Senate Testimony 5-29-19

Please keep the language of HB 154 in the proposed budget. Please pass HB 166 so we can go back to local control.

These past 2 years have been a disaster for students, parents, the community and teachers at LCS. I know firsthand that families are leaving our district. In my preschool class I have 13 students that are eligible for kindergarten. Only 5 of them are staying with our district. Why? The district sent out a survey to them and the parents returned them and explained that they were happy with the teachers and the preschool program, but are not confident with LCS going forward. I asked a little further because I have good relationships with the families- they do not feel the state takeover has helped in anyway, but has done the opposite. Title being used to pay salaries instead of having trained instructors work with struggling students, too many professional development days instead of having children in class, discipline it too lax due to new programs put in place, confusion over the new grading system, and more. Not only are my preschoolers not returning to LCS, but their brothers and sisters are not returning. This hurts all of us and the community.

Confusion and chaos are the two words that come to my mind when I sum up these past 2 years. New grading system, new behavior management system, new administrators, and not much professional development or teacher input with these new programs and people. The report cards were late going home each quarter with many errors. The administrators or central office had to review each report card before it was sent home. Why? We have been successful for years managing report cards. Not this year when we were micro managed.

Mistruths- Many mistruths have been spoken by our CEO- teachers miss an average of 18.9 days a year. Not true. Teachers wanted/requested the monthly Tuesday early dismissals, very early- 10:30 a.m. for our students, for professional development. No, we certainly did not ask for more PD and less time with our students.

So much more I could tell you about, but the most recent mishap was when Hardy non- renewed 3 of our teachers that are Union Building Reps on the last day of school. There was no due process, no development plan, no reason. One teacher was rated skilled and recommended for tenure from her principal. How does this happen? Hardy tries to do whatever he wants because of HB 70 giving him control. No one person should ever have sole control over a district.

Please pass HB 166 and keep the HB 154 language in it so we can start planning for a successful ’19 –’20 school year. WE as educators desire to work with parents, students and community members, the BOE and a new superintendant to truly make LCS a winning school district. Time is of the upmost importance - please help our community, students, and parents and pass HB 166.

Sincerely- Karen Rossi 21 teacher of LCS and PROUD of it!