlined in HB 477. While I understand the intention to streamline certain processes, this proposal introduces provisions that could seriously compromise the effectiveness of Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) and harm the collaborative partnership between schools and families. This legislation appears to be driven by a small group of parents and advocates who feel dissatisfied with the school system. However, rather than prioritizing the best interests of students, this bill threatens to create greater discord and reduced collaboration, particularly among a minority of parents who have concerns about their child's academic programming. There are already established measures in place to address situations where parents and school districts disagree. These existing processes provide a fair and impartial means to resolve disputes and ensure that the needs of the student remain the central focus. Introducing changes to these procedures would have a detrimental impact on children, educational agencies, and parents alike. I urge lawmakers to vote against House Bill 477. Approval of this bill will result in unintended and harmful consequences for all involved parties. The process of navigating disagreements between schools and parents is already complex and sensitive. This legislation would only heighten tensions and create additional obstacles, ultimately leading to negative outcomes for students, families, and educators. Outlined below are just a few of the specific concerns I would like to highlight related to House Bill 477. A change in placement should be allowed, without parental consent, when deemed necessary by the student's IEP team or a school administrator to safeguard the safety and well-being of students and staff. This year alone, I have had three staff members require medical treatment due to incidents involving physically aggressive behaviors from students. If this legislation were to pass, it would significantly hinder my ability to protect both my staff and other students affected by such behaviors. Furthermore, this raises a critical question: who will bear liability for the harm caused when school districts are rendered unable to protect their staff and students due to the constraints imposed by this legislation? This proposal risks creating a dangerous precedent that prioritizes procedural rigidity over the safety of those in our schools. The process of working on amendments under this proposed legislation would become exceedingly complex and cumbersome for both parents and special educators. It is foreseeable that multiple amendments could exist simultaneously, addressing various unresolved items, while other components of the IEP remain agreed upon within the original document. Managing such a fragmented approach would make it extraordinarily difficult to maintain clarity and consistency, potentially leading to confusion and errors in implementation. Given the current shortage of special education teachers, we are deeply concerned that the additional burden of tracking and managing unresolved amendments to IEPs will exacerbate this issue. The increased administrative demands and complexity introduced by this requirement could

prompt more special education professionals to leave the field. This would further worsen the existing shortage and significantly impact the ability of schools to provide essential services to children with disabilities. A change in placement should be permitted, without parental consent, when it is deemed necessary by the student's IEP team or a school administrator to ensure the safety and well-being of students and staff. This year alone, I have had three staff members require medical treatment due to physically aggressive behaviors from students. Passing this legislation would make it nearly impossible for me to protect my staff and the other students that are impacted by these physically aggressive behaviors. Who then does is liable for the harm committed when the district is unable to protect their staff and students as a result of this legislation?? Allowing parents to unilaterally decide on placements, removals, changes, additions, or reductions in services could create significant challenges for students. The development of an Individualized Education Program (IEP) is a collaborative process, grounded in data and informed by a team of professionals. Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) are bound by federal and state guidelines that ensure decisions are made in the best interest of the student. When parents withhold consent, it can result in students being placed in environments that are not the least restrictive or failing to receive the support necessary to make meaningful progress. LEAs are federally mandated to ensure that students make progress on their IEP goals to provide a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE). The inability to implement required services or placements due to withheld consent undermines this obligation, disrupts sound instructional practices, and risks negatively impacting students' educational outcomes. Resulting, again, in Districts being liable for services that House Bill 477 would prevent the district from providing. I have dedicated 19 years to the field of special education, serving as both a teacher and an administrator. Throughout this time, I have witnessed numerous changes and proposals for legislation. Never before have I felt compelled to voice my concerns regarding proposed legislation—until now. House Bill 477 poses a significant threat to the integrity of special education, and I feel it is my duty to speak out. This bill will not resolve the issues it aims to address. On the contrary, it will exacerbate conflict, foster a more combative environment, and increase legal liabilities for school districts. I urge you not to base your decision to support House Bill 477 on the voices of a select few advocating for such disruptive measures. Instead, I implore you to prioritize what is truly in the best interests of students by rejecting this legislative proposal in its entirety.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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BILL NUMBER: HB 477		DATE: 1/22/2025
COMMITTEE: Elementary and Secondary Education		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: KAREN MCKNIGHT		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: karenmcknight@nixaschools.net	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 10:19 AM

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Distinguished members of the legislature, I am a special education director and have been in that role for the past 12 years. I have experienced many IEP meetings, parent meetings, facilitated meetings and even mediation and due process over my tenure. I am writing to express serious concerns about HB 477 and its potential negative impacts on special education services in our state. This bill, while well-intentioned, would create significant challenges for school districts, educators, and ultimately the students we serve. The primary concerns with HB 477 include:

- Administrative and Financial Burden-** Each additional IEP meeting costs approximately \$800 in staff time and resources - some would be many more due to the extensive resources a student may require - this may or may not account for the lost service time to other students while attending multiple meetings- Special education teachers would require 15-16 additional hours per disputed IEP for paperwork and meetings. There is already plenty of additional paperwork in special education making it hard to recruit and retain teachers in this area.- Districts could face costs of \$90,000 per due process case- The total financial impact on districts could include substantial costs for additional staffing, training, legal fees, and compensatory services
- Educational Impact-** The proposed "interim placement" language conflicts with current Missouri State Plan guidelines and could lead to inappropriate placements- Managing multiple IEP amendments with partial agreements would create confusion and complicate service delivery- The requirement for parental consent on 25% or greater changes in services may lead to districts artificially limiting necessary adjustments to avoid triggering this threshold- The bill could interfere with districts' ability to provide Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)
- Staffing Concerns-** Additional administrative burden could worsen the existing special education teacher shortage - teacher shortage is already a significant problem at this point- Teachers would spend significantly more time on paperwork instead of instruction- The requirement for after-hours classroom visits would create additional strain on staff
- Implementation Challenges-** The proposed consent requirements could lead to fragmented decision-making rather than team-based approaches- Districts would struggle to maintain appropriate services across all buildings if parents consent to services but not placement changes- The new requirements would create complex record-keeping challenges for tracking partial agreements and multiple amendments
- Resource Allocation-** Larger districts would face significant challenges in providing all service options at every school- Additional costs for legal consultation, estimated at \$240/hour- Potential need for additional administrative staff (\$100,000 minimum per position) The fiscal impact of this legislation would be substantial. For example, a special education teacher with 17-19 students on a caseload (as an example in our district) could face multiple disputed IEPs, each requiring additional meetings, documentation, and potential legal intervention. This could lead to reduced instructional time and increased costs for districts.

In conclusion, while we support efforts to improve special education services, HB 477 would create unintended consequences that could negatively impact our ability to serve students effectively. I urge you to consider these concerns

and their potential impact on our educational system. Thank you for your consideration of this testimony.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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COMMITTEE: Elementary and Secondary Education			
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: KASHA OETINGER		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: koetinger@concordia.k12.mo.us	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 7:24 AM	
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			

This bill, which requires public schools to obtain and maintain written parental consent for initial placement, placement changes, or revisions to a student's Individualized Education Program (IEP), raises several concerns that make it problematic:

Potential Delays in Services: Requiring written parental consent for every adjustment to an IEP could cause significant delays in providing necessary support to students. If parents and schools disagree on even minor components, the implementation of agreed-upon services may be stalled, leaving students without critical interventions during the negotiation process.

Increased Administrative Burden: Mandating written consent and maintaining extensive documentation adds a layer of bureaucracy for schools, diverting resources and time away from direct student support. Educators and staff may face undue administrative challenges, especially in districts already grappling with limited resources.

Barrier to Timely Interventions: The stipulation that the current IEP remains unchanged unless all parties agree or a due process hearing occurs can result in outdated or insufficient services being provided to the child. This undermines the intent of the IEP, which is to adapt to the student's evolving needs.

Unnecessary Procedural Complexity: The requirement for parents to visit all proposed programs before implementation may be logistically challenging for families, particularly those with limited time, transportation, or other resources. This could further delay services and disproportionately impact families with fewer means.

Risk of Escalated Conflicts: Introducing due process hearings as part of the procedure when agreements cannot be reached may increase tensions between parents and schools. Such conflicts could erode trust and create adversarial relationships, negatively impacting the collaborative nature of IEP development.

While parental involvement is a vital component of special education, this bill imposes rigid procedural requirements that could hinder the flexibility and responsiveness necessary to meet students' individualized needs effectively. A more balanced approach that ensures timely and appropriate services while maintaining meaningful parental input would better serve students and families.



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TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: KATHY DANIEL		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: paulskat@yahoo.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 7:10 AM	

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Working on amendments will become terribly confusing for both parents and special educators. You might have many things in an IEP not agreed upon and in multiple amendments, and other things in the IEP itself that are agreed upon. It will be hard to keep track of this. With the existing special education teacher shortage as it is, we worry this requirement of keeping track of additional amendments not agreed upon will lead to more special education teachers to leave the field, worsening the shortage and impacting the ability to provide services to children. Allowing "partial consent" will result in isolated decision making. At this time, IEP decisions are team decisions. The LEA cannot make isolated decisions, nor should the parent make them. The writers of this bill have no idea what it is like to work with students and in an education setting. Parents are one member of the IEP team and no new decisions can be made without their input on the IEP. They already have avenues to file Due Process if they do not agree with what the districts are doing. The extra work that you will put on teachers will run them out the door, the expense you will put on districts will limit again the resources that school districts can give to students because of things like this.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: KAY WHITNEY		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: kay.whitn@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 12:45 PM
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I oppose bill HB 477 as it does not support the full needs of all the areas a student may qualify for when being evaluated for a disability. If parents are allowed to pick and choose their services it will not ensure FAPE. "Partial Consent" also allows for isolated decision making and IEP decisions are team decisions. If passed it will impact the ability for special education staff and professionals to appropriately support the needs of the students and the ability to carry out the ethical requirements of their profession.



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WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: KEITH D SMITH		PHONE NUMBER: 816-398-2148	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: KANSAS CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS (KCPS)		TITLE: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF LEGAL SERVICES AND GOVERNMENT	
ADDRESS: 2901 TROOST AVE.			
CITY: KANSAS CITY		STATE: MO	ZIP: 64109
EMAIL: ksmith5@kcpublicschools.org	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 8:23 AM	
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Kansas City Public School opposes this language /bill. Requiring "written or electronic consent" for placement changes or the discontinuation of services could delay or even prevent students from receiving appropriate educational supports and services if a parent is unable to respond in writing or unwilling to provide consent. Added Context: The parent consent guidelines outlined in the current Procedural Safeguards require districts to obtain parental consent before providing special education and related services or demonstrate reasonable efforts to obtain parent consent. Additionally, parents are a part of the IEP team. They have the right to participate in reviews of the IEPs and in any decision to change any aspects of the IEP, as well as receive Prior Written Notice for a change in placement.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: KIM MAUCK		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: kmauck@bsd124.org	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 8:45 AM
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“If the parents and local educational agency fail to reach an agreement on the child’s individualized education program within ten business days but reach an agreement on certain IEP services or interim placement, the child’s current agreed upon IEP shall be amended to include such areas of agreement until the areas of disagreement are resolved, and the local educational agency and the parents shall include an addendum in the IEP that specifies the date by which the areas of disagreement shall be resolved. If the areas of disagreement are not resolved by the date specified in the addendum, the local educational agency or the parents may request a 30 dispute resolution option under subsection 7 of this section.”It has been clarified in the Missouri State Plan there is no such thing as an “interim” placement. This should be removed as it’s confusing. Many years ago, there was such a thing in Missouri as an interim placement, but it was over-used by educators by placing children in special education programs on an interim basis when they may not have truly been eligible or when it was believe necessary to remove a child from the general education setting who was misbehaving. These children may or may not have eventually met eligibility. This is not a practice we want to return to as it was not best for students. Working on amendments will become terribly confusing for both parents and special educators. You might have manythings in an IEP not agreed upon and in multiple amendments, and other things in the IEP itself that are a greed upon. It will be hard to keep track of this. With the existing special education teacher shortage as it is, we worry this requirement of keeping track of additional amendments not agreed upon will lead to more special education teachers to leave the field, worsening the shortageand impacting the ability to provide services to children.A placement change should be allowed, without parental consent, when it is determined necessary by the student’s IEP team or an administrator to protect the safety of students or staff. Requiring a parental IEP consent when there is a reduction or addition of 25% or more is not in the best interest of the student. IEP teams in other states who have this requirement are careful to keep their calculations under 25% so as not to trigger this. This may interfere with the provision of FAPE.Since school districts are responsible for developing and implementing IEPs that ensure FAPE (Free Appropriate Public Education), we have concerns about the feasibility of this new requirement if parents are allowed to consent to certain recommendations but not others. Parents should not be allowed to pick and choose what services they want for their child when the experts have determined what is necessary in delivering the appropriate special education services in the correct placement of students to ensure FAPE. Allowing “partial consent” will result in isolated decision making. Atthis time, IEP decisions are team decisions. The LEA cannot make isolated decisions, nor should the parent make them.In larger districts, not all services are provided in every school. For example, a district may have a large number of elementary schools, so self-contained program s are strategically placed in select schools, not uniformly across allbuildings. A potential issue arises if a paren t consents to services but not to a change in placement—would this require that every school have all placement options available? If so, it could

