

PA13-245

SB1097

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H – 1178

**CONNECTICUT
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE**

**PROCEEDINGS
2013**

**VOL.56
PART 29
9742 – 10110**

THE CLERK:

Yes. House Bill 6509, Madam Speaker,

Total Number Voting 141

Necessary for Passage 71

Those voting Yea 132

Those voting Nay 9

Absent and not voting 9

DEPUTY SPEAKER RITTER:

The bill passes.

Will the Clerk please call Calendar 662?

THE CLERK:

Yes, Madam Speaker, on page 32, Calendar Number 662, favorable report of the Joint Standing Committee on Education, Substitute Senate Bill 1097, AN ACT CONCERNING REVISIONS TO THE EDUCATION REFORM ACT OF 2012.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RITTER:

Representative Fleischmann.

REP. FLEISCHMANN (18TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker, and good evening.

I move acceptance of the Joint Committee's favorable report and passage of the bill in concurrence with the Senate.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RITTER:

The question is acceptance of the Joint Committee's favorable report and passage of the bill in concurrence with the Senate.

Representative Fleischmann, you have the floor.

REP. FLEISCHMANN (18TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, as -- as almost every member of this Chamber will recall, certainly everyone who happens to be serving in their second or -- or more term, last year we passed a landmark Education Reform Act, a really strong piece of legislation. As is often the case when you (inaudible) implementation, you start to realize that there may be some tweaks needed, and this legislation makes some of those necessary adjustments to ensure good implementation, and it requires that the new Teacher Evaluation Program for each school district be adopted through mutual agreement between the local Board of Ed. and the local Professional Development Evaluation Committee.

It specifies steps for adopting a program if the parties can't agree. And it specifies the dates for completing evaluation training before teacher are evaluated under the new program.

Madam Speaker, the Clerk is in possession of an amendment, LCO Number 7844. I ask the Clerk please call it and I be given permission to summarize.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RITTER:

Will the Clerk please call LCO Number 7844, which will be designated House Amendment Schedule "A".

Excuse me. I'll rephrase that. Which will be designated Senate Amendment Schedule "B".

THE CLERK:

Senate Amendment Schedule "B", LCO 7844 as introduced by Representative Fleischmann, Senator Stillman, et al.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RITTER:

The Representative seeks leave of the Chamber to summarize the amendment. Is there objection to summarization?

Hearing no objection, Representative Fleischmann, you may proceed with summarization.

REP. FLEISCHMANN (18TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

First, I would like to observe that those two little Latin words et al often conceal a lot. In this case, a long list of Legislators who were tremendously helpful. And there are people who are not on

this list who were tremendously helpful in making sure that we have an amendment that makes a good bill even better.

I would like to recognize the -- the strong contributions of my Vice Chair Representative Doug McCrory, other members of the Black and Puerto Rican Caucus, my Ranking Member Representative Ackert, my Co-Chair Senator Stillman and Representative Mike D'Agostino. All of whom put a lot of thought and effort into this amendment.

Essentially while it has many elements it focuses in on some key issues. Number one, a few years ago we ensured that new teachers would be aware of all the most up to date scientifically validated methods for teaching reading.

We haven't -- we -- to date, we haven't been as effective in ensuring that current teachers of young children are aware of those most up to date methodologies.

And thanks primarily to the efforts of the Black and Puerto Rican Caucus we have good language before us that ensures that there are surveys taken by teachers working with young children and that if those surveys show that there are some holes in their

knowledge that they get professional development that helps them.

There was much discussion about the phase in of teacher evaluation. This has a two-year phase in evaluation with an allowance for a district to seek a waiver if a letter is sent by July 1st of this year. There are other good elements, but I -- I think I've summarized the keys ones.

And I move adoption.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RITTER:

The question before the Chamber is adoption of Senate Amendment Schedule "B".

Will you remark on the amendment? Will you remark on the amendment?

Representative Ackert, you have the floor, sir.

REP. ACKERT (8TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

And I -- I do want to have my remarks be similar to the good Chair in terms of a -- a group effort in terms of what we were trying to accomplish in the -- in this piece of legislation and this amendment has been presented to us.

You know, we tried to go a little bit further with helping towns with evaluation with their

teachers. But I think this is a good middle ground. It -- working with State Department of Education and what they're trying to roll out and what they're trying to accomplish. You know, they have three options as the good Chair mentioned.

One is to stay right with the State Department of -- of Education's plan. The other is to go along with the peak -- the peak suggestion, which is potentially a third this year coming up and then the following remainder of the following year and 100 percent roll out, or, as the good Chair mentioned, the waiver process.

And as my understanding is there are already a handful of -- of districts already in the process of the waiver option and I -- they are looked at favorable by the State Department of Education to date.

They do need to do some more work, so for those districts the Representatives do have concerns with, I would have you reach out to your superintendents and get their work going on that because the State Department of Education will work with you on that.

And also, the -- the piece that the good Chair did mention and that was, working with the Black and

Puerto Rican Caucus on the position of teachers being ready to teach teaching -- that are supposed to be teaching -- I mean, teach -- reading -- that we're supposed to be teaching reading for the early -- our early -- our early children in grades three and below.

So there was concern by teachers that this would be some kind of rating system and for a teacher that's been teaching 25 years and teaching reading and all of sudden they have said they don't meet the -- the benchmark, but they have been very successful. They will have some professional development to do, so I stand in strong support of this piece of legislation and hope others do to.

Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RITTER:

Will you remark further on the amendment before us? Will you remark further?

Representative Tercyak, you have the floor, sir.
No.

Will you remark further?

Representative Lavielle, will you remark on the amendment?

