

Chair Neron, Vice Chairs McIntire and Dobson, and Members of the Committee,

For the record, my name is Justin Dowell. I am a proud OSEA member and a Building Secretary at an elementary school in the Centennial School District.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 3357 today.

In my role, I talk to classified and licensed staff daily about incident reports and why they don't submit them or why they feel that they can't after being injured. Many of our staff, including EA's, bus drivers, custodians, and others, are hesitant to report incidents because they fear students will be unfairly punished for behavior that they can't control. They also struggle to find the time to complete reports or locate the necessary forms in the first place. Even more concerning, many believe that once a report is submitted, it stops at the administrator's desk, where the decision is made unilaterally whether or not to send it further up the chain of review. This lack of transparency discourages reporting and safety concerns from being properly addressed.

A statewide reporting system would solve these issues by:

1. Providing a standardized, accessible platform for submitting reports,
2. Ensuring reports are automatically reviewed at the appropriate levels if need be
3. Protecting staff from retaliation and ensuring that reports are handled fairly and consistently.

This isn't just about improving paperwork, it's about creating a safer and more accessible school environment for both students and staff. A statewide system would ensure that safety concerns are documented, addressed, and used to improve policies moving forward.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today. I urge an aye vote on HB 3357.

Sincerely,

Justin Dowell
OSEA Member, Centennial School District