lead to substantial costs, including the need for additional teachers, paraprofessionals, and space in schools, which are already in limited supply.



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: KIM MILLER		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: kim6395@hotmail.com		ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/21/2025 4:15 PM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: KIM TURNER		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: kturnersped33@gmail.com		ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 9:39 AM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

I am writing today to express my concerns with HB 477 = Special Education Records. I have been worked in the field of special education for 37 years. During that time, we have seen many changes to special education regulations, procedures, and records. The changes proposed in HB 477 create unnecessary hurdles for the provision of a free and appropriate education (FAPE) and excessive demands on special educators. Parents are an essential part of the IEP team, backed by parental rights and processes to protect those rights. Adding additional consent procedures is unnecessary and creates confusion, conflict, and the likelihood that students will not receive necessary services. Children most likely to be impacted are those that have the highest degree of need including children with Autism, emotional disturbances, severe cognitive delays or significant communication disorders. For instance, my district has one elementary classroom for students with severe Autism. While there are multiple elementary schools, the need for this level of services is appropriately small (fewer than 10 students). Children that require the services and staff with highly specialized training may be placed in that program although it is not their typical "home school." Making a move from their neighborhood/home school to this classroom would be a change in placement. If the parent refused consent, the district would be unable to provide FAPE, or at the very least unable to provide FAPE without the excessive cost of hiring and training additional staff to replicate for one child a program that is already in place. Of even greater concern is the very real likelihood that paperwork/compliance will increase. Time spent on documentation and meetings is often cited as a major factor in teachers leaving special education and the field of education in general. Increasing the time away from the classroom and instruction does not serve our children or our staff well. Please reconsider the parent consent portion, as proposed, in this bill.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: KIMBERLIE NOTHDURFT		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: knothdurft@richland.k12.mo.us	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 8:14 AM
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A placement for children should come from professionals and always be determined by what is the safest placement for the majority and how do we keep children safe. Service recommendations should also be left to the individuals. There are a reason professionals are included in the IEP meetings and throughout the evaluation process, this is to insure the child's needs are met. Parents are not experts in the areas of these specialized instruction services; therefore, why should they be the ultimate decider of what is and what is not needed for the children.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: KRISTEN GROMACKI		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: gromackk@smithville.k12.mo.us	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 11:53 AM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.		

As a process coordinator in special education, I find HB 477 especially troubling because It could delay critical services for students with disabilities by requiring extensive parental consent for all IEP changes, even minor adjustments. The added documentation requirements and rigid consent procedures impose significant administrative burdens on schools, potentially detracting from direct student support. Restricting parents' classroom observation to outside school hours limits their ability to make informed decisions. Additionally, the mandated consent form language may pressure parents and leave students without services if parents are uncertain. These changes could complicate established processes under federal IDEA guidelines, leading to confusion and disputes that hinder timely support for Missouri students.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: LAURA MASON		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: lmason@northmercer.k12.mo.us	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 3:15 PM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.		

It would be inherently more difficult to only be allowed to put into practice a portion of a students IEP instead of the IEP in its entirety as well as documenting each piece separately. Changing this will increase the already substantially large expectations of Special Education Teachers. Couple that factor with increasingly lower time slots allowed for Special Education Services in our students school days and you have a system that is not built on students achievement but rather on the preference of someone who is not an expert on the topic.



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: LEIGH GRUBER		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: lgruber@fortosage.net	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 8:12 AM
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This bill would create additional hoops that schools and parents would have to jump through to get students with disabilities necessary services. In situations where we do not have parents who participate in educational programming for their child, the school would be frozen and unable to provide the services they feel are necessary for the student to progress.



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: LESLIE HUSK		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: lesliehusk@nixaschools.net		ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 8:25 AM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			

I do not believe this is good for most parents or students. It can potentially result in multiple amendments which can be very confusing to parents. In addition, it would likely require additional meetings and requirements from working parents, many of which are currently overwhelmed with the requests made to them (IEP meetings, three-year eval meetings, IEP meetings after the 3 yr eval, parent-teacher conferences, and other meetings, as needed). This year, I requested a meeting with a parent (with 2 students in special ed) and she replied, that she had been to enough meetings and we should proceed without her and send the IEP home. This disappointed the team, knowing we still needed to meet regarding her other son. Aksi, Allowing "partial consent" would result in isolated decision-making. IEP decisions are team decisions. The LEA cannot make isolated decisions, nor should the parent make them. This bill sends a message that parents and teachers are not on the same team and that teachers cannot be trusted to propose changes that are good for students. This is detrimental to the collaborative, trusting relationship we are working to keep with our families. Most importantly, this bill is not good for kids. It is the responsibility of school districts to develop and implement IEPs that ensure FAPE (Free Appropriate Public Education) in which students receive the support they need to make progress on grade-level curriculum. The services that are proposed to parents are carefully selected to meet the individual needs of the child. If parents are allowed to pick and choose services, against the expert recommendations of the teacher, it would negatively impact the student's FAPE. Allowing parents to decide on placements, removals, changes, additions, or reduction of services could be a hardship for students. The development of an IEP is a team decision made based on data. Local Educational Agencies (LEA) have Federal and State guidelines they are required to follow. Parents refusing to provide consent could lead to students not being in the least restrictive environment or receiving the needed support to make progress. LEA's are Federally required to provide progress on the IEP to ensure FAPE is provided. This is not conducive to good instructional practices and could have a negative impact on students, delaying the services and support they need (or resulting in them not receiving it at all). In addition, there are times when placement changes are necessary to keep the student or other students safe. These changes should be allowed without parental consent due to the emergent nature of the situation. Overall, this bill does not benefit parents or students. Also, this is being proposed in a time when it is so difficult to find special education teachers to hire, to the extent we are hiring retired regular education teachers with no special education background! It is time to provide support to encourage people to go into the field of special education. Creating obstacles between teachers and families is not encouraging, for either the teacher or the parents and results in students not getting the appropriate instruction they need as individuals. Furthermore, requiring the DESE to adopt a parental consent form is redundant. There is currently one in place which is called Prior Written Notice. Legislation should not mandate forms or content.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: LISA DOYLE		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: lisadarlenedoyle@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 8:28 AM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.		

The requirements of this bill are costly, time-consuming, and redundant. We use the existing Prior Written Notice to inform parents of changes in service and placement and obtain parental consent for proposed actions. Due process procedures already exist which allow parents to contest decisions. This bill requires new forms and new processes to be developed. Approving parts, but not all of the IEP, which is developed and revised yearly with parent input, will make providing services to students confusing and cumbersome and increase paperwork demands that already overtax our special education teachers. With teacher shortages, we must take measures to keep teachers in the field, rather than drive them away with more complicated procedures that don't benefit students. Special education aims to provide specially designed instruction that will allow the child to progress on goals developed by the IEP team. Allowing parents to withhold services is not in the best interest of students. Requiring school districts to file due process cases against parents wastes taxpayer dollars and harms the relationships with parents that are so important in helping students succeed. Please do not approve this bill.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: LOREE PALS		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: lpals@leesville.k12.mo.us	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/21/2025 12:36 PM
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This bill will unduly hinder the education of my special education students. As some of you may be aware there has been an uptick of outbursts in the classroom. As educators we are trained to deescalate these or remove the student from the situation. As you may also know most parents may not agree with that decision. They do not have the training that we as educators have, so naturally they will not always agree with our decisions. By adding this provision on this bill it will hinder the ability of the educator to implement what is best for the student to achieve their goals for their education.



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: LORI		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: loriralph@ymail.com		ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 7:56 AM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

Dear Representative Oehlerking, As a special education professional with over 20 years of experience, I am gravely concerned about the implications of the proposed bill on our ability to effectively serve students with disabilities. The flexibility we currently have is crucial in tailoring services to meet the individual needs of these students. The requirements in this bill would severely limit that flexibility and could lead to significant challenges in providing appropriate support. From an administrative perspective, the process of amending Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) will become overly complicated. Parents and educators could end up navigating a maze of multiple amendments, creating confusion and potential conflict over what is agreed upon. This complexity will not only strain our resources but could also undermine the trust and collaboration between parents and educators. I urge you to consider the real-world impact this bill will have on the educators who dedicate themselves to supporting students with disabilities. These professionals need assurance that they have the backing of our elected officials to continue doing what is best for the children. Thank you for your attention to this critical matter. Sincerely, Lori Ralph



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TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: LYNN MAHAFFEY		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: flagtomo@yahoo.com		ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 7:47 AM

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As a retired special educator, I understand first hand the importance of developing an IEP for a student as a TEAM. This means that every team member has equal say as well as equal responsibility. Giving parents "options" not only muddies the waters, but adds more pressure and paperwork to the teachers already overwhelmed with paperwork and data tracking. We become teachers to work and build relationships with students and their families, HB 477 will put a wedge in that relationship with families. Across the United States, there is a very severe teacher shortage especially in special education, giving teachers less autonomy and more paperwork does not bode well in luring new teachers to the field nor keeping current specialists. I urge you all, please oppose HB477.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 477		DATE: 1/22/2025	
COMMITTEE: Elementary and Secondary Education			
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: MARY CRAWFORD		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: mcrawford@cameronschools.org	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 7:38 AM
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MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 477		DATE: 1/22/2025	
COMMITTEE: Elementary and Secondary Education			
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: MATT WHITEHEAD		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: whitehead_matt@hsdr3.org		ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 12:29 PM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			

