

Thank you for your public service, your time, & your consideration of my testimony. My name is Catherine Cunnningham. I am first & foremost a dedicated Christian. I'm also a former teacher in public & private schools for 8 years, & the parent of a public school student. I am opposed to this bill because **any** pull-out program (doesn't matter if its for religion, athletics, college planning, etc) is disruptive & disrespectful to the teachers & subjects missed. It also presents security & classroom management issues, & doubles the workload for teachers.

There is a well known verse from Ecclesiastes: To everything there is a season & a TIME for every matter under heaven. In my family, the time for religious instruction is Sunday morning, Sunday afternoon, many Monday & Thursday evenings, & whenever we engage in conversation about Christ because whenever two or three gather in His name, there's the church. (Matthew 18:20) We would never interrupt Spanish 3 class to teach religion, because that is disrespectful.

At the heart of any request for off-campus instruction is a request for time. That time comes at the expense of curricular & character learning in progress. An excerpt from lifewise.org states "our programs typically take place during existing specials to ensure that students don't miss (sic) essential coursework." When given permission to skip that class, the student learns that those classes are non-essential and so are the teachers that teach them. Let's unpack that and see if there's any truth.

Ask any graduate student the most important thing they learned and they'll tell you bibliography. Students learn the foundations of bibliography in their ('special' 'non-essential') elementary library class.

Ask any undergraduate who paid their way through college with a music scholarship how important their music training was. I did eight years of admissions for OSU School of Music, & I can attest that there is a huge population of Appalachian & urban kids who cannot afford college without their music scholarship. Same with athletic & visual art scholarships. The foundation of talent training happens during elementary & middle school "special" classes. They are ESSENTIAL to the athletes, musicians & artists that rely on them.

I find it ironic that Lifewise purports to teach character training, when the format of the program is grounded in disrespect. No educator would barge into Sunday school & demand to teach their subject during Sunday school. It's not their TIME. If you teach respect, you cannot teach students to selectively apply it. Kids are smart. They understand implied messages of disrespect & *learn* how to treat their teachers dismissively.

'Specials' teachers have duties monitoring recess, lunch, & crosswalk. Why should students choose to respect teacher's safety directives when their parents & Lifewise have communicated that specials teachers aren't important or worthy of respect? Students get confusing mixed messages when they have to abide by specials teachers at recess & lunch, but not in class.

When students return from Lifewise (possibly late) with gum, toys, games & other "prizes" that they're not allowed to have in school, its disruptive to both the Lifewise students & the students not in Lifewise. Learning cannot take place under those conditions.

Teacher's statement that it doubles their lesson planning workload is factual. Any time a group of students is missing, the teacher must then create a lesson plan for the present students, & a separate lesson plan for the absent students, as well as a plan to somehow merge them. ALL STUDENTS are responsible for material & concepts missed.

Finally, if its character training that you desire, I promise that character training is happening in specials classes. Music & PE is where learn concepts like teamwork, cooperation, balance, problem solving, sportsmanship, & RESPECT.

A school day is not the TIME for religious instruction. It is disruptive, disrespectful, unsafe & inconsiderate.