

HB 1526

Taryn Sweet

Testimony in Opposition

Good morning, Chairman Representative Heinert, members of the Education Committee, for the record, my name is Taryn Sweet and I am here today in my role as Secondary Principal for Beach High School to explain why I would appreciate a do not pass on HB 1526.

There is a process in place for establishing curriculum standards. Administrators and Educators work hard to make sure that the standards established by DPI are taught. These standards were determined by a team of administrators and teachers, rigorously researched, and discussed and it has a chance for public comment before it is implemented. We already have a process in place to establish standards. We already have legislation passed last session that says we cannot teach CRT. It also takes away the vital component of Native American history that was just passed last session. The subjective nature of a lot of these dictates would be extremely difficult to oversee, articulate and determine.

I attended a great deal of school, spent a great deal of time expanding my knowledge and education about the topic of social studies and education. Why am I and my teachers who have gone to school for this not acknowledged as professionals and subject experts who know how to do their jobs? In all my management and educational leadership training they tell us that micromanagement is not an effective way to manage any profession.

The bill states that a teacher shall not address the social emotional needs of students. First, in my building we talked about the importance of relationships in teaching and learning. We work

on creating relationships with students, it helps a child learn. Part of that is asking them if they are okay, showing them, we care. The reality of my day is that I spend time with the kids showing them I care. My staff talks with kids about everything from what new show they are watching to how their dog died, and they are sad. What do you consider addressing the needs? I have students who need love and acceptance. I cannot provide that? Who is an appropriate individual? I spend a great deal of my time helping students with social emotional needs.

Sometimes they are dysregulated and cause problems in class, I help them calm down and return to class. Should I have not be helping a student who is in crisis? We do not try to solve the problems of the students. We communicate with parents, or mental health professionals. We do not solve the problems because quite frankly, the family and the therapists simply help a student solve the problems themselves and give them tools to help deal with issues.

Sometimes, we give students tools like growth mindset or establishing SMART goals to achieve success. What are you saying the teachers and I CAN'T do? Does letting a kid know we care about them considered addressing social emotional needs?

The bill states that we must post all instructional material. No one is hiding what we do but are you aware of the amount of time it would take to post everything we use in a classroom? If parents want to know all this and want a say in their students' education, we already have policies in place for parents to request to view curriculum. Come in and talk to the teacher, we do not deny parents who want to come in and discuss curriculum with teachers. Parents have the choice to read the English book with your student. Parents can find information by talking to their kids, working with their kids on homework or talking to the teachers. Parents already have these abilities and rights.

How does this affect those of us who are different? How much do a parent's rights overcome a student's? I have Home on the Range students. Some of them have been removed from the home or are placed by DJS. How does that play out? We work with multiple team members to help the students. Sometimes we literally cannot communicate with their parents. In some instances of this bill, you have us take over discussions that parents should be having with their students but then in the same breath say we need to leave this to the parents. Transcendent Truth is what churches and parents should teach. We can instruct students about other cultures and ours to inform not indoctrinate or push a single truth except perhaps the golden rule.

Again, please let the systems in place determine curriculum and let my staff do what they are best at, which is educating the students. We got into education because we love our students and believe in preparing them for the future. I urge you to vote to not pass house bill 1256. I will stand for questions.