As a dedicated school administrator, I am committed to ensuring that every student, especially those with disabilities, receives the individualized support and services they need to thrive. It is with this commitment in mind that I write to express my strong opposition to the legislative proposal outlined in House Bill 477. While I understand the intention to streamline certain processes, this proposal introduces provisions that could seriously compromise the effectiveness of Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) and harm the collaborative partnership between schools and families. This legislation appears to be driven by a small group of parents and advocates who feel dissatisfied with the school system. However, rather than prioritizing the best interests of students, this bill threatens to create greater discord and reduced collaboration, particularly among a minority of parents who have concerns about their child’s academic programming. There are already established measures in place to address situations where parents and school districts disagree. These existing processes provide a fair and impartial means to resolve disputes and ensure that the needs of the student remain the central focus. Introducing changes to these procedures would have a detrimental impact on children, educational agencies, and parents alike. I urge lawmakers to vote against House Bill 477. Approval of this bill will result in unintended and harmful consequences for all involved parties. The process of navigating disagreements between schools and parents is already complex and sensitive. This legislation would only heighten tensions and create additional obstacles, ultimately leading to negative outcomes for students, families, and educators. Outlined below are just a few of the specific concerns I would like to highlight related to House Bill 477. ? A change in placement should be allowed, without parental consent, when deemed necessary by the student’s IEP team or a school administrator to safeguard the safety and well-being of students and staff. This year alone, I have had three staff members require medical treatment due to incidents involving physically aggressive behaviors from students. If this legislation were to pass, it would significantly hinder my ability to protect both my staff and other students affected by such behaviors. Furthermore, this raises a critical question: who will bear liability for the harm caused when school districts are rendered unable to protect their staff and students due to the constraints imposed by this legislation? This proposal risks creating a dangerous precedent that prioritizes procedural rigidity over the safety of those in our schools. ? The process of working on amendments under this proposed legislation would become exceedingly complex and cumbersome for both parents and special educators. It is foreseeable that multiple amendments could exist simultaneously, addressing various unresolved items, while other components of the IEP remain agreed upon within the original document. Managing such a fragmented approach would make it extraordinarily difficult to maintain clarity and consistency, potentially leading to confusion and errors in implementation ? Given the current shortage of special education teachers, we are deeply concerned that the additional burden of tracking and managing unresolved amendments to IEPs will exacerbate this issue. The increased administrative demands and complexity introduced by this

requirement could prompt more special education professionals to leave the field. This would further worsen the existing shortage and significantly impact the ability of schools to provide essential services to children with disabilities. ? A change in placement should be permitted, without parental consent, when it is deemed necessary by the student's IEP team or a school administrator to ensure the safety and well-being of students and staff. This year alone, I have had three staff members require medical treatment due to physically aggressive behaviors from students. Passing this legislation would make it nearly impossible for me to protect my staff and the other students that are impacted by these physically aggressive behaviors. Who then does is liable for the harm committed when the district is unable to protect their staff and students as a result of this legislation? ? Allowing parents to unilaterally decide on placements, removals, changes, additions, or reductions in services could create significant challenges for students. The development of an Individualized Education Program (IEP) is a collaborative process, grounded in data and informed by a team of professionals. Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) are bound by federal and state guidelines that ensure decisions are made in the best interest of the student. When parents withhold consent, it can result in students being placed in environments that are not the least restrictive or failing to receive the support necessary to make meaningful progress. LEAs are federally mandated to ensure that students make progress on their IEP goals to provide a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE). The inability to implement required services or placements due to withheld consent undermines this obligation, disrupts sound instructional practices, and risks negatively impacting students' educational outcomes. Resulting, again, in Districts being liable for services that House Bill 477 would prevent the district from providing. I have dedicated 21 years to the field of special education, serving as both a teacher and an administrator. Throughout this time, I have witnessed numerous changes and proposals for legislation. Never before have I felt compelled to voice my concerns regarding proposed legislation—until now. House Bill 477 poses a significant threat to the integrity of special education, and I feel it is my duty to speak out. This bill will not resolve the issues it aims to address. On the contrary, it will exacerbate conflict, foster a more combative environment, and increase legal liabilities for school districts. I urge you not to base your decision to support House Bill 477 on the voices of a select few advocating for such disruptive measures. Instead, I implore you to prioritize what is truly in the best interests of students by rejecting this legislative proposal in its entirety.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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BILL NUMBER: HB 477		DATE: 1/22/2025
COMMITTEE: Elementary and Secondary Education		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: MELISSA ANN LUCAS		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: malucas@spsmail.org	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 7:25 AM
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As a coordinator of special education it is my job to assist teachers and parents when writing IEPs, holding meetings, creating amendments to IEPs etc. Allowing only parts of an IEP to be agreed upon will become a paperwork nightmare for parents and teachers. Human error will happen which can cause more discord between families and schools. It is our duty to ensure that children are receiving a Free and Appropriate Public Education, adding more paperwork to the mix would hinder this from happening. As you may or may not be aware, there is a teacher shortage in this nation, specifically special education teachers. One of the many reasons they leave the profession is the amount of paperwork they are expected to complete yearly. Please reconsider this bill so we can continue to support students in their least restrictive environments.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: MELISSA CONLEY		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: calm.md@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 10:12 AM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

A student’s individualized education program (IEP) Team consists of the individuals from the district, which we will call experts, the parents, and sometimes the student. The Team can also include additional members, which may be outside experts (i.e., medical professionals, educational lawyers, or advocates) invited by the parents. The goal of this group is to develop an IEP that meets the individualized educational needs of the student based upon data and input from the Team members. Currently when consensus cannot be reached the district has the final say. This final say only comes after the Team, which includes input from the parents, have thoroughly discussed the options presented to the Team. The reason the district gets the final say is because they are the experts that have firsthand knowledge of the student’s educational needs because they are present in that educational setting. When the parent disagrees with this determination, they have the ability to take action voicing their disagreement through the dispute resolution process outlined in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). You are removing IEP Team consensus should you pass this bill which allows the parents, the non-educational expert who are not present to see how the student functions in the educational setting, to dictate what can and cannot be implemented in the student’s IEP. Therefore, denying the student a free appropriate public education (FAPE). Additionally, if passed this bill will create additional discord amongst the student’s IEP Team. Furthermore, when you allow the parents to dictate which parts of the student’s IEP can be implemented you create additional work for the district to track which parts of the IEP can and cannot be implemented and create confusion amongst the educational staff responsible for implementing the student’s IEP. Then should the parents or another individual file a complaint it creates additional confusion as to which parts of the IEP are being implemented. This bill will not reduce the number of dispute resolution complaints filed, instead it is likely to increase the numbers because districts, as the educational experts, will be forced to file due process complaints in order to ensure it meets their obligations under IDEA to provide the student with FAPE. Now let’s talk about the fiscal impact this proposed bill would have on a district. Have you ever sat in on an IEP meeting? It isn’t a simple half hour to hour long meeting. These meetings on average can take between two to three hours to develop an IEP that meets a student’s individualized needs even longer if there is dissent. During that time, the district is having to find substitute teachers to cover for special education teachers and general education teachers. So now the district is paying not only the teachers, but they are also paying for extra people to cover the staff who are being pulled away to attend meetings. Should you pass this bill the number of meetings district staff members have to attend to develop an IEP will increase if the district is required to hold multiple long meetings to reach 100% consensus. This takes teachers, who are certified specialists, from their classrooms and replaces them with a temporary individual who is not able to provide the same level of instruction that the teacher would provide. Therefore, disrupting the student’s ability to make progress and achieve success. Don’t forget you have also now increased the number of due

process complaints that have been filed because the districts have the obligation under IDEA to ensure the student is provided with FAPE. A due process hearing is the most adversarial dispute resolution option under IDEA. It will require hours of prep work with an attorney prior to the due process hearing. Then at the due process hearing, which on average is three days, all the district staff members that will have to testify will need to be available the entire length of the due process hearing because they won't know when they will be called in to provide their testimony. So now the district is paying not only for multiple substitutes to cover the staff at the due process hearing they are also having to pay attorney fees. Is this committee willing to find the revenue detailed below the districts will require should they pass this proposed bill?

Additional IEP meetings would need to be scheduled o Potential Impact:?

One 3-hour IEP meeting with staff: • Special Education Teacher (SpEd) \$35/hour • General Education Teacher(s) (Gen Ed) \$35/hour • LEA Representative Principal \$50/hour • Speech/Language \$35 • OT \$35/hour • PT\$35/hour ? Substitute teachers \$30/hour or pay staff within the building to cover during planned times \$36/hour extra duty. ? Subs for meeting, potential preparation time and/or paying for lost plan time if recurring. Perhaps also planning meetings.o Potential Impact on District's Operating Budget:?

Gen Ed \$105 ? SpEd \$105 ? Principal \$150 ? Related Services \$210 ? Sub \$90 ? Extra duty \$108 • Minimum Total: approximately \$800 per IEP meeting held. o More often than not you have multiple spec ed teachers, gen ed teachers, and related services staff present at an IEP meeting. So \$800 is on the very low end of the scale. • Special Education teachers spend additional hours with paperwork - keeping track of all of the consents/amendments o Potential Impact:?

SpEd teacher per hour: rough estimate might be • SpEd Teacher Salary is \$50,000 and he/she might have 3 (or more) out of a caseload of 16 parents who will not consent to parts of the drafted IEP. • Estimates: • Hourly Rate \$35 • 2 hours to review at least 2 IEPs • 1 hour to make a list of goals to address from multiple IEPs • 5 hours to prepare for additional IEP meetings to come to Cost \$576 per case manager for additional IEP paperwork agreement with the parent • 1-2 hours to hold an additional IEP meeting. • Total number of hours of instruction another student isn't getting or that a sub is paid. 15-16 hours per situation. o Potential Impact on District's Operating Budget:?

Cost \$576 per case manager for additional IEP paperwork • Special Education Teachers resign/retire/leave the field because they are overwhelmed with keeping up with several IEPs and trying to work through what parent wants and what school proposeso Potential Impact:?

Hiring a new special education teacher Contract for a special education teacher Paying for compensatory services due to lack of staff Price of hiring and inducting a new teacher?o Potential Impact on District's Operating Budget:?

\$3,500 - \$25,000 compensatory/private services if teacher is not found ? \$72,000 is the approximate cost to hire a new teacher • Extra IEP meetings might keep teachers away from instruction or keep them beyond their contracted hours. o Gen Ed teachers kept from their class o Building Admin away from supervisory, safety, and other dutieso Potential Impact:?

Cost = priceless! ? The impact on lost instruction will be significant from both attending meetings and preparing for meetings. • Gen Ed Teacher \$35/hr • Special Ed Teacher \$35/hr • (2) Related Service \$35/hr providers (might not get a sub, but then services for students are missed) • (2) Admin \$50/houro Potential Impact on District's Operating Budget:?

800 per 3-hour IEP per student ? Teachers caseload average 18 students = \$14,400 ? That is if they have to review each IEP just once. Rarely would one extra IEP get everyone to a consensus • Due Process. o Potential Impact:?

Plan for 3 full days for all parties to be out of the classroom? Districts have had to pay parent attorney fees to settle. \$400/hour o Potential Impact on District's Operating Budget:?

\$90,000 for due process (6 months to hearing) ? Parents' lawyer min \$9600, that's just for them being at the meeting. • Mediation. o Potential Impact:?

Plan for 1 full day for the IEP Team to be out of the classroom? 3 subs (if found)? Administrators away from their building ? Lack of Instruction = pricelesso Potential Impact on District's Operating Budget:?

At least \$1600 for one day IEP Team to be out of the building • Facilitated IEP meetingo Potential Impact:?

Plan for 1 full day for the IEP Team to be out of the classroom for each situation with partial agreement on an IEP. Subs will be needed for • Gen Ed Teacher \$35/hr • Special Ed Teacher \$35/hr • (2) Related Service \$35/hr providers (might not get a sub, but then services for students are missed) • (2) Admin \$50/houro Potential Impact on District's Operating Budget:?

At least \$1600 at a minimum • Lawyer fees for navigating procedures the nightmare created with the passing of this billo Potential Impact:?

District may contact an attorney at \$240/houro Potential Impact on District's Operating Budget:?

Minimum cost of \$4800 • Special education directors and coordinators assisting case managers in navigating paperwork and changes in law/processo Potential Impact:?

