

A Different Point of View: Proposed Bill will Negatively Impact Students

Thank you for caring enough about the students of Connecticut to read this email.

I have had the pleasure of being a teacher for 11 years. In those 11 years, I have worked as hard as I could and have often fought for my students and what is best for them. I am frightened that Governor Malloy's proposed bill will hurt our kids at a time they do not need anything else working against them. I have 4 main concerns:

1.) EVERY student deserves the best education, not just the ones who can help a teacher keep job security.

In the time that I have taught, and for several years was responsible for the scheduling for my schools, I have seen our most dedicated, most flexible, most demanding teachers often be the ones who are given (or are willing to take) our most challenging students. They do a great job eliciting success from these students, but cannot always prove that with a snapshot of standardized testing.

I have witnessed bad teachers do WHATEVER it takes not to have those students. With the proposed bill, our hardest working teachers will either be punished for wanting to work with the most challenging students or they, too, will not want to provide an education to those kids.

2.) Please do not take away the only advocates some of our students have.

In a perfect educational environment, administrators, teachers, and parents would all work together for the best opportunities for all children. However, in reality, political, financial, and societal influences impact the decisions made in our schools. As a teacher, I have often had to disagree with administration to stand up for or fight for what is best for the students I teach. It is what tax payers pay me to do.

The proposed bill will make teachers fearful to stand up for their students for fear of not being renewed, not getting tenure, or put into a bad situation merely for doing what it is they are hired to do.

3.) I attended Boston College Lynch School of Education for my undergraduate work and my graduate work. Before coming to Connecticut I taught at Perkins School for the Blind and in Newton, MA public school system (one of the best communities for education in our country.) I have attended and taught in excellent institutions. During those years and currently in my present school system, I have learned most from the amazing men and women among whom I teach...those veteran teachers who are attacked in this bill. We all know school systems could use more money and that most administrators do not make a career out of staying in one town like a teacher may. The proposed bill would encourage administrators to take away some of our finest assets just because they are too expensive. Please don't let that happen.

4.) In addition to requiring administrators to support first, then eliminate those teachers not working their hardest and being successful with students, perhaps we need to look at the teacher prep programs. For instance, it is my opinion that 1 year of a masters degree does not equip a special

educator to successfully educate all of our students. Let's set higher standards, not encourage lower ones.

Thank you for your time and commitment to education in our state.

Sincerely,

Lisa Hodgkins, M.Ed.