

To Whom It May Concern,

This bill is upsetting as a teacher and as a parent. As a school system, we work diligently to use quality materials, and provide high quality instruction. We plan daily and weekly, and there are countless hours that go into planning. Part of teaching, is realizing when students are not understanding something, and needing to revisit that topic or dig deeper. With this bill, that would not happen. We would need to keep on pace according to what our entire semester or year is planning. This would be taking huge steps back in education. Let's look at the two scenarios that could occur:

Classroom 1: You look in the 1<sup>st</sup> grade classroom and see students engaged. They are working on sounding out words and are a few lessons behind the other 1<sup>st</sup> grade classroom, but students are **READING**. Yes, they are **READING**. Reading words and sentences. They have a deeper understanding of how to use the sounds and how their brains work to create these pathways.

Now, let's look at the other 1<sup>st</sup> grade classroom. This classroom has submitted plans for the entire semester or year.

Classroom 2: As you look in on the 1<sup>st</sup> grade classroom, students are upset, some may be under their desks (that's how many children cope with difficult situations). The teacher is teaching, to the high flyer students that are listening. The teacher is worried, she needs to get through this lesson, because tomorrow they start on a whole new concept. It doesn't matter that only a handful of students understand what she is teaching, because she **MUST** continue with her plans. She keeps on track with what she submitted. Never mind assessing students, it doesn't actually matter because she will need to continue with the next lesson tomorrow, whether they understand it or not.

Now legislators, look at your own children. Which classroom do you want your son or daughter in? Your grandchild? Do you want to see your child flourish? Classroom #1 was able to teach to a deeper level. Classroom #2 stuck with the track they were put on, but only a few students are going to be able to learn. And guess what – those students would likely pick up the information through exposure. It's the student under the desk that needs a teacher to slow down. He/She needs to feel like they are valued and learning. Teachers are accountable to teach students. Sometimes, we need to slow down the pace or pick up the pace. Sometimes, a class needs to revisit a lesson because they didn't gain a deep understanding.

Now, let's also look at test scores. Which classroom scenario is going to have better scores? I can see how having a plan is important – I definitely agree. However, this bill would create a poor classroom learning environment.

We currently have a teacher shortage – which teacher is going to stick with teaching longer? The classroom who is given the autonomy to create her own lesson, make them engaging, and revisit when students need to hear a lesson again; or the teacher who is pushed. Pushed to stick with a timeline they set at the beginning of the year and must stick to. I have no problem allowing parents into my classroom, I believe in what I am doing. However, allowing parents to delegate what/how I am teaching is inappropriate.

As a parent and teacher, I love what I do. But this bill will make me reconsider my career path, as well as if it is the best place for my own 4 children.

Overall, please understand how this bill will have more negative than positive effects. Let's shut this bill down. Think of your children or grandchildren – what do you want their future or current classrooms to look like?

Joni Lematta

Ellendale Public School

1<sup>st</sup> Grade Teacher