½ day training ? Subs for teachers/coverage from other teachers in the building/ Admin covering classes if subs cannot be found \$30/hour ? With hours of follow-up to make sure implementation of the IEP is correct ? Potentially



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: MELISSA SHORT		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: shortm@troy.k12.mo.us	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 10:08 AM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.		

School districts in MO are responsible for creating and implementing special education IEPs with related services that ensure each student is receiving FAPE. While parents are a required and integral part of the education process, they are part of a team. The team consists of a multidisciplinary group of highly educated and trained individuals. By allowing parents to make sole decisions in regards to services and placement, we would shut out the remaining experts on the team. School districts have federal requirements to follow to ensure FAPE is being followed. Parents refusing to provide consent could lead to students not being in the least restrictive environment or receiving the needed support to make progress. Another grave concern is the amount of additional time educators would be required to spend outside of their regular working hours to accommodate parent visits to special education classrooms prior to placement. The state already faces a severe shortage of educators; this Bill creates additional burdens on teachers and may lead them to leave the field of special education. Our students would further suffer if additional qualified, caring educators leave our schools.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: MICHELLE BUTLER		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: 725butler@att.net	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 12:57 PM

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Working from multiple amendments will become confusing and keeping track of all the dates for each amendment either agreed upon or not. If an agreement can't be made, the Missouri state medication program should be utilized. It is very effective in resolving the disagreements between parents and districts to determine a specialized program to meet the student's needs in the least restrictive environment.



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: NANCY GOODWIN		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: nkgoodwin73@gmail.com		ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 11:11 AM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

As an educator with 29 years of experience in special education, including 20 years as the special education director in my district, I have significant concerns regarding Missouri HB 477. In our district, we are deeply committed to providing high-quality educational programs for all students, particularly those with individualized education plans (IEPs). Our approach is collaborative; we work closely with parents to develop and implement these plans. While it is not uncommon for differences of opinion to arise between parents and our team, we prioritize constructive dialogue to reach a mutually beneficial compromise without ever compromising the educational needs of our students. In my experience, we have successfully navigated these disagreements through education and open communication, having only resorted to facilitated IEPs once and mediation twice in two decades. I wholeheartedly support parental rights and advocacy; however, I am concerned that the passage of this bill would create significant logistical challenges for school districts and educators. In a profession already facing difficulties in retaining quality teachers, this legislation could exacerbate the situation, leading to an even greater exodus of skilled educators who are crucial for our students' success. While it is commendable that parents advocate for their children, there are instances where expectations may not align with what is feasible or realistic within available resources. Granting parents complete control over every aspect of the IEP process, with the possibility of due process intervening without district agreement, would not only hinder the timely delivery of essential services but would more importantly jeopardize the educational progress of students who need support. Ultimately, this could leave students at a disadvantage, falling further behind as we navigate bureaucratic delays.



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: NICOLE HUBBARD		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: nicolehubbard23@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 11:03 AM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			

I have been a special educator for 20 years. DESE has created documents that ensure parent participation in IEP meetings and team decisions. Forcing the schools to adhere to a consent /no consent/ or partial consent does not work in the best interest of students. We have timelines in place and waiting on full consent before putting a new IEP in place will cause schools to be unable to meet timelines. The addition of this piece is not important as parents, that are disagreeing with an IEP team decision has the right to request a meeting at any time for the team to revisit any areas of concern.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: NICOLE POTTER		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: npotter@nfranklin.k12.mo.us	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 9:36 AM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.		

A placement change should be allowed, without parental consent, when it is determined necessary by the student's IEP team or an administrator to protect the safety of students or staff. Since school districts are responsible for developing and implementing IEPs that ensure FAPE (Free Appropriate Public Education), we have concerns about the feasibility of this new requirement if parents are allowed to consent to certain recommendations but not others. Parents should not be allowed to pick and choose what services they want for their child when the experts have determined what is necessary in delivering the appropriate special education services in the correct placement of students to ensure FAPE. Requiring the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to adopt a parental consent form is redundant. There is currently one in place which is called Prior Written Notice. Legislation should not mandate forms and the content. We believe this bill will have negative impacts on students with disabilities. a. We have concerns the outcome of this bill will increase litigation against families, which is not good for students. b. Managing multiple amendments within a student's IEP could become confusing and challenging, and have a negative impact on the instruction. c. The bill's emphasis on parental consent for specific IEP components raises concerns that parents might request additions that are not necessary for the student's progress, conflicting with the requirements to provide a free appropriate public education (FAPE)



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: NICOLE STURMS		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: nc.carleton@hotmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 8:55 AM
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TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: PAMELA SNIDER		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: psnider@osceola.k12.mo.us	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 10:27 AM

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The district struggle to get parent participation as is. If we are required to receive more signatures it stop our teaching time to schedule, meet, and sign these documents. We are spending way too much of our time on paperwork in a day as it is please stop adding more work for our teachers.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: PARKS BOESCHEN		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: parks.boeschen@raypec.org	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 11:48 AM
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Allowing parents to make the decision on placements, removals, changes, additions, or reduction of services could be a hardship on students. The development of an IEP is a team decision made based on data . LEA's have Federal and State guidelines they are required to follow. Parents refusing to provide consent could lead to students not being in the least restrictive environment or receiving the needed support to make progress. LEA's are Federally required to provide progress on the IEP to ensure FAPE is provided. This is not conducive to good instructional practices and could have a negative impact on students. If parent visits to special education classrooms prior to placement are required, this will have to take place after regular school hours. It will require teachers to work outside their regular working hours. This also creates additional burdens on teachers and may lead them to leave the field of special education.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: PHILIP RALPH		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: pralph8974@yahoo.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 10:29 AM
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This plan will greatly tax an already shorthanded workforce and will do more harm than good.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: RACHAEL HARRIS		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: rharris@rolla31.org	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 7:44 AM

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1. "If the parents and local educational agency fail to reach an agreement on the child's individualized education program within ten business days but reach an agreement on certain IEP services or interim placement, the child's current agreed upon IEP shall be amended to include such areas of agreement until the areas of disagreement are resolved, and the local educational agency and the parents shall include an addendum in the IEP that specifies the date by which the areas of disagreement shall be resolved. If the areas of disagreement are not resolved by the date specified in the addendum, the local educational agency or the parents may request a 30 dispute resolution option under subsection 7 of this section." a. It has been clarified in the Missouri State Plan there is no such thing as an "interim" placement. This should be removed as it's confusing. Many years ago, there was such a thing in Missouri as an interim placement, but it was over-used by educators by placing children in special education programs on an interim basis when they may not have truly been eligible or when it was believe necessary to remove a child from the general education setting who was misbehaving. These children may or may not have eventually met eligibility. This is not a practice we want to return to as it was not best for students. b. Working on amendments will become terribly confusing for both parents and special educators. You might have many things in an IEP not agreed upon and in multiple amendments, and other things in the IEP itself that are agreed upon. It will be hard to keep track of this. c. With the existing special education teacher shortage as it is, we worry this requirement of keeping track of additional amendments not agreed upon will lead to more special education teachers to leave the field, worsening the shortage and impacting the ability to provide services to children. 2. A placement change should be allowed, without parental consent, when it is determined necessary by the student's IEP team or an administrator to protect the safety of students or staff. 3. Requiring a parental IEP consent when there is a reduction or addition of 25% or more is not in the best interest of the student. IEP teams in other states who have this requirement are careful to keep their calculations under 25% so as not to trigger this. This may interfere with the provision of FAPE. 4. Since school districts are responsible for developing and implementing IEPs that ensure FAPE (Free Appropriate Public Education), we have concerns about the feasibility of this new requirement if parents are allowed to consent to certain recommendations but not others. Parents should not be allowed to pick and choose what services they want for their child when the experts have determined what is necessary in delivering the appropriate special education services in the correct placement of students to ensure FAPE. 5. In larger districts, not all services are provided in every school. For example, a district may have a large number of elementary schools, so self-contained programs are strategically placed in select schools, not uniformly across all buildings. A potential issue arises if a parent consents to services but not to a change in placement—would this require that every school have all placement options available? If so, it could lead to substantial costs, including the need for additional teachers, paraprofessionals, and space in schools, which are already in limited supply. 6. Allowing

parents to make the decision on placements, removals, changes, additions, or reduction of services could be a hardship on students. The development of an IEP is a team decision made based on data. LEA's have Federal and State guidelines they are required to follow. Parents refusing to provide consent could lead to students not being in the least restrictive environment or receiving the needed support to make progress. LEA's are Federally required to provide progress on the IEP to ensure FAPE is provided. This is not conducive to good instructional practices and could have a negative impact on students.

7. Allowing "partial consent" will result in isolated decision making. At this time, IEP decisions are team decisions. The LEA cannot make isolated decisions, nor should the parent make them.

8. If parent visits to special education classrooms prior to placement are required to take place after regular school hours, it will require teachers to work outside their regular working hours. This also creates additional burdens on teachers and may lead them to leave the field of special education.

9. Requiring the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to adopt a parental consent form is redundant. There is currently one in place which is called Prior Written Notice. Legislation should not mandate forms and the content.

10. We believe this bill will have negative impacts on students with disabilities.

a. We have concerns the outcome of this bill will increase litigation against families, which is not good for students.

b. Managing multiple amendments within a student's IEP could become confusing and challenging, and have a negative impact on the instruction.

c. The bill's emphasis on parental consent for specific IEP components raises concerns that parents might request additions that are not necessary for the student's progress, conflicting with the requirements to provide a free appropriate public education (FAPE).

11. Below is a charge with possible Fiscal impact to districts if this bill is passed. Bills are sent to districts to determine Fiscal impact, but districts struggle understanding special education and the costs that might take place if the bill is passed. Therefore, we were able to pull this together for your use:

Events that could happen if the bill is passed in 2024-25 SY? What is the potential impact on the District? What is the potential impact on the operating budget of the District? Additional IEP meetings would need to be scheduled

One 3-hour IEP meeting with staff:
Special Education Teacher \$35/hour
General Education Teacher(s) \$35/hour
LEA Representative Principal \$50/hour
Speech/Language \$35 OT \$35/hour
PT\$35/hour Substitute teachers \$30/hour or pay staff within the building to cover during planned times \$36/hour extra duty Subs for meeting, potential preparation time and/or paying for lost plan time if recurring. Perhaps also planning meetings. Gen ed \$105 Spec Ed \$105 Principal \$150 Related Services \$210 Sub \$90 Extra duty \$108 Minimum Total: approximately \$800 per IEP meeting held

