

Representative Fleischmann

As a Catholic high school Principal, I am contacting you to ask for your support of H.B. 5421, An Act Concerning Educations and Administrators.

In particular, there are two provisions in the bill that are important to all Catholic school teachers.

1. The bill repeals a provision passed last year that does not allow for experienced teaching in nonpublic schools as a means of obtaining a Professional Educator Certification.
2. The bill permits student teaching experience in private and religious schools to count towards preparation and eligibility to obtain an initial educator certification.

While it is not mandated by law, Catholic school teachers are required by the three (arch) dioceses to participate in professional development and all three offices are certified by the state to provide CEUs. Private and religious schools also receive Title II-A funds for teacher training.

It is unreasonable to disqualify a group of teachers to obtain this level of certification. The provision discriminates against non-public school teachers, since it exempts them on where they teach, not on any continuing education requirements and experience.

At least 20 states allow college students to obtain teacher certification by student teaching at a private or religious school. All of these states make it voluntary for each University to allow their students to teach at a private or religious school. This includes our neighboring states of Massachusetts and New York.

The student teaching experience is one of the most important components of any teacher certification process. Allowing college students to student teach in a private or religious school setting would certainly provide them with the skills to serve others and further the values and practices of their profession.

I hope that I can count on your support and I look forward to hearing your response.

Sincerely,

Christian Cashman
94 Robin Rd
West Hartford, CT 06119