



# TESTIMONY

April 2, 2025

## SENATE BILL 63: EXPANDING ACCESS TO EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES FOR NONTRADITIONAL STUDENTS

*By Avery Frank*

Testimony Before the Missouri Elementary  
and Secondary Education House Committee

### TO THE HONORABLE MEMBERS OF THIS COMMITTEE

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. My name is Avery Frank. I am a policy analyst at the Show-Me Institute, a nonprofit, nonpartisan, Missouri-based think tank that advances sensible, well-researched, free-market solutions to state and local policy issues. The ideas presented here are my own and are offered in consideration of Missouri's educational environment.

Sports, theatre, band, and other extracurricular activities teach students teamwork, discipline, resilience, leadership, and other life skills. These activities bring individuals together to work toward a common goal and can help turn a larger group into a community.

Parents of students in nontraditional education settings are taxpaying

community members too, yet the Missouri State High School Athletic Association (MSHSAA) effectively excludes their children from participating in after-school activities by requiring them to be enrolled in and regularly attending at least 80% of an allowable course load at a member school.<sup>1</sup> If schools use local taxpayer dollars to fund extracurricular activities such as football, then it seems reasonable for those activities to be open to local, nontraditional students.<sup>2</sup>

Senate Bill (SB) 63 would prohibit schools from being members of, or remitting funds to, a statewide activities association (like MSHSAA) that bars nontraditional students access to the extracurricular activities it oversees. Passage of SB 63 would ensure that nontraditional students have the opportunity to participate in a range of activities from which they might otherwise be excluded.

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## Opportunities May Be Limited to School-Based Activities

Co-ops and various organizations offer homeschoolers and others access to activities like music, martial arts, or gymnastics. However, some activities, such as football, are almost exclusively conducted at the school level. If a nontraditional student wants to be part of an 11-man football team, a local school team is often the only option. SB 63 would make it possible for these students to participate.

## Strengthening Local Communities

Numerous movies, such as *Remember the Titans*, have demonstrated the stories of different school communities coming together to achieve a common goal. This is not just a theme for film; in recent Missouri history, the merger of Brentwood and Clayton led to success in the 2023 playoffs.<sup>3</sup> A coach from Clayton described the success of these different students joining together, stating:

We joked that as long as the adults don't mess it up, the kids will do just fine. That's pretty much the way it's gone. The players just want to play football.

A student on the team echoed this sentiment:

We didn't know each other, and we'd never played together before. It took a while, but we've formed a brotherhood and we're starting to play like a real football team.<sup>4</sup>

This example highlights how different groups of students can come together to achieve a common goal, a dynamic that could work for nontraditional students as well. This bill could help students take part in beneficial and enjoyable activities and enable them to contribute and develop their talents while learning valuable lessons in teamwork.

SB 63 is a common-sense measure that recognizes the contributions of all taxpayers and helps more students have access to the benefits of extracurricular activities.

## ENDNOTES

1. "Homeschool Sports Access by State." Coalition for Responsible Home Education, 26 Aug. 2024, [responsiblehomeschooling.org/research/current-policy/homeschool-sports-access-by-state](https://responsiblehomeschooling.org/research/current-policy/homeschool-sports-access-by-state); "Missouri High School Sports and Activities: Eligibility Standards." MSHSAA, [www.mshsaa.org/Activities/Eligibility/EligibilityStandards.aspx](https://www.mshsaa.org/Activities/Eligibility/EligibilityStandards.aspx). Accessed 13 Mar. 2025.
2. Wagner, Brittany. "Homeschoolers Want to Play Too." Show-Me Institute, 5 Mar. 2015, [showmeinstitute.org/blog/school-choice/homeschoolers-want-to-play-too](https://showmeinstitute.org/blog/school-choice/homeschoolers-want-to-play-too).
3. Frank, Avery. "Looking at the Tape on the Clayton/Brentwood Football Merger." Show-Me Institute, 1 Dec. 2023, [showmeinstitute.org/blog/performance/looking-at-the-tape-on-the-claytonbrentwood-football-merger](https://showmeinstitute.org/blog/performance/looking-at-the-tape-on-the-claytonbrentwood-football-merger).
4. Ibid.



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