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Committees
Government Oversight & Reform, *Vice Chairman*
Finance—Primary/Secondary Education Subcommittee
Education
Judiciary
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Rules and reference

Matt Huffman
Majority Floor Leader
12th District

To: Members of the Senate Education Committee
From: Senator Matt Huffman
Date: June 9, 2020
Re: Sponsor Testimony: COVID-19 Education Changes

Chairwoman Lehner, Vice Chair Brenner, Ranking Member Fedor, and members of the Senate Education Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony on Senate Bill 319, which contains several changes to education policy in response to COVID-19.

This legislation will allow schools, students, and educators flexibility and exemptions regarding certain testing, evaluation, and training requirements that may be difficult/impossible to fulfill due to the closure of schools in response to coronavirus. The goal of this legislation is to make it easier to navigate education requirements during the uncertain times that we are experiencing due to the COVID-19 virus.

Here is a brief summary of the policy changes found in SB 319:

- **Use of student growth data:** Prevents districts from using student academic growth data in evaluations for the 2020-21 school year
- **Third grade reading tests:** suspends the requirement that the State Board of Education must increase the cut score for 4th grade promotion in the 3rd grade reading test for the 2020-21 school year
- **Homeschool students:** Exempts parents of homeschooled students from the administrative requirement of submitting an academic assessment record for the 2019-20 school year to their local school district in order to continue homeschooling their child in the 2020-21 school year
- **Graduation requirements and end-of-course exams:** Ensures that students who were not able to take end-of-course exams in spring 2020 due to the school closure order do not have to take those exams in the 2020-21 and allows districts that awarded pass/fail credit to students for courses in Spring 2020 to determine locally whether points should be awarded to that student
- **Teacher contracts:** Allows a district board of education to provide a one-year limited contract to a teacher, administrator, or superintendent in lieu of an automatic continuing contract if the board elected not to evaluate that employee for the 2019-20 school year

- **Reading plans:** suspends the requirement for certain districts and schools to submit reading achievement improvement plans for the 2020-21 school year
- **Bus Driver recertification:** Directs ODE to create an online bus driver recertification program in lieu of required classroom hours
- **Community school sponsor evaluations:** Prohibits ODE from issuing community school sponsor ratings for the 2019-20 school year, instead requiring ODE to report results of sponsors' adherence to quality practices and compliance components based on available information
- **Special education students:** extends the currently authority for licensed special education providers to serve children using tele-health and electronic communication methods through the 2020-21 school year
- **Permissive furloughs:** allows district boards of education to temporarily furlough employees for financial reasons instead of having to resort to use of a Reduction in Force of their employees
- **Funding for districts with valuation losses:** Provides additional funding for school districts that have experienced local valuation losses that were not accounted for in their state foundation aid due to the suspension of the formula for FY20 and FY21

Thank you for your attention and consideration. I will be happy to answer any questions you might have at this time.