REP. LAVIELLE (143rd):

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Just a couple of quick questions for the proponent. I - I support the amendment.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RITTER:

Please proceed.

REP. LAVIELLE (143rd):

Just want to clarify that all of the things that have just been summarized by the Chair and the Ranking Member in terms of delays and alternatives and options for different school districts to implement the -- the new teach evaluation procedure.

What the amendment changes from was that in the - - in the underlying originally they all had to do everything by September 1st, 2013; am I correct?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RITTER:

Representative Fleischmann.

REP. FLEISCHMANN (18TH):

Through you, Madam Chair.

No. The underlying bill I believe allowed for a two-year phase in. The amendment allows for a two-year phase in plus a waiver for districts that are having difficulty with that phase in.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RITTER:

Representative Lavielle.

REP. LAVIELLE (143rd):

Okay. Thank you.

I -- that -- that must have been something like a -- a prior -- a prior version perhaps from the original reform bill.

No. I -- I - I do believe my -- my school districts are all very concerned about their ability to get all of this implemented in good time. And I think that this amendment provides them a good compromise and a number of options. And I'm sure that it will serve them well.

So I urge the Chamber to support it.

Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RITTER:

Will you remark further on the amendment?

Representative McCrory, you have the floor, sir.

REP. MCCRORY (7TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, this is a very good bill. I encourage my colleagues to support it.

Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RITTER:

Will you remark further on the amendment before us?

Representative LeGeyt.

REP. LEGEYT (17TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

A couple of questions to the proponent of the amendment, if I may?

DEPUTY SPEAKER RITTER:

Please proceed.

REP. LEGEYT (17TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

As I'm looking at this amendment starting on Section 14, Line 300 taking about giving certified individuals a -- asking -- requiring them to take a survey on reading instruction, Line 310 and then on Line 315 or a comparable reading instruction examination. I'm interested to know one, what the nature of that survey is. Is it something that's going to be graded?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RITTER:

Representative Fleischmann.

REP. FLEISCHMANN (18TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker.

Yes. I believe that what we're talking about is a survey or exam that will directly parallel to one that already exists and that everyone who is currently seeking to become a newly certified teacher must take, so it has several domains that cover the key areas of reading instruction.

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RITTER:

Representative LeGeyt.

REP. LEGEYT (17TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

So if it is -- if it's not really a survey, but it is more an examination then what's the -- how am I to understand that they're going to take an examination on reading instruction or a comparable reading instruction examination?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RITTER:

Representative Fleischmann.

REP. FLEISCHMANN (18TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker.

I'm -- I'm really not sure I understood the question.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RITTER:

Representative LeGeyt, could you repeat your question?

REP. LEGEYT (17TH):

Yes. Thank you.

Line 310 to take a survey on reading instruction, with the good Representative and Chair of the Education Committee shared was more like an examination. And then Line 315 or a comparable reading instruction examination. I'm wondering how those two co-exist and eventually I'm wondering which one will be chosen and what's the methodology behind that?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RITTER:

Representative Fleischmann.

REP. FLEISCHMANN (18TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker.

I guess I would direct my good colleague to the language a few Lines below where he's reading in Line 318. The Department, meaning the State Department of Ed. shall design such survey in a manner that identifies the strengths and weaknesses of such certified individuals and reading instruction practices and knowledge on an individual school and

district level. Such surveys shall be administered at no financial cost to such certified individual and so forth.

So we're empowering the State Department of Education to go ahead and look at the exam that's already there for young people who are entering the teaching profession and develop something of an equivalent nature for teachers now in the classroom.

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RITTER:

Representative LeGeyt.

REP. LEGEYT (17TH):

Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

I appreciate that clarification and so Line 310 when it says survey and the word survey being used further down -- when I think of a survey I think of something that gathers data rather than making determinations about the proficiency or quality of performance of the person who's taking the survey; am I correct about that?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RITTER:

Representative Fleischmann.

REP. FLEISCHMANN (18TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker.

I would say yes and no. This is a -- an instrument that gathers data on an individual's strengths, proficiencies and weaknesses.

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RITTER:

Representative LeGeyt.

REP. LEGEYT (17TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

And so not to -- not to pursue the issue of semantics too much further, it sounds like we're talking about an examination instead of a survey. If that's the case, then I'm -- I'm still wondering how the survey/examination in 310 is compared to the reading instruction examination in Line 315 and how one or the other is chosen for each individual teacher and who makes the decision?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RITTER:

Representative Fleischmann.

REP. FLEISCHMANN (18TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker.

Just to be clear. The State Department of Education shall make a determination that will apply

to all teachers across the board. There is not going to be a plethora of instruments with one person taking one and another person another.

There will be a single instrument developed by the Department of Education, or adapted from the current instrument that those who are entering the teaching profession take, and that instrument will be approved by the State Board of Education and then offered to all of the teachers enumerated in this amendment.

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RITTER:

Representative LeGeyt.

REP. LEGEYT (17TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

And my next question has to do with what the results of the examination -- how are the results of the examination to be used?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RITTER:

Representative Fleischmann.

REP. FLEISCHMANN (18TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker.

As the amendment makes clear, the core purpose of this instrument is to identify areas of strength and weakness and where weaknesses are found to ensure that an individual receives professional development, so that every child in that teacher's classroom is the beneficiary of the most up to date knowledge on how one teaches literacy.

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RITTER:

Representative LeGeyt.

REP. LEGEYT (17TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I see those Lines down in Line 327 and -- and subsequent Lines. My question is if I don't see the word evaluation here. I don't really see the word evaluation in Section 14. Am I to understand that this examination is going to be used and the data that's gathered from it is going to be used to improve reading instruction without having a -- an evaluative measure assigned to each teacher who takes the examination?

