

TESTIMONY ON SB 1097

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Along with my colleague superintendents, I am concerned about one provision of SB 1097 that in essence makes the evaluation system for teachers and principals a mandatory topic of bargaining with the bargaining agents for both groups.

Under present statute, the local board of education has final authority over the teacher and principal evaluation system as long as representatives of the bargaining unit involved are consulted prior to a decision being made. Section 1 (b) of the proposed bill, however, removes from the Board of Education this final authority regarding the system that will be used to evaluate teachers in every school system in the state. The authority would rest with the professional development and evaluation committee unless the committee and the Board could not agree. If that is the case, the district would be obligated to implement the state model plan.

Members of professional development and evaluation committee members, however, have no responsibility for the results achieved by a school system. Only boards of education and the superintendents whom they hire have this responsibility. The bill, then, would give authority over a school system function that is directly related to the results achieved by a school system to a body that has no responsibility for those results.

The bill would also constitute a significant departure from over thirty years of history by making moot the 1986 Wethersfield case that holds that teacher evaluation systems are not a mandatory subject of bargaining.

*The prospective impact of this provision is suggested by its logical extension: divest **all** of the state's delegated powers from the local board of education; then name the local professional development and planning committee the new recipient of those powers.*