

WILL: Urges Kenosha Unified School District to allow parent to observe classroom

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The News: The Wisconsin Institute for Law & Liberty (WILL) issued a [letter](#), on behalf of a parent, to Kenosha Unified School District (KUSD) Superintendent, Dr. Bethany Ormseth, urging the district to allow parental classroom observation as provided by federal law and school-board policy. WILL represents a parent concerned that persistent classroom disruptions may be causing a drop in her son's academic performance.

The Quote: WILL Deputy Counsel, Dan Lennington, said, "Public school classrooms should not be a 'black box.' Parents have the right to know what is being taught in classrooms, and federal law specifically gives parents the right to observe classrooms in person. Kenosha schools should reverse course, and view parents as partners in the education of children."

Background: WILL represents the mother of a student at [Kenosha School of Technology Enhanced Curriculum](#) (KTEC), a public charter school in the Kenosha Unified School District (KUSD). This parent is concerned about her son's poor grades, particularly in light of reports of regular classroom disruptions, including use of profane language, racial epithets, physical altercations, and property damage. In September, this parent sought permission to observe the classroom to better understand the academic environment and the source of her son's struggles. But officials at KTEC and KUSD denied multiple requests and cited multiple inconsistent reasons.

But parents have a legal right to observation and transparency. The federal [Every Student Succeeds Act](#) (ESSA), signed by President Obama in 2015, requires public schools to implement policies and procedures to ensure "the involvement of parents" in the educational setting. Under this law, districts like KUSD are required to implement a policy allowing the "observation of classroom activities."

And KUSD has adopted several policies to comply with ESSA. For example, [Policy 1120](#) states that “parent/guardian engagement is key to academic achievement.” According to this policy, schools must be “open and inviting” to parents, allowing parents opportunities to “participate in classroom activities.” [Policy 1600](#) states that “parents/guardians/caregivers of District students and the public shall be encouraged to visit schools” and specifically allows for “classroom visits.” WILL is urging KUSD to provide the opportunity for parents to observe classroom activities as provided for in federal law and school board policies.

Read More:

- [WILL Letter to KUSD](#), November 3, 2021