Special Education teachers spend additional hours with paperwork - keeping track of all of the consents/amendments
Special Ed teacher per hour This is rough to estimate but a guess might be: SpEd Teacher Salary is \$50,000 and he/she might have 3 (or more) out of a caseload of 16 parents who will not consent to parts of the drafted IEP. Estimates: ? Hourly Rate \$35 ? 2 hours to review at least 2 IEPs ? 1 hour to make a list of goals to address from multiple IEPs ? 5 hours to prepare for additional IEP meetings to come to Cost \$576 per case manager for additional IEP paperwork agreement with the parent ? 1-2 hours to hold an additional IEP meeting. ? Total number of hours of instruction another student isn't getting or that a sub is paid. 15-16 hours per situation. Special Education Teachers resign/retire/leave the field because they are overwhelmed with keeping up with several IEPs and trying to work through what parent wants and what school proposes Hiring a new special education teacher Contract for a special education teacher Paying for compensatory services due to lack of staff Price of hiring and inducting a new teacher? \$3,500 - \$25,000 compensatory/private services if teacher is not found \$72,000 is the approximate cost to hire a new teacher Extra IEP meetings might keep teachers away from instruction. Gen Ed teachers kept from their class Building Admin away from supervisory, safety, and other duties Cost = priceless! The impact on lost instruction will be significant from both attending meetings and preparing for meetings. ? Gen Ed Teacher \$35/hr ? Special Ed Teacher \$35/hr ? (2) Related Service \$35/hr providers (might not get a sub, but then services for students are missed) ? (2) Admin \$50/hour \$800 per 3-hour IEP per student Teachers caseload average 18 students = \$14,400 That is if they have to review each IEP just once. Rarely would one extra IEP get everyone to a consensus Due Process Plan for 3 full days for all parties to be out of the classroom Districts have had to pay parent attorney fees to settle. \$400/hour \$90,000 for due process (6 months to hearing) Parents' lawyer min \$9600, that's just for them being at the meeting. Mediation Plan for 1 full day for the IEP team to be out of the At least \$1600 for one day of IEP team out of the building classroom 3 subs (if found) Administrators away from their building Lack of instruction (priceless!) Facilitated IEP Plan for 1 full day out of the classroom for all team members for each situation with partial agreement on an IEP. Subs will be needed for: ? Gen Ed Teacher \$35/hr ? Special Ed Teacher \$35/hr ? (2) Related Service \$35/hr providers (might not get a sub, but then services for students are missed) ? (2) Admin \$50/hour \$1600 per day of IEP Lawyer fees for navigating procedures District may contact an attorney at \$240/hour Min of 20 hours= \$4800 Special education directors and coordinators assisting case managers in navigating paperwork and changes in law/process ½ day training Subs for teachers/coverage from other teachers in the building/ Admin covering classes if subs cannot be found \$30/hour With hours of follow-up to make sure

implementation of the IEP is correct **Additional staff would possibly need to be hired to handle additional paperwork, coverage, etc. \$100,000 min for additional staff \$30/hour for sub per staff District forced to file due process to meet FAPE \$90,000 per case A scenario with possible fiscal impacts: A special education teacher has 15 students. The teacher will need to hold an IEP meeting for all 15 students. At each IEP apparent according to this law the parent would need to consent to parts of the IEP. Let's say at one IEP the parent does not consent to one part of the IEP. A form would need to be created and filled out for each area the parent does not agree with. At this time the team: 1. could reconvene at a later date to come to a resolution. 2. The team could decide to file a due process because a child would not receive FAPE if the changes were not made. 3. The rest of the IEP would be implemented. This means a teacher would have the ongoing IEP that was agreed upon, not implementing what the parents do not agree on with the new forms. The amount of time and record keeping of what was agreed with and what was not agreed with is overwhelming. The hours that special Ed teachers would need to keep track of what is agreed upon and what is not is time-consuming. Instead of coming to a consensus and using the current PWN (prior written notice) a new form would need to be created.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 477		DATE: 1/22/2025	
COMMITTEE: Elementary and Secondary Education			
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: RACHEL BULLOCK		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: rib0329@gmail.com		ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 9:19 AM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

I have worked in the field of special education for almost 20 years. I am also the parent of 2 children with developmental disabilities. Therefore, I have been a part of the special education process both professionally and personally. The rights of parents are extremely clear and well regulated under IDEA law, Missouri compliance indicators, and Local Compliance Plans. Parental consent on IEPs is redundant and unnecessary, as their rights allow for 10 days to consider any change or they may file for their due process rights. Any change made by a team is already documented on a Prior Written Notice. To implement anything immediately, requires their consent already. Otherwise, the parent has 10 days to notify the team they do not agree. If the team cannot come to an agreement on the changes that prompted the Prior Written Notice, it is imperative that they follow through with these well-outlined rights, rather than teams being in a position of cherry-picked services. Actually, when a parent does not agree, it further prompts the team to work together to come to a reasonable consensus. By requiring parental consent, it appears that legislation wants to give parents the ultimate decision, which is not the guidance of IDEA. IDEA implores a multidisciplinary team to create a plan that allows a student to access the curriculum AND make progress. If a parent does not agree, the teams need to work together for a solution, not be in a position of a parent simply blocking changes that are typically recommended based on data and other quality information sources. The process for special education is well outlined by current compliance indicators and case law. Legislation does not need to mandate additional processes and form content for special education. This bill could increase due process filings from school districts against parents that block necessary services for their child or worse, could lead to parents revoking consent for special education in full, which impacts the child's growth and development. Please block this proposed change and allow the current laws and compliance procedures to do what they were designed to do - facilitate team decisions.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 477		DATE: 1/22/2025	
COMMITTEE: Elementary and Secondary Education			
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: REBECCA RAINBOLT		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: brainbolt@ssdmo.org	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 2:10 PM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			

Allowing parents to make the decision on placements, removals, changes, additions, or reduction of services could be a hardship on students. The development of an IEP is a team decision made based on data. LEA's have Federal and State guidelines they are required to follow. Parents refusing to provide consent could lead to students not being in the least restrictive environment or receiving the needed support to make progress. LEA's are Federally required to provide progress on the IEP to ensure FAPE is provided. This is not conducive to good instructional practices and could have a negative impact on students.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 477		DATE: 1/22/2025
COMMITTEE: Elementary and Secondary Education		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: REBECCA VANCOUR		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: rvancour@mc-wildcats.org	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 8:26 AM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.		

Since school districts are responsible for developing and implementing IEPs that ensure FAPE (Free Appropriate Public Education), we have concerns about the feasibility of this new requirement if parents are allowed to consent to certain recommendations but not others. Parents should not be allowed to pick and choose what services they want for their child when the experts have determined what is necessary in delivering the appropriate special education services in the correct placement of students to ensure FAPE.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 477		DATE: 1/22/2025	
COMMITTEE: Elementary and Secondary Education			
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: ROBYN HOLDMEYER		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: holdmeyerr@unionrx.org		ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 6:57 AM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			

To whom it may concern, I am writing to express my strong opposition to HB 477. This proposed legislation poses significant concerns that could negatively impact all special education teachers, parents, and students. If this bill passes it would cause additional IEP meetings for all team members. It would also mean that special education teachers to spend additional hours in meetings and paperwork, which would cause districts to pay more or cause teachers to work on their own time without pay. Some special educators may even choose to resign/retire/leave the field of education because of the overwhelming paperwork and hours spent on the IEP. Extra IEP meetings/longer meetings would also cause special educators and general educators to step away from providing direct instruction that the students require in order to make progress. HB 477 can even force districts to file for due process and additional lawyer fees. HB 477 presents challenges by for all team members within an IEP team, which could have long-term consequences for our community. Instead of advancing inclusive and effective solutions, this bill may hinder growth and accessibility for those who need it most. I urge you to consider the voices of those directly affected and to oppose HB 477 in favor of policies that support fairness, inclusivity, and progress. We must work together to find solutions that serve all individuals equitably and uphold the values that strengthen our community. Thank you for your time and attention to this important matter. Sincerely, Robyn Holdmeyerholdmeyerr@unionrx.org



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 477		DATE: 1/22/2025	
COMMITTEE: Elementary and Secondary Education			
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: ROBYN L PUMMILL		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: robypummill@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 8:22 AM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			

with the existing special education teacher shortage as it is, I worry this requirement of keeping track of additional amendments not agreed upon will lead to more special education teachers to leave the field, worsening the shortage and impacting the ability to provide services to children.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

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COMMITTEE: Elementary and Secondary Education		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: ROCHELLE BIRK		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: rbirk@cpsk12.org	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/21/2025 9:26 PM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.		

With a parent making this decision it takes out the team approach and professional options of the educators/specialist. This gives all the power to one individual which is a set up for parents strong arming teachers and school districts. In a large school district it is not reasonable for a district wide classrooms to be located in 26+ elementary buildings. Districts already have a hard time staffing and having space. Please say no to this bill and keep teams working together and not against one another.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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BILL NUMBER: HB 477		DATE: 1/22/2025	
COMMITTEE: Elementary and Secondary Education			
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: SARAH GREGORY		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: sgregory@phr3.org	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 8:20 AM	
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			

Dear Members of the Committee, Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on behalf of Missouri's special education professionals regarding HB 477. As the Director of Special Education for [District/Organization Name], I am deeply concerned about the implications of this legislation for students with disabilities, their families, and the educators who serve them. While I respect the intent of ensuring robust parental involvement in special education decisions, HB 477 introduces provisions that would have unintended and detrimental consequences. Below, I outline the primary concerns regarding this proposed legislation.

- Interim Placements and Amendments** The provision in HB 477 allowing for "interim placements" until disputes over IEPs are resolved is problematic for several reasons:
 - Confusion and Misapplication:** The Missouri State Plan does not recognize "interim" placements, and for good reason. Historically, interim placements were overused, leading to inappropriate special education placements and delays in determining actual eligibility. This practice was harmful to students and does not align with best practices in special education.
 - Administrative Burden:** Tracking multiple amendments for areas of agreement versus disagreement within an IEP would create significant confusion for both parents and educators. The potential for multiple, overlapping amendments would complicate the delivery of services and increase the likelihood of errors, ultimately impacting students' education.
 - Staffing Impact:** With an existing special education teacher shortage, the added administrative burden of managing and documenting numerous amendments will exacerbate teacher burnout and attrition, further reducing the capacity to serve students.
- Placement Decisions to Ensure Safety** HB 477 does not adequately address situations where immediate placement changes are necessary to protect the safety of students or staff. Current guidelines allow for IEP teams or administrators to make such decisions based on data and best practices. Requiring parental consent in these urgent situations could delay necessary action, putting everyone involved at risk.
- 25% Threshold for Service Changes** The proposed requirement for parental consent when there is a reduction or addition of 25% or more to services is concerning:
 - Manipulation of Calculations:** In other states with similar requirements, IEP teams often avoid triggering the 25% threshold, which can result in suboptimal service delivery.
 - Interference with FAPE:** This provision may delay necessary adjustments to services, hindering the provision of a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) as required under federal law.
- Feasibility of Partial Consent** Allowing parents to consent to certain IEP components while rejecting others undermines the collaborative nature of the IEP process:
 - Team Decision-Making:** IEPs are developed by a team of professionals who rely on data to determine the appropriate services and placement for the child. Allowing parents to unilaterally reject recommendations compromises this process and may result in inappropriate services or placements.
 - Compliance Challenges:** School districts are legally responsible for ensuring FAPE. If parents can pick and choose which recommendations to consent to, districts may struggle to fulfill their legal obligations, potentially leading to increased litigation and delays in service delivery.

Logistical and Financial Strain on Larger DistrictsIn larger districts, services are not available at every school. For example, self-contained programs are strategically placed to maximize resources. If parents consent to services but not to a necessary change in placement, districts may face:

Substantial Costs: Expanding all placement options to every school would require significant investments in staffing, training, and facilities.

Reduced Efficiency: Centralizing specialized programs ensures high-quality services. Diluting these resources across all schools could lead to inconsistent implementation and lower-quality support.

6. Negative Impacts on StudentsUltimately, this bill risks creating several negative outcomes for students with disabilities:

Instructional Challenges: Managing multiple amendments within an IEP would complicate the implementation of services, potentially disrupting instruction and progress monitoring.

Litigation Increase: The emphasis on parental consent for specific IEP components could lead to more disputes and litigation, diverting resources away from students.

Conflicts with FAPE: Allowing parents to request unnecessary additions to IEPs may conflict with the team's obligation to provide FAPE and could result in services that do not align with the student's actual needs.

7. Parental Visits Outside Regular HoursRequiring parental visits to special education classrooms to occur after regular school hours places an additional burden on special education teachers. This mandate would necessitate extra compensation and time, further straining a workforce already experiencing significant shortages. Such policies risk driving more educators out of the field, exacerbating staffing challenges.

