

## **State Board of Education considering end of teacher licensure**

At the request of the Coalition of Innovative School Districts, the Kansas State Board of Education is considering a proposal that will allow those districts to hire unlicensed, untrained persons for classroom teaching.

While the superintendents calling for this have been trying to assure others that this practice would only be used sparingly, it begs the question of why they think it's a good idea to de-professionalize teaching.

Emporia State University professor John Richard Schrock, in a column in the Emporia Gazette, put the issue in perspective:

*There is a shortage of medical doctors in rural Western Kansas. Why not allow pharmacists, nurses and veterinarians practice medicine?*

*Presume that we have a shortage of lawyers as well. Why not let policemen practice law?*

*We don't. It would "de-professionalize" these fields. But this is what was proposed at the March Kansas State Board of Education (KSBE) meeting. And it will come to a vote at their April 16 meeting.*

Click here to read the column.<sup>[1]</sup>

Teachers know better.

Knowing one's content is critical to good teaching but no more so than knowing how to convey that content to students. A skilled engineer certainly knows mathematics but can that engineer share mathematics with students for whom English is a second language? Can he reach students with developmental disabilities? Homeless students, hungry students, students who witnessed violence in their home or neighborhood last night? What about students who just would rather not be spending time in a math class?

Yes, content knowledge is critically important. But having read the Merck manual does not make one a surgeon. In Kansas, trimming your child's hair does not qualify you to cut hair in a salon or barber shop. Have you ever noticed yourself looking up at the barber's

cosmetology license?

This may be part of a trend. As Jon Stewart recently pointed out on The Daily Show, a new Kansas law allows one to carry a loaded concealed handgun on the streets without any training but it takes 1,000 hours of practicum to cut hair. Are we willing to go to the same place with teaching? Or will the State Board of Education stand up for teaching as a bonafide profession?

And just in case it is unknown to anyone, Kansas already allows districts to hire unlicensed persons to teach under certain very controlled circumstances. There is a conditional, restricted license that ensures pedagogical training happens. There is a provisional endorsement option. And there is the visiting scholar license. All would allow the districts to recruit from the business community or elsewhere. But all also ensure that our students are not experimented on by untrained, unlicensed personnel.

**Contact your State Board of Education member now** and encourage them to vote against opening Kansas classrooms to reckless experimentation. Click the following link to use an interactive state map to locate your State School Board member and access their contact information.

Interactive Map of Board Members: <http://www.ksde.org/Board.aspx><sup>[2]</sup>

Direct Contact Information for each Board Member:

<http://goo.gl/csUUT3><sup>[3]</sup>

### Links

1. <http://click.email.nea.org/?qs=f54f2b1a39916a55c1b0e08500ee28002902e3af90626e09e5f19d7f35087b5a73dd7b9cfc03137d>
2. <http://click.email.nea.org/?qs=f54f2b1a39916a55ad46e63413c12d8825c374bcda21eb077359011ac21c70d17892e43cef523694>
3. <http://click.email.nea.org/?qs=f54f2b1a39916a559164879917f171f333ec044073682e5cb08441908ce994fee8207b705ab8243d>

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