

Good morning, Chairman Beard and members of the Senate Education committee. Hello, my name is Regina Rodriguez Garcia. I'm from San Julián, Jalisco, México. I'm 15 years old.

When I first moved to Wishek in August 2018, I was only 8 years old and could only recognize colors and a few numbers in English. I was both excited and extremely nervous to start school as a 3rd grader. The day I walked into the classroom, I could feel all eyes on me. I felt so anxious, especially because I couldn't speak English. That's when my teacher pulled out a computer to help translate everything for me. She would speak for me as I typed out what I wanted to say. Even though I didn't understand what they were saying, thanks to my teacher and the staff at Wishek Public School, I learned English in just six months. I went from not understanding anything to being able to speak English.

All of this is thanks to the teachers I'm going to mention: Miss Scherbenske, Mrs. Kuntz, Mrs. Bettenhausen, and our principal, Miss Bosch.

I also remember how Mrs. Bettenhausen would pull me out of class to teach me English one-on-one. There were times when I struggled, but I learned so much, and I will never be able to thank our school enough for all they did, not only for me but also for my brother Juan.

I also want to mention how repeating a year in 4th grade helped me tremendously. When I first got to 4th grade, I had over 25 classmates, and my teacher just couldn't give me the support I needed. That's why we made the decision for me to repeat the year, and it was so helpful. Because of that decision, I'm now an 8th grader, and I owe so much of my growth and success to the education I received at Wishek Public School.