

TERESA L. SCHOOLEY
STATE REPRESENTATIVE
Twenty - Third District



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
STATE OF DELAWARE
LEGISLATIVE HALL
DOVER, DELAWARE 19901

COMMITTEES
Education, Chair
Capital Infrastructure
Health & Human Development
Veterans Affairs

Education Committee
Meeting Minutes
June 16, 2010

Vice Chair Scott called the meeting to order at 2:35 pm. Members present were Representatives Barbieri, Oberle, Walls, Jaques, Mulrooney, Miro, Briggs-King, Kowalko, Schooley, Q. Johnson, Blakey, and Kovach. For a list of guests present, please see attached.

Vice Chair Scott started by calling on Chair Schooley to introduce her bill, **HOUSE BILL 470, AN ACT TO AMEND TITLE 14 OF THE DELAWARE CODE RELATING TO EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION**. Chair Schooley then stated that the bill updates the current code concerning responsibilities for the Early Childhood Council to make it comply with federal requirements for states. She brought up how the bill relates to the Interagency Management Resource Committee (IRMC) and the Early Childhood Council (ECC). She stated that HB 470 will also help Delaware to be more competitive in seeking federal funds.

Vice Chair Scott then asked if there were any questions or comments. Seeing none he asked for a motion. Rep. Jaques motioned to release the bill from committee; Rep. Kowalko seconded the motion. HB 470 was released from committee on a 1-10-0 vote.

Chair Schooley then introduced the next bill, **SENATE BILL 263, AN ACT TO AMEND TITLE 14 OF THE DELAWARE CODE RELATING TO TEACHER NOTICE AND HEARING PROTECTIONS**. She brought up that many educators around the state are on board for this bill and will be used as part of Race to the Top. Colorado and Florida had problems with similar bills, but educators around Delaware want this bill. She then asked Dr. Lowery to speak on behalf of the bill. Dr. Lowery stated that this is a good bill and will help with teacher assessment. She brought up that new teachers have two years of satisfactory student growth before they will have the standard assessment. She said that after that three-year period, the teacher will be assessed through student growth measures. The teacher will not be fired during that time – if they do not show much progress – but they will not receive the highest level of employment protection.

Rep. Blakey then asked what is in existence that will help keep teachers improving. Dr. Lowery said that the Department of Education has new teacher evaluation techniques that appraise teachers to keep them working above and beyond the standards that help train teachers. She brought up how this bill gives the teachers two years of work and the third

is for the evaluation. She concluded by saying that there are additional evaluations outside of this third-year evaluation.

Representatives Briggs-King and Kovach made a statement about how new teachers are not always given the best students and this may affect how their student growth assessments look. Dr. Lowery stated that they are looking closely at this subject. She brought up how these evaluations are not just for the teacher, they are also for the district.

Rep. Blakey then asked by whom the teachers are being evaluated. Dr. Lowery said that the development coaches will train the administrators for this purpose. She brought up that after the evaluation is over, the teachers will be given all of the write-ups and documents from the process.

Rep. Jaques then asked what will happen with teachers in the arts and physical education areas. Dr. Lowery said that those teachers still have to abide by the national standards as well as the different district standards. She stated that most assessments are based on levels of proficiency and that the teachers also help make up the evaluation measures.

Rep. Mulrooney then asked what the term “highest protection” meant. Dr. Lowery brought up how the state of Delaware does not use the term “tenure” and that highest protection is supposed to take that form. She stated that once the teacher has the “highest protection” teachers will have a hard time losing their job.

Rep. Jaques then motioned to release the bill from committee; Rep. Barbieri seconded the motion. SB 263 was released from committee on a 2-9-0 vote.

Chair Schooley then introduced the next bill, **SENATE BILL 245, AN ACT TO AMEND TITLE 11 OF THE DELAWARE CODE RELATING TO CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECKS FOR STUDENT TEACHERS**. She stated that this bill will make all 19 districts require their student teachers to obtain background checks. She brought up that the price for these will be around 69 dollars, which will be covered by the student teacher.

Rep. Q. Johnson then applauded the bill by saying that this bill will help clear up the inconsistencies in background checks from district to district. Rep. Briggs-King then stated that sometimes employers can find a lot of information about a person through these checks and she supports the bill.

Rep. Kowalko then motioned to release the bill from committee; Rep. Mulrooney seconded the motion. SB 245 was released from committee on a 0-10-0 vote.

Chair Schooley then proceeded to introduce the next bill to the committee, **SENATE BILL 261, AN ACT TO AMEND TITLE 14 OF THE DELAWARE CODE TO ENCOURAGE PARENTS TO BECOME INVOLVED IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS**. She stated that this bill is very similar to House Bill 350. She brought up that the differences are that local districts can adopt any model that commits to student success

for their declaration of responsibilities. This bill does not hold the teachers accountable for the lack of signatures. She then stated that this bill will help keep track of where districts are using their money for parental involvement.

Rep. Jaques then asked who will enforce the declaration of responsibilities. He stated that he does not want to take time out of teachers' busy day. Chair Schooley then stated that this is intended to make schools perform more outreach and engagement for the purpose of parental involvement. Rep. Jaques then commented that if educators took the time to educate parents on engagement that would be effective. He then stated that he does not believe that this declaration of responsibilities will be affective. Rep. Scott then commented that this bill was made to help communicate to parents that we want their involvement to help their students.

Rep. Miro commented that this is a feel-good and unnecessary bill that does not add anything that schools have not previously done. He then stated that this is only for Title 1 schools. He concluded by saying that this bill is an activity that most schools already do. Chair Schooley then stated that this bill is not for Title 1 schools because they already do this.

Rep. Barbieri then commented that there is strong support for this bill and that this bill is for awareness. Rep. Oberle then stated that this bill is a step in the right direction and there is a possibility to add more to this legislation down the road. Rep. Blakey then asked who will be accountable for this declaration and how will legislators know parents and teachers have carried out this legislation. Chair Schooley then said that this is up to the school district on how to enforce it. She brought up how there will be no penalty for parents and teachers for not doing it, but it does have some teeth for districts.

Rep. Miro stated that this bill has no teeth and that teachers should receive an incentive for parents who sign this agreement. He commented that there are no accountability measures, except for the Title 1 students. Rep Kowalko then commented that this can be a successful program for districts to share what parental involvement measures they have done and which ones have worked.

Rep. Q. Johnson then stated that if this bill helps engage 1, 10 or even 20 new parents, then the committee helped create a better education system. Rep. Scott stated that there needs to be more parental involvement in schools and thinks this bill can accomplish something.

Rep. Kovach then stated that he is concerned with lines 26 and 27, pertaining to federal funds for parental involvement. He commented that this information can be used for good or bad because there is potential for misunderstanding in the data collected for parental involvement in relation to the amount of parents who sign of the document.

Vice Chair Scott then asked if there were any questions or comments. Seeing none, he asked for a motion. Rep. Barbieri motioned to release the bill from committee; Rep. Oberle seconded the motion. SB 261 was released from committee on a 0-7-1 vote.

The meeting adjourned at 3:25 pm.

Respectfully submitted by,

Trevor Felix