8. Redundancy of Parental Consent FormsThe bill's requirement for the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to adopt a specific parental consent form is unnecessary. The existing Prior Written Notice process already fulfills this purpose. Mandating additional forms and processes would add redundant layers of bureaucracy without improving outcomes for students.

ConclusionMissouri's special education system is guided by federal and state laws designed to ensure FAPE for all students. While parental involvement is essential, the provisions in HB 477 undermine the collaborative nature of the IEP process, place undue burdens on educators, and risk compromising the quality of services for students with disabilities. I urge you to reconsider this legislation and work with special education professionals to develop policies that truly benefit students and support educators.

Thank you for your time and consideration.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 477		DATE: 1/22/2025
COMMITTEE: Elementary and Secondary Education		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: SARAH HANSEN		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: shansen@kennett.k12.mo.us	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 7:16 AM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

The proposed legislation introduces a series of challenges to the individualized education program (IEP) process, emphasizing parental consent for specific components. Under the bill, if parents and the local educational agency (LEA) cannot agree on an IEP within ten business days, the current IEP must be amended to reflect areas of agreement, while unresolved areas are documented in an addendum with a resolution deadline. If no resolution is achieved by the specified date, either party may request dispute resolution. However, the bill's reliance on parental consent for specific IEP elements, including placements or service changes, raises concerns about feasibility, fairness, and compliance with federal and state guidelines for Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE). These requirements could lead to confusion from maintaining partial agreements, increase administrative burdens, and create legal disputes, ultimately detracting from the educational needs of students. The legislation is likely to have significant financial and operational impacts on districts. Additional IEP meetings and administrative efforts to track and reconcile partial agreements could overwhelm already limited resources. Special education teachers, already in short supply, may leave the profession due to increased workloads, exacerbating staffing shortages. The requirement for parental consent on changes exceeding 25% could incentivize teams to circumvent thresholds, potentially hindering FAPE compliance. Furthermore, requiring all placement options in every school could create substantial costs and logistical issues. The bill's provisions may disrupt the collaborative nature of IEP team decisions, leading to isolated decision-making, delays in implementing critical services, and increased litigation. Overall, these changes could negatively impact students with disabilities by reducing the efficiency and effectiveness of their educational support systems.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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BILL NUMBER: HB 477		DATE: 1/22/2025	
COMMITTEE: Elementary and Secondary Education			
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: SARAH KLINE		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: sekline0524@gmail.com		ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 8:54 AM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			

HB 477 introduces several requirements that will be problematic for schools, IEP teams, and students. 1. The requirement for schools to create an amended IEP, while concurrently working to find an IEP that meets full agreement of all team members, presents additional burdens to special education teachers who are already working with limited resources. Managing the additional paperwork and time spent in meetings to resolve what may become protracted disagreements, will remove teachers from the classroom where they should be instructing students. 2. Working on amendments is likely to become confusing for both parents and educators. IEPs are complex documents with a myriad of compliance requirements. As teams continue to work through amendments, it will be cumbersome for parents and educators to keep track of the various changes and amendments, which introduces additional opportunities for confusion. 3. Placement changes should be allowed without parental consent when a team of educational professionals, experts on the education of students with disabilities, is determined necessary by those experts. The safety and well-being of students is under threat when one individual has the power to interfere with the actions a school must take to provide necessary services to students, and to maintain orderly operations in a public school. 4. This bill conflicts with Federal and State guidelines that school districts are required to follow. Specifically, schools are obligated to provide a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment; they may languish in an environment that is too restrictive, or they may not get their needs met in a less restrictive environment. Also, if a group of educators determines that a certain set of services is what the student requires in order to receive a free appropriate public education, but the parent consents to only a subset of those services, then the school district may be violating their obligation to provide a free appropriate public education. All of these could have negative impacts on students. 5. I believe that families should have the right to visit any classroom or program that is proposed for their child so that they can be a participating member in the IEP Team discussion and decisions. However, requiring that visits take place outside of regular school hours will not provide families with adequate information about the classroom/program, as it will not be in operation, and families will have a very limited amount of information about a program - essentially the type of information that one could obtain from a brochure or conversation with anyone familiar with the program. Further, this will require staff to work outside of their regular working hours. Teachers already spend a large amount of their personal time and money to operate their classrooms and provide nurturing environments for their students. Mandating additional time creates additional burdens that may lead teachers to leave the field of special education. We cannot afford to lose teachers over additional time demands and paperwork requirements. 6. The requirement of adopting a new parental consent form to document any changes is unnecessary and confusing. IDEA already requires a Prior Written Notice be provided to families when districts propose or refuse to initiate or change the

identification, evaluation, or placement of a child, or the provision of FAPE. DESE has already adopted a form to serve this purpose and to meet the requirements of the IDEA. Legislation should not further mandate additional forms and it's content.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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BILL NUMBER: HB 477		DATE: 1/22/2025
COMMITTEE: Elementary and Secondary Education		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: SARAH MASON		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: mason_s13@yahoo.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 8:28 AM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.		

I believe this bill will have negative impacts on students with disabilities. a. I have concerns the outcome of this bill will increase litigation against families, which is not good for students. b. Managing multiple amendments within a student's IEP could become confusing and challenging, and have a negative impact on the instruction. c. The bill's emphasis on parental consent for specific IEP components raises concerns that parents might request additions that are not necessary for the student's progress, conflicting with the requirements to provide a free appropriate public education (FAPE).



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COMMITTEE: Elementary and Secondary Education		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: SCOTT BLAKE		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: sblake@mz.k12.mo.us	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 10:48 AM

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IDEA has similar paperwork that is sufficient for coverage. Depending on the complexity, a due process hearing could range from \$5,000 to \$20,000. Student learning is impacted by teachers and staff dealing with paperwork and hearings. Teachers need to be in the classrooms.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 477		DATE: 1/22/2025
COMMITTEE: Elementary and Secondary Education		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: SHANE MEDLIN		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: smedlin@agpirates.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 1:49 PM
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As a parent, educator, principal for 18 years and now superintendent, I am adamantly opposed to HB477. During my 27 years in public education, I have watched the special education pendulum swing in many directions. Some were positive moves for both students, families and the school while others have not been. If passed, HB477 would bankrupt many schools. Done well, the IEP process is an intensive process that best supports the needs of the student and equips the school team support each student for success based on their needs. The beauty of this process is the team approach that gets input from all parties. However, giving parents the right to "partially decline" parts of the IEP will have financial implications and learning implications for students. Just this year, we had a parent disagree with an IEP team decision. She filed a child complaint and we went to mediation. 2 child advocates brought BY THE PARENT agreed that our district and team were providing FAPE and were working in the best interest of the student. If this bill were in place, the parent would have been able to decline the services that were deemed to be appropriate by the parents' own advocate and would have resulted in due process. Estimates show that a full due process "case" costs a district approximately \$90,000. HB477 would open districts up to this extreme cost potential should parents disagree with a team determination. As a small district of just over 800 students, this amount would be catastrophic for our district budget. This is not an exaggeration in any way. Well-intentioned, hard working teachers who strive to partner with parents to best serve students would be asked to provide services or not provide needed services at parent discretion to avoid these costs. This would be a disservice to our students, their families and our staff. Additionally, these costs are at the expense of other students whose learning would be impacted due to budgetary constraints caused by unwarranted due process and additional special service costs due to the ramifications of this bill. I applaud the spirit of the bill in supporting families and students in the IEP process. However, there are already mechanisms in place for families who are not satisfied with IEP or their child's services. This check and balance allows for equal participation in the process. This bill shifts this balance at the expense of all student learners. As the building leader that hosted specialized programs for students with IEPs for 18 years, I can give numerous examples of successful remediations and partnerships with parents that were not at the expense of all learners and were wins for students with IEPs. I cannot begin to estimate the cost, man hours and the loss of special education teachers that would have resulted with this bill being in place. I am happy to discuss this further with anyone and I appreciate your careful consideration of this bill and educator input.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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COMMITTEE: Elementary and Secondary Education		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: SHANNON ROBERTS		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:	STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: shannonroberts@nixaschools.net	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 8:03 AM

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I am writing to express my strong opposition to HB 477. While I deeply support the rights of parents in decisions related to their child’s IEP, I believe that this bill will create division between families and the public school system and significantly slow down the process of providing a student with appropriate services based on data collected on the student's performance in the educational setting. The requirement that parental consent must be obtained for various changes to an IEP could lead to significant delays in the provision of services. This delay could adversely affect children who need of timely interventions, particularly when parents and school officials cannot reach agreement quickly. By requiring formal parental consent for actions that are often a part of normal educational practice, this bill may undermine the ability of schools to make appropriate, data-driven adjustments to a child's education in a time-efficient manner. Educators are trained to assess and respond to a child's educational needs and should be allowed to adjust services, especially when those changes align with the student's best interests and legal guidelines under IDEA. The detailed process this bill requires places additional administrative burdens on LEAs. As many schools already struggle with insufficient funding and staff, this bill could further strain their ability to meet the diverse needs of students with disabilities and ensure high-quality educational opportunities. For these reasons, I urge you to reconsider or amend this proposed bill to avoid potential harm to students with disabilities and the educational system as a whole. I strongly advocate for a balance that respects the rights of parents while not impeding the timely and effective delivery of services to children in need.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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COMMITTEE: Elementary and Secondary Education			
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: SHAWNNETT WILLIAMS		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: shawnnett.williams@fpsk12.org	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/21/2025 3:04 PM	
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			

I appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony in opposition to HB 477. While the intent of this legislation may be to enhance collaboration between parents and schools, the practical implications raise significant concerns regarding the clarity, feasibility, and overall impact on students with disabilities.

1. The Confusion Surrounding "Interim Placement" The concept of "interim placement" proposed in HB 477 reintroduces outdated practices that are no longer supported under Missouri's State Plan for Special Education. This terminology is not only unnecessary but also misleading, as there is no recognized provision for interim placement in the current framework. Historically, interim placements were overused to place students in special education programs without fully determining eligibility, often based on behavioral issues rather than legitimate needs. This practice was ultimately harmful, as it led to inappropriate placements and delayed access to appropriate services. Reintroducing this concept risks reverting to those ineffective and inequitable practices.

2. Challenges of Managing Amendments and Agreements The bill's provisions requiring multiple amendments for areas of disagreement create significant logistical challenges: **Complexity in Documentation:** Managing a mix of agreed-upon and disputed elements in an IEP will result in confusion for parents, educators, and administrators. Multiple amendments within a single IEP will complicate documentation and implementation, increasing the likelihood of errors. **Burden on Special Educators:** With the ongoing shortage of special education teachers, adding administrative burdens will further strain educators, potentially leading to higher turnover rates. This exacerbates the staffing crisis and jeopardizes the ability of schools to provide services effectively.

3. Safety Concerns and Placement Decisions The bill's requirement for parental consent on placement changes undermines the ability of IEP teams to act in the best interest of all students. In situations where safety is a concern, school administrators and IEP teams must have the authority to make immediate placement decisions to protect students and staff. Allowing parents to veto placement recommendations disregards the expertise of educators and creates barriers to ensuring a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE).

4. Negative Impacts on Students The bill's emphasis on parental control over specific IEP components raises several issues: **Conflict with FAPE Requirements:** Parental refusal to consent to necessary services or placements could prevent students from receiving appropriate support, impeding their progress and potentially violating federal mandates. **Increased Litigation:** Disputes over individual IEP components are likely to result in more frequent litigation, diverting resources away from instruction and support for students. **Instructional Challenges:** Managing conflicting amendments will disrupt the consistency of instruction, negatively affecting students' progress and outcomes.