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RITTER:

Representative Fleischmann.

REP. FLEISCHMANN (18TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker.

That is correct. And I would direct my good colleague to Lines 323 and 324, quote, the results of such survey shall not be included as part of any summative ratings for performance evaluations conducted pursuant to Section 10-151(b). So we are trying to be explicit here that it is not to be used in any gotcha kind of manner, rather it is intended as a way to assess and then strengthen teacher performance.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RITTER:

Representative LeGeyt.

REP. LEGEYT (17TH):

Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

I want to thank you. I appreciate the courtesies and I want to thank the good Chair of the Education Committee for walking me through that.

Thank you very much.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RITTER:

Will you remark further? Will you remark further on the amendment that is before us?

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If not, I will try your minds. All those in favor, please signify by saying, aye.

REPRESENTATIVES:

Aye.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RITTER:

Opposed nay.

REPRESENTATIVES:

Nay.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RITTER:

The ayes have it and the amendment is adopted.

Will you remark further on the bill as amended?

Representative Kokoruda, you have the floor, ma'am.

REP. KOKORUDA (101ST):

Good evening, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RITTER:

Good evening.

REP. KOKORUDA (101ST):

I have a couple of questions for the proponent of the bill --

DEPUTY SPEAKER RITTER:

Please proceed.

REP. KOKORUDA (101ST):

-- of the underlying bill.

In -- trying to see what section. I guess in -- in the first section the second part, I really want to talk about the waivers.

Through you, Madam Speaker.

I'm on Line 138. It says the Commissioner of Education may waive the provisions of the subsection of this section and of the implementation plan provisions of this. And then later on it said that the State Board of Education determines if this evaluation is in substantial compliance.

So I just wanted to be clear for schools that are going after waivers, through you, Madam Speaker, they're going after waivers the Commissioner would have the authority to -- to provide the waiver; is that correct?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RITTER:

Representative Fleischmann.

REP. FLEISCHMANN (18TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker.

Yes. Though I want to be clear, this section enumerates two different types of waiver. One relating to the -- the local plan for evaluation and the other related to the phase in.

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RITTER:

Representative Kokoruda.

REP. KOKORUDA (101ST):

Through you, Madam Speaker.

The -- I really wanted to ask about the phase --
the phase in of the evaluation -- teacher evaluation.
And I'm going -- to the proponent of the bill; am I in
the right Section?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RITTER:

Representative Fleischmann.

REP. FLEISCHMANN (18TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker.

Yes, you are.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RITTER:

Representative Kokoruda.

REP. KOKORUDA (101ST):

Thank you.

Through you, Madam Speaker.

So the Commissioner of Education could provide
the waiver and then it is the State Board of Education
that determines if the waiver is in substantial
compliance; is that true?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RITTER:

Representative Fleischmann.

REP. FLEISCHMANN (18TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker.

I -- I think I read this section a little differently. As I read it the commissioner of Education may provide the waiver regarding the phase in and/or implementation plan of a -- of a local education authority based on his judgment as to whether it substantially conforms to the intentions of the State Board phase in plan that's already out there.

As to whether it shows a good faith intent to make sure that the evaluation system is fully in place by the time we get to the fall of the next academic year, but that power rests in the hands of the Commissioner, which in reality means that, the Commissioner will be consulting with the professionals in his department, particularly in talent and development, to make sure that he's being presented with something that shows an effective way to phase in the evaluation plan over two years.

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RITTER:

Representative Kokoruda.

REP. KOKORUDA (101ST):

Thank you.

Through you, Madam Speaker.

Just so I'm clear, it does seem on Line 144 to continue with (inaudible) the bill started, it says that the State Board of Education determines while working with the Commissioner determines that the plan that's provided by the local board of Education is -- has substantial compliance. I believe there's 19 items and they are in substantial compliance, would the Commissioner of Education be working with the Board of Education and would they be involved with that decision onto -- to allow the waiver?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RITTER:

Representative Fleischmann.

REP. FLEISCHMANN (18TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker.

You know, I think my good colleague has pointed out a fair point. Subsection "C" does indicate that - - that the Commissioner will, in the end, go back to the State Board of Education which will make the final

determination about whether there is substantial compliance.

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RITTER:

Representative Kokoruda.

REP. KOKORUDA (101ST):

Through you, Madam Speaker.

You know, I do think that many towns have already started to put in plans hoping for a waiver and I think that we -- I think they want to be clear on who's going to make the decision, and -- and -- it sounds like the Commission does, but my question is -- and this is really what by Board of Ed asked, if they are turned down for the waiver, is there an appeal process and to whom would -- whom would they appeal that decision?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RITTER:

Representative Fleischmann.

REP. FLEISCHMANN (18TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker.

You know, the -- the final authority, as my good colleague pointed out, is the State Board of Education and they determine whether a plan is in substantial

compliance. And if they decide that's a plan is not I suppose the school system could go before the State Board to plead their case, but to be clear, we are serious about making sure that every district has fully phased in the new teacher evaluation plan over the next two years.

And so substantial compliance means substantial compliance and I -- I think the -- the language is pretty clear on its face. Districts may have some latitude, but they have got to -- they have got to show that they are indeed phasing in over the next two academic years with complete conformity to the law by the time we get to the '14 - '15 academic year.

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RITTER:

Representative Kokoruda.

REP. KOKORUDA (101ST):

And finally, I just wanted to say that I know took -- talking to two of my superintendents, you know, they are -- they are taking this seriously and they are -- this actually has really made them take stock and I know one of my towns has put a plan in with 15 of the 19 items and they -- I do feel that is substantial, but I think what I heard today and I

think it would make them feel good is that we know the whole State Board of Ed will be making this final decision.

