

Submitter: Douglas Detrick
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Revenue
Measure: HB3221

Dear Chair Nathanson, Vice-Chairs Walters and Reschke, and Members of the House Committee on Revenue,

My name is Douglas Detrick and I am a parent of two children at Grout Elementary. One is in 2nd grade, the other we were forced to withdraw because PPS has not provided enough staff support to make a free and appropriate public education possible for him. He was in 4th grade, he was in a regular classroom and has an IEP. His classroom teacher was talented and enthusiastic, and we love his SPED teacher and other members of his team. They all did their best, but there was not nearly enough of their time to support our son and all the other kids who need it. PPS has not funded the necessary aides, support staff, small group support that he (and many others) require.

Our Special Educators have caseloads that are too high. They are stretched too thin. The tiered intervention system that PPS supposedly has to identify and remediate academic gaps in General Education is negligible at best, considering there are virtually no extra staff or aides hired or available to implement any consistent skill building with our struggling kids. Look at our state scores. Look at our graduation rates. This failure begins in Elementary school.

We support this measure, and all others that will bring more funding to PPS. We also urge PPS to prioritize funding for teachers over technology and new curriculums. Teachers and support staff are more expensive, but they have a much bigger and more positive impact. There are so many kids that still need help at Grout. Please pass this measure and give them more support.

Thank you.