

Good Afternoon

My name is Julie Garcia and I am a teacher in the Lorain City School District. I have 29 years of teaching experience, and I have lived my entire life in the city of Lorain and I am a proud graduate of Lorain City Schools. In the past 18 months, I have seen our district fall into a dark abyss that will take years to emerge from. Before the

implementation of HB70, our district was beginning to see improvement. Teachers knew that our superintendent cared about them and our students. He took the time to attend student activities, such as plays, sporting events and after school family engagement activities. He acknowledged teachers, students and parents when he saw them outside of school. He even attended

funerals of students and staff that we lost during his tenure. He became a genuine member of our community.

Our current CEO, his chiefs and administrators have not tried to become members of our community. Most don't live within the city even though they profess their love for Lorain's students. The community feeling that had been built over the years is

slipping away with the influx of outsiders into our district.

Academics are suffering! Each building is being told to teach whatever their Dean of Academics tells them to, such as I ready, A-Z learning, A Net, etc. We don't use the board adopted and teacher selected curriculum. Every building is an island unto itself. When my students leave my classroom to go to a different school in the

district, they will be introduced to something completely new regarding reading and math. This is obviously not good for any student, especially in Lorain, where students are transient and consistency is needed to help them be successful.

Nothing positive has come from HB70 being present in Lorain. Our students are the biggest victims. They have lost

interventions that are greatly needed. Our Title 1 program is nonexistent; my intervention group is 20 plus students. A chief told me that our building would not be getting any bodies to help with intervention, we have the Accelerated Reader computer program and that is our intervention. The funds that were used to support intervention teachers like Title

1 was used to hire 58 new administrators who have no student contact.

Student behavior is out of control. Principals are worried about the data that is shared on their Big Board since it is used to evaluate administrators. So students who disrupt, attack each other, steal, vandalize and more are returned to the classroom with no consequences. Other

students see this and are beginning to decide to participate in these behaviors knowing there are no consequences.

Our young teachers are seeking jobs elsewhere, afraid to speak out about inequities, equipment that does not work and lack of simple things such as books, lockers, paper, etc. They fear a target being put on their backs, so they do not

participate in things such as OEA sponsored lobby days or meeting such as this one.

Administrators and chiefs are bullying our teachers. Many are afraid to make a report for fear of retaliation. Those who have come forward are being targeted or bullied by administrators and they fear their OTES evaluation will be held hostage for their reporting.

Teacher morale is extremely low and many have stated that they would leave Lorain if they could.

We have not always been a failing district; there was a time when we had a magnet program that was nationally recognized. What happened? The state report card happened! I have to admit that I have just really become familiar with how it works. My

understanding is that High school graduation rate is calculated only on students who attend Lorain High School starting at 9th grade. The student only counts if they attend Lorain High for all 4 years and graduate. If a student transfers to Lorain High as a sophomore, Junior or senior they do not count in the graduation rate even though they will graduate from Lorain

High. In more affluent communities, parents purchase homes and stay put. However, in cities like Lorain, Youngstown and East Cleveland, the population is transient, so our report cards will never improve. This is only one example of how the state report card is biased.

HB70 not only needs to be repealed, the state report card should be done away with also.

I understand accountability, but until a report card that is representative of All of the the diverse communities found in Ohio, there will be no equity.

I urge the legislature to repeal ALL parts of HB 70 and replace it with the necessary wrap around services that are needed for our students.

DSM