There will be many ears listening and many eyes looking at it. And I think that's important to these towns that really have worked hard on these plans. And -- and a lot of them have been worked on with their teachers and they have all been stakeholders, they have all bought into the new process.

I think it's wonderful that it's happening and from what I understand a major number of towns are putting alternative plans hoping for a waiver as long as they have substantial compliance.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RITTER:

Representative Ackert, you have the floor, sir.

REP. ACKERT (8TH):

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

And to the good Representative Kokoruda's questions, through you, Madam Speaker, just want to make some comments. The -- talking with the State Department of Education many of our districts have submitted -- many have already complied and are moving forward. Many are going to be moving through the 100

percent STE model. A handful needs some work, and that's why I stress to the Legislators if they're getting concerns from their superintendents that it's -- it's up to them to get their plans together and get them submitted. If they want a waiver to get to work on it now, they have got until July.

Many plans have already been submitted by the May turnaround. They need to also reach out and make sure that they contact State Department of Education to get their plans, either waived and/or adjusted. Many of them aren't going to receive the waiver until they make the adjustments that the State Department of Education is -- is going to be requiring.

And just a follow up one question to the good Chair of Education, through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RITTER:

- Please proceed.

REP. ACKERT (8TH):

You know, just going back to the survey/reading component, this is primarily -- this -- this survey, through you, Madam Speaker, to the good Chair, is for those teaching reading -- reading education?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

Correct?

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June 4, 2013

DEPUTY SPEAKER RITTER:

Representative Fleischmann.

REP. FLEISCHMANN (18TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker.

Yes.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RITTER:

Representative Ackert.

REP. ACKERT (8TH):

Yeah, thank you. Because I just want to make sure that -- for people to understand that, you know, an individual teaching high school biology is not going to be taking a survey and have it be used in some way for their evaluation process, so that -- or mathematics -- that their -- their goal is to not use this as a tool for evaluation.

One follow-up question and if the good Chair may know. If the -- if there's somebody that has a -- a problem with the survey and they -- they have the developmental -- or professional development courses and they are not successful with those courses, through you, Madam Speaker, would there be some remedy or would that potentially be a potential loss of -- of work?

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RITTER:

Representative Fleischmann.

REP. FLEISCHMANN (18TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker.

So the intention of this bill is to ensure that, you know, all of our teachers who are working in grades Pre-K through three have a full understanding of the -- the five core elements of effective teaching of literacy. If a teacher takes this exam and -- and shows strength on three areas, but is struggling in say phonological awareness -- a fourth area -- they would get strong professional development in that area.

If they didn't respond to that professional development in the next year of teaching they were still showing a lack of response then it's my understanding that in the subsequent year that -- that challenge -- that lack of ability to convey phonological awareness could in fact become something that would be part of their evaluation, but not in -- in the initial stages where we're trying to make sure people have the supports they need. Only down the road if they didn't respond to professional development.

Through you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RITTER:

Representative Ackert.

REP. ACKERT (8TH):

Through you, Madam Speaker.

And I thank you to the good Chair.

You know, there's been a lot of radio ads and things that are saying that, you know, reach out to your legislature, you know, they're backing up on the reform package and I can tell you what, through the leadership of the Chairs of the committee we're not backing up at all. We're going forward. We want to make sure that the children in the state of Connecticut get the best opportunity for their education in communities.

And I thank the good Chair and I thank you, Madam Speaker.

Please support this legislation.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RITTER:

Will you remark further on the bill as amended?

Will you remark further?

If not, will staff and guests please come to the Well of the House? Will members please take their seats; the machine will be opened.

THE CLERK:

The House of Representatives is voting by roll.

The House of Representatives is voting by roll. Will members please return to the Chamber immediately?

DEPUTY SPEAKER RITTER:

Have all the members voted? Have all the members voted?

Will the members please check the board to determine if their vote has been properly cast?

If all the members have voted the machine will locked and the Clerk will take a tally.

The Clerk will please announce the tally?

THE CLERK:

In concurrence with the Senate, Senate Substitute Bill 1097 as amended by Senate "B"

Total Number Voting	143
Necessary for Passage	72
Those voting Yea	143
Those voting Nay	0
Absent and not voting	7

DEPUTY SPEAKER RITTER:

The bill is passed in concurrence with the
Senate.

Will the Clerk please call Calendar 664?

S - 661

**CONNECTICUT
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
SENATE**

**PROCEEDINGS
2013**

**VOL. 56
PART 10
2837 - 3149**

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Thank you, Madam President. Madam President if the Clerk would call as the next items Calendar page 11, Calendar 389, Senate Bill 1097. And then under matters returned Calendar page 42, Calendar 359 Senate Bill 1099. And then returning to an item that was passed temporarily earlier, Calendar page 38, Calendar 196, Senate Bill 961. And then, Madam President, moving to an item earlier in the Calendar, and that is on Calendar page 3, Calendar 202, Senate Bill 979. And then also, Madam President, one other item that was passed temporarily earlier for need of an additional amendment, on Calendar page 42, Calendar 301, a Senate Bill 1015. Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Mr. Clerk.

THE CLERK:

On page 11, Calendar 389, substitute for Senate Bill Number 1097, AN ACT CONCERNING REVISIONS TO THE EDUCATION REFORM ACT OF 2012, Favorable Report of the Committee on Education, there are amendments.

THE CHAIR:

Good afternoon. Good afternoon, Senator Stillman.

