

Testimony Opposing House Bill 70
Before the Senate Education Committee
By Tina Banks

Members of the Senate Education Committee, thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony opposing House Bill 70.

I teach English at Chaney High School, which is one of the high schools in the Youngstown City School district. I have over twenty years of teaching experience in the Youngstown City Schools.

I am here today to discuss why having a CEO run a school district is detrimental to the education of children. Giving one person ultimate power and control over an entire district has resulted in the deterioration of the educational process. One specific example is the implementation of Gradual Release of Responsibility (GRR). GRR is an extremely effective strategy. It is not effective at all, however, the way it was recreated and expected to be used by every single teacher in the district. We were instructed to use the following model:

- 5-15 minutes; Focused Instruction
- 5-7 minutes; Whole Group Guided Instruction
- 35-60 minutes Collaborative Learning
- 10 minutes Independent Learning

By implementing such a rigid learning structure, individualized differentiation becomes impossible. Not all assignments or subject matter fits into this neat little prescription. Kids cannot always learn this way. Plus there is no allowance for the millions of little things that also occur in a lesson. It's an extremely unrealistic way to attempt to teach.

We were introduced to two very expensive companies that were hired in order to help us become better teachers. Upon investigation, it was discovered that these two companies had two very different philosophies, so while one group was teaching us one way, the other group was going in a totally different direction. The mission statements for Discovery Education and ICLES clearly describe their very different missions.

One last thing that I found tremendously detrimental to my kids was the implementation of end of grade period testing. Our students are already subjected to a barrage of tests, both state and district mandated. Adding another test to the docket is nothing short of ridiculous. These particular tests were designed to assess the mastery of standards. They did not take into account the number of days direct instruction was lost due to calamity days, testing, assemblies, professional development waiver days, or any of the other multitude of interruptions in a typical school day.

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to speak for the students of the Youngstown City Schools. My kids do not need another CEO, they need someone who can address their specific needs and teach them in a way that best suits their learning styles.

