

3/21/2023

To whom it may concern,

I am writing in opposition to SB2260.

My name is Rae Ireland. I hold an AA, AS, BS-Elem-Ed, and a MS-SpEd-LD and considered a Highly Qualified teacher in the state of ND. I have been teaching for the past 17 years and I have taught in ND for 16 of the 17 years.

I will begin by saying that the occupation of teaching is one of the hardest, most underpaid and least appreciated occupations in our state and our country. There are many hours that teachers donate to the profession above and beyond the normal 8-4 work hours. There are many dollars that teachers spend out of their salaries and pockets to ensure their students have what they need and all of the extra things above and beyond what a classroom budget can afford. But no matter how hard teachers work, no matter the many, many hours that teachers donate without pay, no matter the amount of money a teacher puts into the classroom without reimbursement, teachers are constantly being scrutinized.

The expectations of a teacher today are unrealistic. Teachers today are expected to be miracles workers. When tests don't show the numbers expected, schools are penalized and the requirements of teachers goes up, yet again. It seems to be never ending. I think that somewhere down the line, its forgotten that we teach children. Every child is not going to learn at the same rate and what is a big gain for one, may be a small gain for another. It's we call diversity.

So now comes SB2260, which just adds more requirements that schools and teachers don't need added to their already complex lists of requirements. At this point, we are working hard and are following the requirements at hand so to add more onto schools and teachers is going to be detrimental. We are at our limits. We struggle with parent/guardian involvement in our schools as it stands without SB2260. This bill would just add more work for the teachers and school and would take away precious time that we could be using to further the education of our students. On the flip side, this bill would add more work, more stress and would add conflict amongst schools, teachers and parents/guardians over lesson plans, curriculum, materials, presentation, assessment and things that are not up for debate. To put this plainly, this bill will open a can of worms that will not end well.

Many teachers are getting out of teaching because teachers and schools are less supported and expected to perform miracles. Teachers aren't doing their jobs if they have a fourth-grade student who is scoring low and trying hard but still cannot gain 1-3 grade level in one year to reach the same level as their peers. It isn't because the school or teachers or students haven't tried hard enough but it's the straight fact that every kid is not the same and doesn't learn at the same rate of their peers. It's called diversity. The last time I checked all students are not the same so why do we keep

expecting the same test results for all of our students? If there's a miracle formula or something we can take and use to pull all of our students up to grade level that would be GREAT, in the land of perfect. We don't live in the land of perfect, we live in the land of diversity. So with diversity, we can have one classroom with 15-20 different levels of learning and we, as teachers, are expected to do miracles so that all of the students finish off the school year at their respected grade level with all of their peers. That hasn't happened in the past and I'm certain that it won't be something that will be happening in the near or far future. Again I must re-iterate...We are not miracle workers but we are dedicated to do our best each school day to teach our students from where they are, up to the next level of learning, no matter how long that takes and still treat each student with respect and dignity.

Finally, teacher shortage is one of our major problems in ND and in our country. Passing this bill would discourage teachers in the field even more to go into new fields or take jobs in other fields because of the lack of support for hardworking schools and teachers. If you think teacher shortage is an issue now, pass this bill and you will see the decline of education and the lack of teachers we have now will not compare to the teacher shortage that we will be facing in the future due to the lack of support for our schools and teachers. As you vote, consider all the detrimental effects this will have now and, in the future, and do the right thing and vote No on SB 2600
Thank you,

Sincerely,
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