SENATOR STILLMAN:

Good afternoon, Madam President. I move the Joint Committee's Favorable Report and passage of the bill.

THE CHAIR:

Motion is on acceptance and approval. Will you remark?

SENATOR STILLMAN:

Yes, thank you Madam President. This bill before us today makes some continuing changes to the Education Reform Act that we passed in 2012, just as the title alludes to. It addresses the issues around teacher evaluation, makes some clarifications. It makes some conforming changes to the initial bill last year. And it also addresses some deadlines regarding some of the reading assessments and -- and concerns within the low performing school

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districts. But with that, Madam President, I'd like to ask the Clerk to please call LCO Number 7608 and that I be allowed to summarize.

THE CHAIR:

Mr. Clerk.

THE CLERK:

LCO Number 7608 Senate "A" offered by Senators Stillman, et al.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Stillman.

SENATOR STILLMAN:

Thank you, Madam President. I move adoption of the amendment.

THE CHAIR:

Motion is on adoption. Will you remark?

SENATOR STILLMAN:

Yes, thank you. This amendment has obviously some changes to the underlying bill, makes some further clarifications. It addresses reporting requirements by superintendents. It also has language in it that are -- that makes it conform with the Performance Evaluation Advisory Council. It lays out an evaluatory program where if -- giving school districts working with their teachers and their -- obviously their teacher unions and et cetera, to come up with a evaluation program first through mutual agreement. Then if they're not able to do that, possibly come up with a program, an evaluation program from the State Board of Education model. And if they still can't agree, then the local Board of Education can adopt their own.

A very important part of this amendment, which was written by members of this Legislature concerned about reading and closing the achievement gap, as we all are, is in this amendment as well. And as just a point of clarification

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from within this legislation that's in front of us, I also want to make it clear that if there are reading endorsements or special education endorsements, and if you are renewing that those certificates are required to -- and if there's a concern that certificates are required to -- that they're required to take the test and they would have to continue to take it every five years on renewal. That is not the case, and that when revising and reviewing the guidelines for teacher eval and support, is it inclusive of the peak process, and yes, it is. And again I move its adoption of the amendment. Thank you.

THE CHAIR:

Motion on the -- Will you remark further? On Senate "A"? Senator Boucher.

SENATOR BOUCHER:

Thank you, Madam President. Madam President, I rise to support the amendment which will become the bill. I believe it basically keeps intact the reform package that was put in place last year. It does make some accommodation for mutual agreement at the local level. And additionally provides for additional improvements that the black and Latino caucus worked very hard on in reading improvement. The process of improving education is ongoing. It is never finished. Should never be finished, in fact. And this is another step in refining that process.

And as we go through it, I'm sure there will be other things that come up that will need some changes brought forward. But by and large, I think Connecticut has shown that it's committed to improving education through a reform project and process that has been negotiated over a period of time. And I believe also the changes through the certification process was also warranted, and for that reason I stand in support of the amendment. Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you. Will you remark? Will you remark? Senator Chapin.

SENATOR CHAPIN:

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Thank you, Madam President. A question to the proponent through you, please.

THE CHAIR:

Please proceed, sir.

SENATOR CHAPIN:

Thank you, Madam President. One of the things I'm sure you here -- I'm sure all of us here is about unfunded mandates. And I know there was some concern when we passed last year's Education Reform Bill as to the impacts on the municipalities and our local boards of education. This amendment before us, would you say that it relieves -- provides some relief from some of those mandates that we may have imposed in prior legislation? Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Stillman.

SENATOR STILLMAN:

Thank you, Madam President. Through you. I think what it does is it brings some clarity to the boards of education so that they can be assured that the dollars that are being spent on their reading programs are being spent properly. In terms -- if I may, Madam President, I would like to ask in response if the Senator would be so kind to ask is there a particular part of this amendment that you're concerned about a mandate? Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Chapin.

SENATOR CHAPIN:

Thank you, Madam President. Through you I -- generally I'm concerned with any mandates, but I think the one that most specifically was raised really with some objection was the teacher evaluation piece. As I recall, the state Department of Education, at least through a press release said municipalities weren't required to do 100 percent evaluations of 100 percent in the first year. I think

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they might have said one-third of the teachers in the first year.

As I understood the impact, one of my -- one of the municipalities that I represent I think they didn't really view that as relief, because they felt that they had to hire somebody to perform this particular task anyway. So I guess specifically to your question in that regard, it would be through the teacher evaluation sections. Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Stillman.

SENATOR STILLMAN:

Thank you, Madam President. Through you, I don't -- I don't believe that this imposes a mandate. It doesn't really change the evaluation process. It is still to be done within two years, as everyone had agreed to. What it does is it reinforces the peak decision, a decision that was made by the Peak Advisory Committee so that there is, as some would say, a more orderly process to getting to that two year guideline.

It's my understanding from Commissioner Pryor that the overwhelming majority of school districts are already meeting the benchmarks that are needed so far. Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Chapin.

SENATOR CHAPIN:

Thank you, Madam President. And again through you. So the rest of the sections in this amendment, I think you characterize this amendment as clarifying something we had done in a prior session. Is it fair to say there aren't any new mandates in the amendment before us? Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Stillman.

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SENATOR STILLMAN:

Through you, Madam President, that is correct.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Chapin.

SENATOR CHAPIN:

Thank you, Madam President, and I thank the good Chairwoman for her answers.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you. Will you remark? Senator Kissel.

SENATOR KISSEL:

Thank you very much. While I appreciate the efforts made by Senator Stillman and the Education Committee regarding this, I will be offering an amendment on the issue touched upon by Senator Chapin. And I want to state at the outset, this amendment doesn't change some of the time frame. And my boards of education and my superintendents of schools in Northcentral Connecticut said, you know, we understand you wanting to reform education. And they understand the bill that we passed last year.

