

To whom it may concern,

My name is Landon Pavlish, but as most people know me, I am Mr. P. I am a first-year teacher in southwestern North Dakota, and this bill scares me. I figured that rather than copying and pasting what others have said (which in the educational world, is called plagiarism) I thought I would voice my opinion, from the mouth of someone just starting out in the profession.

As a first year teacher, I wake up everyday long before the sun rises so that I can be at school at least an hour early to prepare for the day ahead. As I go about my day, I deal with disruptions and distractions, little victories and large failures. Once the day is done, I wave off my students and get to work for an extra six hours, grading papers, adjusting lessons, and finding the extra resources needed to assist the students who need the support. We do not have an interventionist for math, so that is my responsibility. We do have one reading specialist who has to juggle herself and her time between every single class in every single grade, so for some of my students who struggle in reading, I have to make extra plans to meet their needs as well. I have been told that after I have a few years under my belt, I won't stay after school for so long because all of my materials and resources will be made and put together from prior years. I do not teach anything controversial, I do not teach anything offensive, and I most certainly don't push my own agenda onto my students.

So I ask this, how am I supposed to do my job if someone else is deciding what I teach, when I teach it, and how I should teach it, with no room to move? How am I supposed to support my students when we are short on staff as it is and I am required to teach the next lesson the next day whether my students understood the fundamentals or not, because that is what my lesson plan says. What happens when we have an emergency over an important concept and we have no time left to teach it until the following week when it is way out of our student's heads? I already spend an extra eight hours of my day reflecting on my lessons, working to prepare for the next day, and adjusting to meet the needs of my students, (without overtime pay mind you). Am I expected to do more? Am I going to have to spend more time posting curriculum that parents have approved and can change from year to year? Am I going to have to devote my life to look into resources that help engage students and have them approved by parents, who a lot of times, have busy lives as well and can't focus on approving lessons? All of these are serious questions that I now have to think about.

Yet, as I type this, a more serious question pops into my head. Had I known about this, would I have spent four years of my life preparing to become a teacher? Teachers are already a rare thing in this state. We have a shortage, the whole country does. I could take my talents elsewhere, to a place where I am needed, where I am welcomed, where I am seen. I love my job, I love my students, and I love the people that I work with. I know that some of those people will quit this profession if this bill passes. Good luck trying to attract teachers to come teach in our schools as well. This is not a good look for new teachers, like I was just a year ago. I wish you all the best in this decision, it is definitely a hard one.

Sincerely,

Landon "Mr. P" Pavlish