Conclusion HB 477 introduces unnecessary complexity, increases administrative burdens, and undermines the ability of educators to provide appropriate services and placements. These changes will have negative consequences for students with disabilities, including delayed access to support, reduced instructional time, and potential safety risks. I urge the committee to reject this bill in its current form and instead consider

solutions that support collaboration without compromising the integrity of the IEP process or the provision of FAPE. Thank you for your time and consideration.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: SHELLY STEPHENS		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: shelly.stephens@mcdonaldr1.net	ATTENDANCE: In-Person	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 9:48 AM
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There are many things in this bill that are problematic. Here are a few that stand out to me as a Certified Special Education Teacher and Process Coordinator for Special Education in a Missouri school district.

1. Missouri's state plan does not allow for an interim placement. Either the student has an IEP in place, or they do not. This bill would complicate this issue by allowing parents to agree about portions of the IEP, while disputing others.
2. IEP meetings and amendments are time consuming. There is a lot of detailed paperwork involved when writing or amending an IEP, which takes time away from the teacher's already packed schedule. Every Special Education teacher in our district has between 16 and 27 students that they are case manager for, in addition many of those are also providing specific services to other students they are not case manager for. We are required by law to serve the exact number of minutes for each of these students every week, and we must ensure that any time that is missed (due to attending meetings, or due to teacher absence) is made up. Therefore, most of the time teachers must spend writing and documenting information for the IEPs is handled outside of contracted school hours. If you allow IEPs to be amended multiple times due to disagreements, it is placing an incredible burden on teachers who are already being driven from the field of teaching. We already have a shortage of teachers due to excessive paperwork, excessive expectations, scarce resources, and low pay. We won't be able to keep the teachers we already have, let alone recruit new ones. In addition, if parent visits to special education classrooms prior to placement are required to take place after regular school hours, it will require teachers to work outside their regular working hours with no additional pay. This creates additional burdens on teachers and will be another factor in teachers leaving the field or not joining it at all.
3. Districts like ours that are spread out over a large geographic area may not have the resources to provide self-contained programs in every school building, but we are able to make that service available in strategically placed buildings in the district and bus the students to that placement. An issue arises if a parent consents to services but not to a change in the building/placement. Would districts be required to have every service available in every building? This would be extremely expensive and require additional building space, additional teachers and paraprofessionals - all of which are in short supply already. IEP meetings are held as a team, the school staff are required to provide data which is used to determine how much support a student needs to make progress. LEAs are required to document that the student is making progress. If parents (who are not bound by these requirements) are allowed to make the decision on placements, removals, changes, additions or reduction of services, it is not conducive to good instruction and can negatively impact a student's progress.



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: SHEREEN PETTIT		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: shereenpettit@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 7:56 AM
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Allowing parents to make decisions regarding placements, removals, changes, additions, or reductions of services can create challenges for students. The development of an Individualized Education Program (IEP) is a collaborative process that relies on data and input from the IEP team. Local Education Agencies (LEAs) must comply with Federal and State guidelines. When parents withhold consent, students may not be placed in the least restrictive environment or receive the necessary supports to make progress. LEAs are federally obligated to ensure IEP progress to provide a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE). These situations can disrupt effective instructional practices and negatively affect students. While parents have the right to be informed about their child's education, requiring unrestricted access to visit special education classrooms during the school day prior to placement raises confidentiality concerns for other students in the classroom. If such visits are mandated to occur after regular school hours, it would require teachers to work beyond their contracted hours, placing additional burdens on them. This added strain could lead to burnout and contribute to teachers leaving the field of special education.



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: SHERI PRICE		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: sprice@wcr4.org	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 9:52 AM	
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There are serious concerns and possible ramifications with this bill and the effect it would have on an already overwhelmed and difficult-to-find staff. Allowing parents to pick and choose what services a child needs eliminates the need for highly qualified staff. If a team of highly qualified individuals isn't allowed to make decisions, then why bother pulling a team together? This bill essentially lets the parent decide and determine what will or will not be provided. Will this bill protect the district when the parent comes back a year later and says the district should have been providing a service the parent originally denied? A denial of FAPE is serious. What happens in the case of shared custody when one parent agrees and one doesn't? These are real situations we face every day and this bill will only add to the stress and workload of special education staff. Why would anyone want to go into a field where you spend more time on paperwork than serving the students. People who have a heart for children with special needs and want to make a difference are going to be lost from our field because of the paperwork and convoluted processes. This is already the case as our field has a significant shortage of teachers. This bill only works against us.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: SHERRIE BECK		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: sbeck1213@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 9:29 AM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.		

Since school districts are responsible for developing and implementing IEPs that ensure FAPE (Free Appropriate Public Education), we have concerns about the feasibility of this new requirement if parents are allowed to consent to certain recommendations but not others. Parents should not pick and choose what services they want for their child when the experts have determined what is necessary in delivering the appropriate special education services in the correct placement of students to ensure FAPE. Requiring the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to adopt a parental consent form is redundant. There is currently one in place which is called Prior Written Notice. Legislation should not mandate forms to be used and the content of these forms.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: SHERRY DAVIS		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: sherrydavis1988@gmail.com		ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 7:35 AM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			

Requiring the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to adopt a parental consent form is redundant. There is currently one in place which is called Prior Written Notice. Legislation should not mandate forms and the content. It has been clarified in the Missouri State Plan there is no such thing as an "interim" placement. This should be removed as it's confusing. Many years ago, there was such a thing in Missouri as an interim placement, but it was over-used by educators by placing children in special education programs on an interim basis when they may not have truly been eligible or when it was believe necessary to remove a child from the general education setting who was misbehaving. These children may or may not have eventually met eligibility. This is not a practice we want to return to as it was not best for students. Since school districts are responsible for developing and implementing IEPs that ensure FAPE (Free Appropriate Public Education), we have concerns about the feasibility of this new requirement if parents are allowed to consent to certain recommendations but not others. Parents should not be allowed to pick and choose what services they want for their child when the experts have determined what is necessary in delivering the appropriate special education services in the correct placement of students to ensure FAPE. We believe this bill will have negative impacts on students with disabilities. a. We have concerns the outcome of this bill will increase litigation against families, which is not good for students. b. Managing multiple amendments within a student's IEP could become confusing and challenging, and have a negative impact on the instruction. c. The bill's emphasis on parental consent for specific IEP components raises concerns that parents might request additions that are not necessary for the student's progress, conflicting with the requirements to provide a free appropriate public education (FAPE).



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: STACEY SEABAUGH		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: k2seabaugh@aol.com		ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 7:47 AM

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Interim placement is not recognized in the State Plan-it is subjective and confusing.Special education teacher shortage is a real concern already, and will only be exacerbated by this bill.Parents should not be allowed to consent to some, but not all, services-public school is not a buffet.Parental choice could lead to difficulty in reporting appropriate progress, thereby violating Endrew F.LEAs are not allowed isolated decision-making, therefore parents should not be either.Parents visiting special education rooms after contracted hours creates a hardship for district administration.Parent request for additions to the IEP could lead to negative relationships, possible litigation, and additional cost with no additional funding.Additional meetings costs the district, and can cause team members to miss valuable instructional time.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: STACI M. MATHES		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: mathesstaci@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 1:08 PM
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IDEA and the Missouri State Plan outline parents rights through Procedural Safeguards and the Missouri Parents Bill of Rights. Parents already have rights and procedures they may follow if they disagree with the proposed IEP. This bill would inhibit IEP teams from making full IEP team decisions with partial consent provisions. The IEP team is required to meet annually to review the IEP and can meet at any other time during the school year upon request of the parent or school team members. An allowance to provide consent for certain parts of the IEP would create concerns for the IEP team to be able to provide a Free Appropriate Public Education for the student. This would also be burdensome to special education teachers who are managing paperwork associated with IEPs. The way this bill is written, there is potential for multiple amendments and meetings would need to be held to address individual pieces of the the IEP. I cannot support this bill as written and continue to believe that parents have a right to disagree under the law already.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: STACIE WIEBERG		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: stacie@ste.k12.mo.us	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 9:59 AM
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This bill could leave an IEP incomplete for an undetermined amount of time disrupting the school's ability to provide FAPE. It will allow temporary placement and create scheduling nightmares for staff and students who require consistency. School who are providing appropriate services are already contacting parents when changes in placement are made unless it is related to behavior which may require immediate removal and it is not conducive to waiting for parent consent because of possible harm to the student, other students or staff. Parents are already notified as soon as possible after behavioral removals. Special education services are not a restaurant menu that parents can pick and choose from. Teachers are considered professionals and do what is in the best interest of the child. They have the knowledge, experience and education for this purpose.



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: TAMMY PREWITT		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: tprewitt@bsd124.org		ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 8:26 AM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

I want to state my strong opposition to HB 477. An interim placement does not currently exist and would be a nightmare to implement. As a Special Education Director, staffing is already a huge issue and this will add more paperwork to compile and keep track of as multiple amendments might be written. Safety has become the #1 jumping off point for many Special Educators. Administrators need to have the ability to keep children and staff safe, even without parental consent for a change of placement. Students are becoming increasingly aggressive and physical and we need to keep schools as sanctuaries of safety. IEPs have never been a "cafeteria plan" for good reason. As educators, we propose what is needed in order to provide FAPE. If a parent "picks and chooses" services that the IEP team have determined are inclusively needed, FAPE could be compromised. At my district, a parent did not want her child to receive speech and language as related services, even though the student's speech impairment was impacting the student's ability to sound out words (therefore affecting progress in developing his ability to read). The IEP team proposed reading services along with speech and language services to ensure the student made progress on his IEP goals. The LEA is responsible for the student making progress to the best of his ability. Our district also has "district programs" (for autism, functional skills, etc.) in only a few of our elementary schools. If the parent does not agree to a change of placement, the district would be unable to provide the services the student requires, according to the IEP. This could result in substantial costs to develop new programs in each elementary - money which the district does not have. In closing, the IEP team, which includes the parent, is the decision making entity for a child's special education services, placement, goals, and participation in regular education. There are processes in place to allow parents to disagree with any IEP team decision. Removing the control from the school district/LEA and the IEP team promises to weaken the IEP team and the educator's role in the education of special education students. The knowledge base and years of experience of Special Education Teachers, Related Service Providers, and Special Education Administrators needs to be recognized and respected. Please vote in opposition of HB 477. Special education is hard enough!