But they are up in arms right now in Northcentral Connecticut, whether they are affluent towns such as Granby or not so affluent towns such as Enfield, they have stated to me with one voice, quit putting so much on their plate. They're professionals, they want to do as good as they can. They all care about the kids. That's why they got into education. But they are really outraged that the state has put so much on their plate and never gave them a head's up as to the cost. And in the colloquy that you had with Senator Chapin, I would say that one-third doesn't solve the problem.

And so I will support this amendment, but I have been charged by all of my towns to make a statement on this bill. And one can say, well there were some towns that said, okay, we better start doing this. Let's start spending the millions of dollars, the hundreds of thousands of dollars.

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But unless we give our municipalities a head's up as to what's coming down the road, we really catch them in a blind spot.

They have said, let us know, give us a head's up, we can plan it two, three years down the line so that when the costs arrive it's not such a gut shot.

But in Enfield alone we just passed over a hundred million dollar referenda to consolidate the high schools, Enfield High School and Fermi. The townspeople want to do the very best they can. There was a shift regarding the information technology from the education side to the town side. We went and changed our elementary schools in Enfield so that they weren't the traditional models of, like, K-6 to try to make sure that it was geographically balanced. We are facing diminishing school children in our schools and an aging population. And I just heard on public radio the other day that we are at the cusp of having whole municipalities that have more seniors than productive adults.

You can't keep piling costs on our education system and expect nothing to give at some point. And under the mantra that we always want what's best for our kids, it seems like we're not paying attention to that portion of our local budgets that are really being hurt.

It pains me and it pains, for example, the Enfield Board of Education that they just went through a process where either they do the state required evaluation or they face laying off 15 teachers. What kind of Hobson's Choice is that. We want great teachers, but to evaluate them you're going to have to lay off over a dozen teachers? That's not fair.

And then we don't even get our budget together before the towns have to get their budgets together. And we have that bill over and over in this building. Let's get our budget act together before we put that burden on our towns, and we miserably fail them year in and year out.

I'm not happy about the direction that our state government is going when we are not good partners with our municipalities.

I've never agreed with the fact that we needed a wholesale

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evaluation of teachers, because when I go talk to them they're not happy with how they're treated in our state. The respect level just doesn't seem to be there.

We want them to teach, to generalize tests, and then we grade the schools if they get the kids that are right on the border over that line. Forget about the kids that are doing great. Forget about the kids that are doing poor. Teach to the tests, and pull as many over the line as you can.

When we passed the reading reform, you want AP science teachers to take reading tests? I know that we're revising that. We need to benchmark that. But in our zeal to go after educators in our state, I really believe that we almost throw the baby out with the bathwater.

These aren't the people making millions of dollars from Wall Street. These aren't the people that are living in 6, \$700,000 homes in Fairfield. These are people that are really struggling, that want to know that we're making our commitment to their pension fund, who wonder, what are we doing with the millions and millions of dollars in our state budget. And again, when I talk to superintendents and boards of education, and I'm not going to say that say that everybody is poor in Northcentral Connecticut. That's not how it is. It's a great mix of people, but they really feel that we don't listen down here. And they said, we're behind you, John. Go yell, rant, and rave, and tell them we're not happy. We can get our house in order. Give us a head's up, give us a few years advance, and we'll show you how well we can perform.

But you can't take all of society's ills and dump them on the education system and create an evaluation system that puts financial pressure on education systems with subjectivity that has got them bewildered.

You know, if it's reading, writing, mathematics, those are easily or more easily put into some sort of numerical time -- numbered time set frame so that you can grade it. Special education, physical education, art, music, well, what's -- and what about this? Let's say you are doing the very best that you can do as a teacher. Let me just throw that out there. Because evaluations is what is the center of a lot of this. Let's say that you are the best teacher in the State of Connecticut. And you have gotten

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all of your kids to the highest grade. Follow this through. And you're now benchmarked and you're looked at a year or two down the road. How can you do better? If you start off being the best, how can you be better?

So I don't want to belabor this. I'm not trying to filibuster this amendment, but I'm telling you, I got to -- I got my marching orders. This year I got my marching orders. And it is not a criticism of Senator Stillman. She has gone out of her way to work with my communities in Northcentral Connecticut. She has done a fabulous job. Senator Bye has done a fabulous job. Senator Boucher has done a fabulous job. My criticism isn't with the folks that are trying to implement these reforms from the Education Committee.

But what I'm saying is this. The financial pressure in my communities is palpable right now. And something's not going to be able to hold all the stuff that we're putting on the plates of the local leaders on our boards of education and our first selectmen and our town councils. And I just felt like I had to get that on the record right now. Because they asked me to get it on the record right now. I'll support the amendment. I hope you understand when I move forward with my amendment, sometimes we do things because of strong personally held beliefs. That's why we run for the Senate and House. But also we have to keep our ears to the ground and listen to our constituents. And they have told me from as far west as Granby to as far east as Somers down south to Windsor to up to the Massachusetts border in Enfield, please stop burdening us with more and more responsibilities without sending us the money to do it. Thank you, Madam President.

(Senator Duff of the 25th in the Chair).

THE CHAIR:

Senator Looney.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Mr. President. Mr. President, if this item might be passed temporarily and if the Clerk would call the next item, Calendar page 42, Calendar 359, Senate Bill 1099. And then to be followed by Calendar page 3, Calendar 202, Senate Bill 979. And then Calendar page 38, Calendar

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Or seeing none, then Mr. Clerk, let's start our day.

