

Submitter: Michelle Morrison

Agency: Hillsboro School District

Date: March 6, 2023

Committee: House Committee on Education

Measure: HB 2703

I am submitting written testimony in opposition of HB 2703.

I have served school districts since 1998 and have been through multiple types and styles of bargaining. Although I think that class size and caseloads are already a topic brought to the bargaining table, I was not in agreement for that to be issued as a mandatory subject of bargaining. However, when SB 580 passed in 2021, I was greatly heartened at the wisdom of the legislators to focus the subject on Title Schools. This provided an equity lever that districts have not had before in their attempts to provide accessible and relevant instructions to all students, regardless of their household income or demographics.

Removing that requirement is a mistake from the administrators view as an equity issue. The current rule ensures that the most vulnerable learners will be considered a priority.

Schools are a service business with 80 percent or more of operational expenditures as staff that serve students. A budget reduction impacting staff typically means an increase in student to staff ratios. Class size and caseload management is already a priority for district administrators and this rule currently protects vulnerable populations during staffing and throughout the bargaining process.

The projected general fund shortfall in Hillsboro School District for the 2023-25 biennium is \$10.2 million dollars at the Governors Recommended Budget of \$9.9 billion for the State School Fund. This equals an increase to the student to licensed staff ratio of 2 student system-wide for each year of the biennium (\$2.6 million per student to licensed staff per year). SB 580 requires the district to staff with the vulnerable student populations in mind.

Current target for student to licensed staff ratios (requires a State School Fund appropriation of \$10.3 billion to maintain):

	Current Service Level	Projected Service Level
Kindergarten	26:1	28:1
Grades 1-3	24:1	26:1
Grades 4-6	28:1	30:1
Grades 7-12	30:1	32:1

Please let me know if I can provide additional information. Thank you for your consideration,

Michelle Morrison, District Financial Officer

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