

I am writing in opposition to SB 223. This proposed bill is inequitable, unnecessary, and unjust.

Many families choose a private school option for their family because public schools have failed to either provide an adequate education for their children or keep them safe. Public education was set up hundreds of years ago, and much of its initial structure has not changed. This poses a real problem for many families, as the "one size fits all" formula of public education has proved to be a harmful experience for them. Families of all different cultures, backgrounds, incomes, and abilities have sought out private education to help their children receive an education that fits them culturally, emotionally, and physically. These needs are being met in a number of different ways from how they grade, what curriculum they focus on, how they meet their unique emotional needs, to who teaches and supports their children. Most parents who choose private education spend hours researching schools, interviewing staff, and touring campuses. There is no way a board of seven people can possibly be versed in knowing what each child needs to be educated and what specific things will help these kids reach their full potential. To subject their new school to be under authority of a board comprised of people who set up the same system that failed them in public school is completely inequitable.

Currently, private schools can go through an accreditation process. Most private schools go through this process, and most colleges accept this accreditation. There are seemingly no complaints about the process currently in place. We do not need more bureaucracy.

This proposed bill attempts to solve a problem that doesn't even appear to exist. There are no studies to show private school children are receiving less of an education than public school children.

To threaten to take away sports and clubs from students is just plain bully behavior. Years ago, our son was enrolled in a public school that, year after year, "failed" under the No Child Left Behind Policy. At that time, the state had empirical evidence that these schools were not providing students with an adequate education, yet, no sports or clubs were ever taken away from these students. Under SB 223, clubs and sports would be taken away if schools do not meet the requirements set up by a few individuals, all far removed from knowing the students in each building.

Please, reject this proposed bill. Please don't subject families to more systemic harm. Please don't subject students to unfair consequences. Please don't create bureaucracy when there is no evidence that more is needed. Please let kids be able to be in an environment tailored to them so they can be safe, enjoy their education, and become lifelong learners!