THE CLERK:

On page 9, Calendar 389, Substitute for Senate Bill Number 1097, AN ACT CONCERNING REVISIONS TO THE EDUCATION REFORM ACT OF 2012, favorable report of the Committee on Education.

LCO 7608 was designated Senate "A" on May 22nd.

THE CHAIR:

Good Morning, Senator Stillman

SENATOR STILLMAN:

Good morning, Madam President.

I again move the joint committee's favorable report and passage of the bill.

THE CHAIR:

Motion is on acceptance and passage.

Will you remark, madam?

SENATOR STILLMAN:

Yes, thank you.

I believe the first order of business is for me to remove the amendment that I had asked to be called when the bill was previously before us.

THE CHAIR:

The motion is to withdraw Senate Amendment "A."

All in favor?

SENATORS:

Aye.

THE CHAIR:

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Opposed?

The amendment has been withdrawn.

SENATOR STILLMAN:

That you, Madam President.

This -- I explained the bill previously. It does have to do with some revisions to the Education Reform Act of -- that we passed last year. I have another amendment that I would like to call and that is LCO Number] 7844, and that I be allowed to summarize.

THE CHAIR:

Mr. Clerk.

THE CLERK:

LCO Number 7844, Senate Amendment Schedule "B," offered by Senator Stillman, et al.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Stillman.

SENATOR STILLMAN:

Thank you, Madam President.

I move adoption of the amendment.

THE CHAIR:

The motion is on adoption.

Will you remark?

SENATOR STILLMAN:

Yes. Thank you, Madam President.

This bill really, in a sense -- this amendment, rather, completes the bill in terms of clarifying the evaluation process. It does not change the timing of it. It is

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still -- that has not been adjusted.

It just does give a little bit of leeway in terms of asking for a waiver from the commissioner for own-process only, not timing. Just how to achieve that two-year timeframe of the new evaluation process that is before our school districts right now.

Of another very important part of this amendment is addressing literacy and the procedure for teachers to be trained appropriately in reading and the rest of the amendment is just some conforming language.

And again, I move adoption.

THE CHAIR:

Will you remark further? Will you remark further?

Senator Boucher.

SENATOR BOUCHER:

Good morning, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Good morning, madam. Still morning.

SENATOR BOUCHER:

And it is lovely to be in the morning timeframe, for sure after yesterday.

I rise to support the amendment that becomes the underlying bill, but before we proceed, to further clarify some areas of the bill -- a good bill -- for our side of the aisle that did have some questions previously on it.

This bill puts in place a collaborative process between the board of education and a committee that was the professional development committee that has been added to that responsibility to include the evaluation committee as well.

In addition, there is a reporting process to the board of education each year which gives the status of

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implementation of the teacher evaluating and support program along with its frequency and ratings and number of teachers not yet evaluated among other things, and sets out a timeline, I believe, for this.

As we said, the local board of education and professional development and new evaluation committee for the school district is going to be involved in a collaborative process to come up with a mutually agreed-upon evaluation process. And if not, then the agreement would be finalized by the local board of education. They would take that role on.

Just for clarification if I can, through you, Madam President, for those still that have had questions on this.

Who would make up that professional evaluation and development committee? Would it be the same membership dissipated for the professional development committee? Or would there be other members?

Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Stillman.

SENATOR STILLMAN:

Thank you. Through you, Madam President.

Yes, the district must appoint a professional development committee. It's a multistep process.

The situation is when the boards of ed and the committee and the evaluation committee can't agree on an evaluation program. So this amendment that we are discussing at the moment lays out a procedure as to how to come up with an agreeable evaluation process. If the two parties failed to agree, then obviously the board will make the decision on its own. That's the actual final step if there has not been an agreement.

But the professional development committee is developed by the district and it is to work with the teachers and other certified staff.

Through you, Madam President.

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THE CHAIR:

Senator Boucher.

SENATOR BOUCHER:

Thank you, Madam President.

And I believe, Madam President, there was some language that also prescribed that members should be appointed and also that -- or certified teachers and would be chosen by the bargaining unit, if I understand that correctly.

Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Stillman.

SENATOR STILLMAN:

I'm sorry, Madam President.

If the Senator would kindly repeat her question?

THE CHAIR:

There was a comment.

Okay. Senator Boucher, would you repeat that please?

SENATOR BOUCHER:

Certainly.

It is my understanding, Madam President, that members of this professional development and evaluation committee would be appointed through the local governing bodies that would include some appointments through the local bargaining unit.

Through you, Madam President, that were certified in the district.

Through you.

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THE CHAIR:

Senator Stillman.

SENATOR BOUCHER:

Thank you.

Through you, Madam President, That's correct.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Boucher.

SENATOR BOUCHER:

Thank you very much, Madam President.

I also find that there are many really helpful components of this bill that actually removes some requirement for validation, but] adopts guidelines that can be looked into and will also have a pilot whose results will be used to revise those guidelines for the model evaluation program that is used as a basis for our local districts to formulate their own evaluation system, if I'm not mistaken. And I think that is a very good change as well.

And as was just explained by our good chairman, that there are waivers in this program for the process, but not necessarily the timeline. So just to be clear and to be on the record that in fact] there is a process waiver, but not a timeline waiver as far as how to implement.

And to further -- to answer questions that are out there, that right now some of the high-performing districts are looking for an opt-out. I don't believe this includes an opt-out, but again a waiver through the commissioner for the process that they would engage in versus the timeline.

Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Stillman.

SENATOR STILLMAN:

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Thank you.

Through you, Madam President.

