

Submitter: Emily McIntire
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Education
Measure: SB756

Hello Chair Dembrow, Vice Chair Weber, and Members of the Committee,

I am sure you will be sick of seeing my testimony- but here we go again;)

I would ask, in accordance with this bill- are we sure this isn't happening? I have read the special education booklet that is given to parents. In the handbook, it states that for an IEP or 504 meeting, there has to be ALL the key players in the room, the parents, student, teacher, staff member, everyone who might be helpful to have in the room to help make the BEST choices for the child the meeting is about. These are already requirements for the school to do.... In regards to having ALL school employees have access to all information about a child- this makes me a little bit nervous. If a staff member is going to be having constant and direct contact with this child then yes- they need to know, and I would even go so far as to say the SCHOOL should be letting staff know about students that have higher needs. That is a safety issue, for the student and the staff member. But to just allow anyone to have access to records is a violation in my book. Not everyone needs to have access to confidential information. We live in a world where not everyone has everyone's best intentions and I feel this could lead to mistreatment of students and private information.- Also- I have never heard of any of these meetings not be during at time where all staff members were being compensated.

Section 3 of this bill- I actually like. Having been a substitute in a high needs SPED class, it would have been really nice to know the best ways to interact, help, and engage these students. To be more informed of the needs they have, the way the disabilities might portray themselves, and also key ways to help kids calm down. THIS- training- is something that I think should be discussed further and offered. Even if it is something that the EAC (Educator Advancement Council) has on their dashboard as a Professional Development tool, I think that would be beyond helpful.

I would like to add, that yes, we can have some bad players in the SPED arena. Special education is HARD. EVERY child/student is different. Autism looks similar but extremely different in each child, as does EACH disability. Then you have the family setting, the child's disposition, the other children in the room, the teachers, the day, the food, the smells, the sounds, sights, feelings- there is no perfect way to make this perfect for everyone. But I can tell you, that our state has gone to great lengths to make sure that our SPED students are treated with respect, care, concern, love, compassion, and dignity.

I would strongly encourage you all to reach out to your closest school and tour their special education department. I would also encourage you to reach out to your local school district and ask them for the process and procedure they are using to oversee and implement their SPED services. See what their biggest concerns are and how we can help. If there is a district struggling- lets help.

Again, thank you for taking the time to read this testimony and for your service.

Blessings! Emily McIntire