

Testimony of Cathy Delehanty, President
Greenwich Education Association
Re: Senate Bill 1163
An Act Concerning Assault of a School Employee

Good afternoon, Senator Coleman, Representative Fox, and members of the Judiciary Committee. My name is Cathy Delehanty, and I am the President of the Greenwich Education Association. I have been a teacher in the Greenwich Public Schools since 1974, and now I am the representative for nearly 900 certified educators (classroom teachers, special education teachers, guidance counselors, school psychologists and social workers). I am here to speak in favor of Senate Bill 1163 which relates to the assault of a school employee.

Currently, the number of reported assaults does not accurately reflect the number of times teachers are being pushed, shoved, hit, spat upon, punched, threatened, or subjected to any other form of violent and/or insubordinate act. Often times the assaulted teacher is made to feel responsible for the assault. They are victims. Non-tenured teachers are often given the message that they must be having classroom management issues which led to the assault. Non-tenured teachers feel their job is at risk if they report incidences.

All teachers, tenured and non-tenured, need to feel that their school and their classrooms are a safe work environment. The students need to be aware of the serious, legal ramifications of their actions. Across the nation, assaults on teachers are on the rise. Teachers need the support of the State to know that they are respected and protected to continue to do their job to the best of their ability.

As the overall demands on the teaching profession grow with increased expectations and accountability, I feel it is part of the State's responsibility to take some of the concerns off of their plate so that teachers can remain focused on what is most important - student achievement. I implore you to take notice and support Senate Bill 1163 so that we address each student and their needs and appropriate placement due to the issues presented.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Cathy Delehanty
President
Greenwich Education Association
203-869-2864
geagps@optonline.net
www.greenwicheeducationassociation.org