



# Centerburg Local School District

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March 9, 2022

Chair Brenner, Vice Chair Blessing, Ranking Member Fedor, and members of the Senate Primary and Secondary Education Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to enter written testimony in regard to House Bill (HB) 583. I am Mike Hebenthal, Superintendent of Centerburg Local School District, Knox County. I am here today to testify in support of HB 583.

The issue of lack of substitute teachers has grown to a level that a permanent solution needs to be considered. Our district struggled to fill substitute positions before the pandemic and the situation is now at an unworkable level. This year we have had to fill classrooms with teaching staff during their conference periods, administrative staff, secretarial staff, and at one point we contemplated closing the school due to lack of substitutes. We combined classes at times in able to cover two or more classes with one teacher. These classes were moved to the auditorium due to lack of space, which is not an acceptable learning environment. Our district is a small, rural district that shares subs with other schools in our county. The reality is there are not enough substitutes to cover the need.

This year we did have two people become subs through the temporary allowances allowed under Senate Bill 1. HB 583 includes similar flexibility. Neither of these substitutes have a college degree and both have done very well. Both are moms of current students in our district and only want to work part time and only during school days. They are positive role models and do well at continuing the educational program in the classroom. A position of a substitute is exactly what they are looking for but they aren't going to invest their personal funds to get credentialed for a part time job that pays less per hour than fast food. They have been responsible, reliable and effective at doing what we ask of them.

Please give this bill your utmost consideration. I very much understand and support the limitation of five days for long term positions. But for day-to-day subbing when the majority of the time they are in a class for one or two days, these people do a great job.

Thank you for you consideration.

Mike Hebenthal, Superintendent.

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