

To the Honorable members considering bill 2260,

I am an educator in the public school setting and have been for more than 10 years. Throughout my service in education, I have watched as more expectations and duties are placed on teachers. At the same time more demands are being made, compensation has not elevated to match. We have always strived to include parents and improve parental engagement. If a student will be gone for an extended time or is in the hospital for any reason, the teachers I work with have bent over backwards to support a family that requests work for the coming weeks. That will not change in the future. This bill will create a needless burden on teachers and their schools by creating unrealistic working expectations.

Schools already provide parents with access to curriculum and other educational resources being used in the classrooms. Any teacher that I work with will gladly provide information in a timely manner to parents that request it. To be required to drop everything and submit a near immediate response to a parent request due to a law is impractical. The burdens that teachers face with planning, teaching, re-teaching as needed, and performing extra duties around the school is challenging on its own. By placing unworkable planning requirements months in advance on teachers, something else on the plate of a teacher will suffer. Teachers will no longer be able to stop and re-teach a lesson that the students didn't understand because it is not in the plan. Teachers will no longer be able to experience and grow the spontaneous "teachable moments" that happen when off topic questions arise in a discussion. If they are required to set out all their plans weeks or months in advance, teachers will not feel free to explore this. Requiring teachers to record class materials days in advance is not plausible. If teachers are teaching all day, they would then have to go home at night to "record" what they planned to do days from now.

Teacher burn out is becoming a growing problem every day, even in our state. The demands are great and the rewards are diminishing. The field of teaching is no longer something people strive to enter into because of the stressors that the job brings. SB 2260 will make these conditions worse creating a further teacher shortage in our state.

The thing I am most concerned about in regards to SB 2260 is the protection it may offer abusive or neglectful parents when it comes to our ability to report. We need to be able to protect the children in our care. This bill will make this far more difficult for our schools to provide help and assist children where the parent is the suspected abuser.

Please think about our children's future before voting on this bill. A future without teachers is a bleak one. If you vote to increase the demands and take away our rights to represent abused or neglected children, there will not be many teachers who stick around.

Sarah Skogen

Hettinger Public School Teacher