

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Young, Lu - KBE Member](#); [Glass, Jason - Commissioner of Education](#); [Hylton, Gretta - KDE Associate Commissioner](#); [KDE KBE](#)
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Public Comment on Draft KSB/KSD Policies From KSB and KSD Advisory Board members
Date: Monday, July 31, 2023 9:33:13 PM

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Attn: State Board of Education

Penned:

Virren Malhotra, KSB Advisory Board member, parent to blind child at KSB
Scott Haun, KSD Advisory Board member, Professional in Deaf Education, and Chair

In mid-June, both the Kentucky School for the Blind Advisory Board and the Kentucky School for the Deaf Advisory Board, received proposed policy revisions in a 63-page word document in advance of their respective board's meeting. Both Advisory Boards - whose members represent and advocate on behalf of deaf and blind students across the state of Kentucky - have two concerns regarding the added Human Sexuality language. Our first joint concern revolves around language equity versus other public schools in the state. Two articles displaying language delay/equity include: www.healthymindsconsulting.com/language-deprivation/ **"The Impact of Language Deprivation On The Overall Development Of Deaf And Hard Of Hearing Children"** by M. Natasha Kordus, Ph.D. and

"Extending Language Deprivation to Deaf Education: Review of: Glickman, N. & Hall, W. Language Deprivation and Deaf Mental Health" in The Journal of Deaf Studies and Deaf Education, Volume 25, Issue 3, July 2020, Page 377. Our second cobweb is around opting-in for teaching definitions on sexual abuse. The following paragraphs help explain our concerns.

First, we want to ensure that the proposed language in the Human Sexuality section is no more restrictive than what has been agreed to for larger school districts including JCPS and Fayette County.

Secondly, The teams unanimously opposed students opting-in for education around sexual abuse because of the specific concerns around children with disabilities and the increased risk of sexual abuse. In the attached document the team has gathered and collated undeniable statistics that support the board's concerns including a [2014 study of children aged 6 to 17 in the school setting found that children with disabilities are at 3 times the risk of sexual abuse compared with typically developing peers.](#)

Both Advisory Boards understand the sensitivity of the proposed changes and is supportive to work with the State Board of Education to uphold the spirit of the intended changes **but** support awareness for children with disabilities to be able to identify sexual abuse enough to 1. Know what it is 2. Be able to report it if it happens to them.

We trust the State Board of Education will take our team's feedback and welcome the opportunity to adapt language that helps specifically support this underserved and vulnerable population.

Virren Malhotra, KSB Advisory Board member

Scott Haun, KSD Advisory Board member