

Hello,

I am hoping that this email could be shared with the committee at the Senate Bill 24 hearing on Tuesday, Feb. 21.

I am a middle school teacher with 26 years of experience. I have many concerns about several parts of the Bill, but I will only mention the ones that concern me the most.

The first area of concern is the section on "Teacher and Principal Talent" and the new Evaluation and Support system.

Student achievement on statewide tests should not be the single, significant factor in the evaluation of a teacher. There are so many more factors in the day to day education of a student. There are some students who are knowledgeable but "freeze up" when taking tests. There are other students who are dealing with difficult family life or health problems. If these tests become even higher stakes than they already are, students will be turned off to getting an education. There are many other ways they can show their knowledge such as verbal communication, group activities or projects.

IF the tests are to be used as any part of a teacher's personal evaluation, it MUST be in a way that the scores of one grade can not be compared to a previous grade. In other words, the scores must be measured "longitudinally" . Each year, we greet a new group of students with individual needs, abilities and intelligence. They come with prior knowledge and we, as teachers, move them forwardand the amount they move forward should be used as the measure, not their actual score.

IF the test score is the only thing being used as an evaluation, some teachers would do everything they could to manipulate the students that are in their classes. They would refuse to have low scoring students in their classes.

The second area of concern is the tenure and teacher certification. I find it hard to believe that you would consider any part of the new proposal. How could one Principal decide certification level and salary of a large staff??? As it is now, my Principal is only able to come into my classroom about twice a year. I teach 180 days a year. It would be impossible for her to see my day to day work with students on a regular basis. It would also be possible for the Principal to have a personality conflict with a perfectly fine teacher or get overwhelmed with the power they would be given if this new Bill is passed. We already have a good, effective system of evaluating our teachers and even if a teacher has "tenure", if they start to perform poorly, there is a valid, fair system to evaluate and document inefficiencies. If the teacher does not correct them, they can be fired.

Please listen to all comments and know that they come from hard working and caring teachers.

Thank you,
Marian Carson