



# TIPS FOR OPT-OUTS & COMMUNITY VALUES STATEMENTS

## KIRKWOOD FOR EDUCATIONAL INTEGRITY

Opt-Out & Community Values Statement documents are available on the [KFEI website](#).

The U.S. Department of Education states in its charter that **“Parents have the primary responsibility for the education of their children, and States, localities, and private institutions have the primary responsibility for supporting that parental role.”** These documents help ensure that parents’ primary rights are respected by the schools.

### **What is the Parent/Student Opt-Out document?**

This document is for parents/guardians of current students.

Its intent is to protect our children from:

- Surveys collecting very personal information
- Categorizing students based on assumed bias
- Instruction of sexuality outside of parent approved curriculum
- Discriminatory instruction that identifies any one person as better or worse than another.

### **What is the Community Values Statement?**

This document is for taxpayers without kids currently in the public schools who wish to inform District leaders of their awareness of and concern about what is happening within KSD. Public schools are a key part of a community, and District leaders are accountable to all taxpayers.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **Is it really necessary to send something like this?**

That answer depends on you. Every time a line is crossed and nothing is done about it, that becomes the new boundary line. Some are fine with that. Others are not. Positive & proactive steps will keep you engaged in what is going on in the schools and will help restore accountability.

### **Who should I send this to?**

KFEI suggests sending this to:

- Your children's teachers, librarians, counselors and school administrators (grade level and school-wide). The KSD contact directory can be found [HERE](#).
- Board Members:  
[jeanmarie.andrews@kirkwoodschoools.org](mailto:jeanmarie.andrews@kirkwoodschoools.org), [darnel.frost@kirkwoodschoools.org](mailto:darnel.frost@kirkwoodschoools.org),  
[mark.boyko@kirkwoodschoools.org](mailto:mark.boyko@kirkwoodschoools.org), [angie.bernardi@kirkwoodschoools.org](mailto:angie.bernardi@kirkwoodschoools.org),  
[nikole.shurn@kirkwoodschoools.org](mailto:nikole.shurn@kirkwoodschoools.org), [chad.kavanaugh@kirkwoodschoools.org](mailto:chad.kavanaugh@kirkwoodschoools.org),  
[jennifer.pangborn@kirkwoodschoools.org](mailto:jennifer.pangborn@kirkwoodschoools.org)
- Dr. David Ulrich (Superintendent): [david.ulrich@kirkwoodschoools.org](mailto:david.ulrich@kirkwoodschoools.org)
- Dr. Bryan Painter (Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum & Instruction):  
[bryan.painter@kirkwoodschoools.org](mailto:bryan.painter@kirkwoodschoools.org)
- Dr. Matt Bailey (Assistant Superintendent of Student Services):  
[matt.bailey@kirkwoodschoools.org](mailto:matt.bailey@kirkwoodschoools.org)
- Dr. Howard Fields (Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources):  
[howard.fields@kirkwoodschoools.org](mailto:howard.fields@kirkwoodschoools.org)

### **Will my child(ren) be penalized for me sending this?**

Legally, your child(ren) cannot be discriminated against. Our hope is that our educators and administrators will respect your parental rights and honor the opt-out without penalizing your child.

### **What should I do if the school violates my opt-out?**

This scenario is highly likely. If that does happen you will have to gauge the severity of the violation. Is a conversation reminding the school of your position as the parent enough? Or was the overstep more extreme, or even a repeated action that requires you to make a bigger decision? In some cases, it may be warranted to seek legal counsel.

## **Should I include a personal message in the email or letter?**

Absolutely! You are trying to work *WITH* the school district. We respect and honor our teachers and administrators. They have chosen a special vocation that brings them in partnership with the family.

SAMPLE you may edit:

*Dear Teachers, Principals, Librarians, Counselors, Superintendents, Board Members, etc.,*

*We are looking forward to a wonderful school year (modify as needed for the time of year when you send this but always be personable & respectful). Thank you for your work and care in supporting our students / the students of Kirkwood. Our child(ren) have been receiving instructional input, some of which was never outlined in approved curriculum, that is in conflict with our home culture. Some of these things even violate their rights.*

*We realize that making changes may take some effort on everyone's part so we have taken the first step to identify and opt-out of topics that infringe on our rights as parents and theirs as individuals. Our signed opt-out / community values statement is attached. We hope this will serve as a guide to what is appropriate and acceptable in the classroom.*

*We have every expectation that you will honor this opt-out. If there is need for clarification on any points, please do not hesitate to reach out to us.*

*In partnership, (your signature)*

REMEMBER: Less is more and clarity is key. Simple, kind and to the point.

## **I am nervous about doing this.**

We understand. Nothing in this process is perfect, but we are all trying to stand for our own children and back up each other as we do that. Don't worry if someone confronts something in this. You are confronting things as well.

This is not an infallible document. It is a statement. You are doing your best to raise your child(ren) and to support all children, to see them happy and healthy, and to move them toward success as adults. You are doing a great job, and we are with you.

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