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: VANESSA KUTZ		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: kutz101098@yahoo.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 7:41 AM
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I have been in education 22 years and 19 of that has been in special education. For the past 10 years, I have been a Special Education Process Coordinator in which I attend IEP meetings as the LEA for the meeting and I review and finalize all special education documents. If this bill were to pass, it would create an unfeasible and unsustainable environment for special education. There are many reasons that this bill will do more harm to students than the intended good. 1. Special education staff are trained professionals that make data based decisions in IEP team meetings. Services, goals, placement, and accommodations are all determined based on student need and the data that supports that need. Parental decisions/requests are often made out of emotion such as fear or anger. This is normal. A parent's job is to protect their child and do what is best for their child, however, they do not have the decades of training and research knowledge that comes with being an expert in the field of special education. Often times in an effort to "protect" their child or to provide them a "safety net", parents often want more restrictive educational environments for their children because they want to make sure that their child is getting A's and that school is "not too hard" for them. While their intentions are good, the long term effects are detrimental. Labeling a child with a disability automatically puts them at greater risk for non-positive post secondary outcomes. Children with disabilities are less likely to attend four year college, are less likely to strive for higher paying positions, and are less likely to pursue employment that would not be considered the "working poor". When a child with a disability is given lower expectations, that is what they adapt to and that is what they live up to. Unfortunately, parents in their attempts to protect their child from any "failures" often expect such lowered expectations that the child's education and future are detrimentally impacted. 2. The field of education overall and especially special education is facing critical staffing shortages. This bill would put such a hardship on educational staff time that it would take away from the students learning time. Teachers would have to be out of their classrooms for more IEP meetings to resolve the disputed points, thus leaving instruction to substitute teachers. Special education teachers would be required to be in more, and often times longer, IEP meetings thus reducing the amount of time that they are available to provide services for the students. This would result in the the need to hire more general and special education teachers so that the caseload and class size numbers are lower. One of the most common request from parents is that they want their child to have a one on one paraprofessional to help "keep them on task or behaved". If this were the case, we would have more staff than students in a school building which also results in a more restrictive environment, less need to develop independence for the child, and again is never requested using data based information. 3. This bill could cause way too many versions of a student's IEP to be in effect thus resulting in utter confusion and the inability to affectively implement a specialized education plan. Teachers will have to become so overly focused on paperwork, that it would take away from their energy and drive that is needed to actually provide the specialized instruction to the children. Special education teachers are amazing and we work with the

hardest of the hardest students on a daily basis, however, none of us are superheroes and our ability to do 20 different things at once is unrealistic. Trying to ensure that one IEP per child is followed with fidelity and to the letter of the law is taxing enough without adding in the extra versions of an IEP to also monitor. 3. Parents already have a dispute method that they are provided if they do not agree with an IEP team decision. Parents may file a due process or child complaint with the state or the Office of Civil Rights. This law would cause school districts to be put in a position to file due process more often against the parents in order to be able to provide FAPE to a child if the parent is in disagreement with part of an IEP. This all takes time and resources away from the child where it really matters....in the classroom. 4. Missouri is already the lowest ranked state in regards to state funded elementary and secondary education. The financial burden that this would place on local taxing entities is unrealistic in a climate/state in which everyone already feels underpaid and overtaxed. 5. Decisions made for a student's IEP are already an IEP team decision and the parent is part of that IEP team. However, if the parent has sole consenting rights to parts of the IEP, then it is no longer IEP team decisions and it is strictly parental decisions. While parents are key participants in their child's educational journey, they do not have the education, training, and experience to make such decisions based on research and years of practice. 6. On a regular basis, I hear parents state that they would prefer to keep more services or keep the child in a more restrictive environment even when the child is being successful due to their own capabilities "just in case" they may need it in the future or if the curriculum gets "too hard". Students grow more and learn more when they are in with their general education peers to the greatest extent possible given their individual circumstances. If we allow parents to be the ones to decide or consent to exactly how much that is, then we are doing a disservice to the child. Thank you for taking the time to consider my testimony. I am in education because I love to see students grow and learn and I am always going to put what is best for the child as a priority in decision making. I do feel that parents are first and foremost the most important advocate for their child and they do know their child best. However, some credence needs to be given to the fact that they do NOT know educational research and educational practices the best in comparison to special education teachers that have spent their careers devoted to constantly learning and growing and their field of expertise.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 477		DATE: 1/22/2025	
COMMITTEE: Elementary and Secondary Education			
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: VANESSA SCHIBI		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: schibivanessa@neoshosd.org		ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 8:01 AM

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It has been clarified in the Missouri State Plan there is no such thing as an “interim” placement. This should be removed as it’s confusing. Many years ago, there was such a thing in Missouri as an interim placement. Still, it was over-used by educators by placing children in special education programs on an interim basis when they may not have truly been eligible or when it was believed necessary to remove a child from the general education setting who was misbehaving. These children may or may not have eventually met eligibility. We do not want to return to this practice as it was not best for students. Working on amendments will become confusing for both parents and special educators. You might have many things in an IEP not agreed upon and in multiple amendments, and other things in the IEP itself that are agreed upon. It will be hard to keep track of this. With the existing special education teacher shortage as it is, we worry this requirement of keeping track of additional amendments not agreed upon will lead to more special education teachers leaving the field, worsening the shortage and impacting the ability to provide services to children.



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: WHITNEY R BOWERS		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: bowersw@hcr1.org	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 2:53 PM	
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I am in opposition to HB 477 for many reasons. First, the potential for multiple amendments and increased paperwork will place another confusing and unnecessary burden on case managers who are also trying to teach to the fullest extent possible to all of their special education students. With the rise in discipline, a placement change should be allowed without parental consent in cases of safety for the students and staff. Parents should not be allowed to pick and choose what services they want for their child when the experts have determined what is required in delivering the appropriate special education services in the correct placement of students to ensure FAPE. Allowing parents to make the decisions on placements, removals, changes, increases and decreases in services is not in the best interest of the IEP student. The IEP is developed based on data, while also adhering to Federal and State guidelines. Parents refusing consent could lead to students not being in the least restrictive environment and deny FAPE. Lastly, the amount of time I have spent in the last 2 years dealing with parents not trusting the experts, is unfair to all special education students. The end result has been in favor of the district, whether through a child complaint decision, OCR determination, facilitated meeting etc. For the sake of time and money, I can see districts "giving in" to parents because that is much easier, less time, less work, and less money. In turn, this could result in overservicing students, conflicting with the requirements of FAPE.



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: WILLIAM MATTHEWS		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: wmatthews@afftonschools.net	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 11:27 AM

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In a time when there are special education teacher shortages in Missouri, it baffles me that the state would even consider making the IEP process and teacher work loads more complicated. As it is, scheduling IEP's are difficult when trying to work around scheduling of custodial parents, non-custodial parents, general education teachers, district representatives and special education teachers. This bill would add to the problem and actually reduce the number of minutes that a special education teacher would spend with a students due to having to be in extra meetings.I would expect that if this passes, the teacher shortage will increase as teacher will either retire or leave the education field all together.



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WITNESS NAME		
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:		
WITNESS NAME: LEIGH ANNE HAUN		PHONE NUMBER: 417-326-9922
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: MISSOURI DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES COUNCIL		TITLE: DIR. OF POLICY ADVOCACY
ADDRESS: 1706 E. ELM STREET		
CITY: JEFFERSON CITY		STATE: MO
EMAIL:		ZIP:
ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 12:00 AM	
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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: LUKE BARBER		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: luke.t.barber764@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 8:09 PM	
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As a student who graduated high school with a "Transitional IEP". Transitional IEPs are used for post-secondary. It is one that is used for College accommodations, Employment Modifications/accommodations, Medicaid Eligibility and Case Management, Etc. My IEP in 2014 Still had the Classic stereotypes which we know now to be disproven today. You see, my IEP had the stereotypes of not being cut out for college or not being able to hold a job, these things we know now I could do. I currently am employed in competitive integrated employment in retail. I also am currently enrolled in a Masters Education Program. I recommend the following changes to HB477: Students who can make decisions and are their own guardians should be able to sign as Individuals for the 16+ Transitional IEP With or Without Parental Signature. You see ... my parents signed off on my Transitional IEP, however, as a Student, I didn't get that Final say. I wish I could have had the Power of the Pen/Signature saying I agree or disagree because these services are About ME- A Student with a Disability. "NOTHING ABOUT US WITHOUT US " that is the rallying cry of disability rights, however when Students arent given their own voice or their own power it often becomes a pile of notes and documents and records about them without them. This further stigmas disability rather than being the empowering form of providing the necessary services in the least restrictive way in the classroom/ in the community or wherever these students may be post graduation.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: MARY R BYRNE		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: mary.byrne53@att.net	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/21/2025 3:49 PM
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I have submitted recommendations for changes to Representative Oehlerking in collaboration with Ashley Lawson, a parent of children with special needs. The recommended changes are designed to strengthen the intent of the bill, which is to ensure that parents of students with special needs are given the opportunity to give truly informed consent before signing documents about their children's education. Currently, there is no definition of informed consent, or description of criteria districts should be accountable for to ensure parents are fully informed. For example, parents must understand districts cannot force them to submit their medical coverage information for the payment of special services their children may need. In addition, students who are the age of majority -- acting as their own agents at IEP meetings -- should not be in a position to unwittingly jeopardize their parents' private health insurance by acting independently in situations that require signing off on special services payment through the parents' private insurance policy with the possibility of private insurers cancelling the policy. If Representative Oehlerking and the House Education Committee accept our recommended changes, then HB 477 will advance protection of the rights of parents and the civil rights of students with special needs in Missouri.



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WITNESS NAME			
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:			
WITNESS NAME: MIKE LODEWEGEN		PHONE NUMBER:	
REPRESENTING: MO COUNCIL OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS		TITLE:	
ADDRESS: 3500 AMAZONAS			
CITY: JC		STATE: MO	ZIP: 65109
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 12:00 AM	

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WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: SUSAN HENRY		PHONE NUMBER: 314-989-8143	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: SPECIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT OF ST. LOUIS COUNTY		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY: ST. LOUIS		STATE: MO	ZIP: 63131
EMAIL: srhenry@ssdmo.org	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 2:57 PM	
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As a Director of Special Education Compliance for a public school district, I am a part of daily conversations about the challenges special educators face in maintaining positive parent relationships, while balancing compliance requirements for the content of the IEP, and implementing quality special education services for students. Basically, it's a lot of moving parts to manage and the other parts compete with actually teaching. HB 477 is a noble proposition but it carries with it unintended ramifications that may not be readily apparent to those who do not case manage IEPs, such as special education teachers. Indeed, 40 other states have decided to not require the type of consent proposed by HB 477. • Written consent for increases or decreases in services of 25%o

Added calculations for teachers to manage to determine which proposed service changes require consent and which ones don't. • Parent confusion An IEP meeting may result in some changes that require parent consent and some that only require prior written notice by the district. There could be parent confusion as to why they get to consent to some changes and not others. o Even if parents understand which service changes require consent and which ones don't, they may actually want to refuse a service change that does not actually have a consent requirement.o

Parents will be bombarded with more forms than they already are. • IEPs "in limbo", protracted IEPs, out of compliance IEPso Allowance to amend an IEP does not change an annual IEP due date. Delays in obtaining consent or agreement will potentially cause annual IEPs to go out of compliance. o Multiple ongoing IEPs to resolve services/consent will remove service providers from their work with students.o Multiple ongoing IEPS can be costly in that subs must be paid for• Increased paperwork requirements for teachers (one of the main reasons special educators leave the profession)o Tracking amendments for services that are agreed upon and resolution talks on those that aren't agreed upon, could prove overwhelming for teachers.o

IEPs frequently require the provision of multiple prior written notices to parents when several changes to an IEP are made. Adding the requirement for another consent form will add to teacher workload and paperwork. • DESE already has a sample prior written notice form that contains a section for consent. Districts may use this sample form or develop their own that contains all required compliance components. •Provision of a free appropriate public education, a central tenant of IDEA could be compromisedo IEP services are intended to complement each other and support progress in all areas for the student. Parent refusal to consent to one or more services weakens the collective power of all of the services and threatens the provision of FAPEThe acknowledgment was heard at the Hearing for this bill on 1/22/2024 that the vast majority of IEPs are mutually agreed upon by all IEP team members—including the parent. But there are pockets where families have less agreeable experiences. Perhaps instead of cumbersome bill that puts requirements in place that could actually lead to more litigation, a better solution is to support districts in obtaining

training for their staff in communication skills, facilitation skills and consensus building strategies to improve parent relations that will support positive IEP development.



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WITNESS NAME			
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:			
WITNESS NAME: WILLIAM GAMBLE		PHONE NUMBER: 573-634-4876	
REPRESENTING: SPECIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT OF ST LOUIS COUNTY		TITLE: LOBBYIST	
ADDRESS: P0 BOX 1865			
CITY: JEFFERSON CITY		STATE: MO	ZIP: 65102
EMAIL: bill@molobby.com	ATTENDANCE: In-Person	SUBMIT DATE: 1/21/2025 3:55 PM	
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