Yes, it does provide a waiver that school districts, if they choose to implement a process in a little different manner than the PPACA committee has recommended. Then those school districts can ask for a waiver from the commissioner and the commissioner will make that determination.

Again, it's a process only. It has nothing to do with adjusting to timeframe.

Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Boucher.

SENATOR BOUCHER:

Thank you, Madam President.

I appreciate the response. It does clarify it and it's very helpful.

Again, I commend the good chairman with regards to language that is included here that talks about adding the evaluation component to the professional development committee, because in fact] they really do go hand-in-hand.

When you are evaluating your staff and you are trying to formulate the kinds of curriculum and programs that they should engage in to further enhance their capabilities and their effectiveness in the classroom they really are very much tied together, and so it is a good idea to actually include the two.

There is a portion in this that does speak to the pilot program that will assess and evaluate implementation of the local support program for this evaluation based on either/or the guidelines for model program or the program adopted by mutual agreement of the board of education and its local committee, if I'm not mistaken.

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So to clarify, the pilot program that's going to be assessed regarding the implementation of this evaluation program will have a choice to either look at the guidelines and revise the guidelines on the model program, or any program adopted locally, if I'm not mistaken.

Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Stillman.

SENATOR STILLMAN:

Thank you, Madam President.

Yes, there are a couple of pilot programs. Well, there's a study, there's the Neag study of the pilot program itself. There's also a study of the teacher training and having to do with special education, specifically reading programs to make sure that their students are not misidentified for special education and that they are appropriately placed in reading programs where teachers have been as appropriately trained to improve the reading standards for our students.

Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Boucher.

SENATOR BOUCHER:

Yes, thank you, Madam President.

All of these very good components of this particular amendment -- it should be supported, no question.

One of -- another question regarding the training aspect of this particular bill, and it does actually define who would be trained and what the term "teacher" is, and includes each professional employee of the board of education below the rank of superintendent who holds a certificate or permit issued by the State Board of Education.

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In there it further clarifies the training mandate in this bill in lines 288 to 295 that talks about the training component every two years, so biannual versus every year.

I just wanted some clarification, if I could, through you, Madam President, how this changes that training component.

Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Stillman.

SENATOR STILLMAN:

Thank you.

Through you, Madam President.

It makes a clarification because we want to make sure that especially new teachers that are hired that are trained appropriately, and so they will be in training programs that are conducted by new evaluators. And I believe that is one of the most important changes in this bill in terms of the value of our teaching our children how to read at appropriate ages.

Through you.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Boucher.

SENATOR BOUCHER:

Thank you very much, Madam President.

I believe that concludes any questions I have of the good chairman and I want to thank her again] for working so hard on this amendment. I know we've had multiple versions and it has been refined time and again, and finally I believe we've got it just right.

And before concluding I do want to especially highlight the component of this amendment that the Black and Latino Caucus have worked very hard and diligently over the last few years trying to focus in on reading of our very young

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children, highlighting the fact that if we don't have our children reading by the third grade then many, if not most, are doomed to failure later in life.

And in fact, one of the frightening statistics is that our correctional managers actually look at the data of how many children failed to read in the third grade to plan ahead for the number of actual jail cells and capacities in our prisons. So there is a very strong link between failure and success in reading by the third grade.

And so the focus on this area is very appropriate and in this there is a requirement now that talks about our certified K through three teachers and conducting a survey on reading instruction. And the results of that survey to be used -- and not for rating purposes or evaluation purposes or even for FOI, but to actually design training to address the weaknesses embedded there.

It will also show the strengths and I think that is a very critical piece of this and really will help us going forward, and as one of the more valuable components of this amendment. And as such, I recommend it strongly to everyone in this circle.

And certainly if anyone has further questions, but again, this was very well done and I thank the chairman. It has been a pleasure to work with her.

Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you.

Will you remark?

Senator Bye.

SENATOR BYE:

Thank you, Madam President.

I stand in support of this amendment and I really want to be sure to thank Chair of our Education Committee. She has been following this teacher evaluation process through her own district of Waterford, which has successfully

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implemented a lot of what's in this bill and we heard from her superintendents.

But at the same time, with so many members of this circle and downstairs who've been hearing from their superintendents whose districts are different, she and her cochairs and working with the ranking members have incorporated changes that give everyone comfort while recognizing the emergency that we have in front of us, which is that each child in the state] deserves the best professional they can possibly have in front of them. So I really want to thank her for her work.

I also want to say I've heard from my superintendents who've had some concerns, and I believe that this bill addresses those. And also want to make sure I thank the Governor for his focus on education reform as a major priority, understanding the implications that that has for economic development.

That said, I think as a body, downstairs, upstairs, our Governor and our State Department of Education is going to have to be watching and listening very carefully over the next several years. We are undertaking a new teacher evaluation system at the same time that we're asking our districts to develop common core assessments, link common core curriculum across the grades, all the way down to preschool even.

We're also implementing a new assessment and the teacher evaluation has a component that's based on student assessment. So as the assessments are changing it's going be hard to chart growth over time in the way that we'd like to immediately, but I think the committee is saying, importantly, that doesn't mean we shouldn't keep moving forward.

But I think what it does mean is that as we look at our teachers we're going to have to be patient with implementation with administrative -- administrators and teachers. We're going to have to continue to, as we have to this point, listen to teachers and administrators.

And most importantly, we want to make sure that these reforms keep children at the center and are making a difference for children in the classrooms in Connecticut.

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So I see this amendment as a really important example of how this legislative body deliberates, listens to both sides and also looks for examples of great practice like we've seen in Waterford in the implementation of this. So I just wanted to make sure I stood up and supported it and thanked the Chair of the Education Committee.

Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you.

Will you remark? Will you remark?

If not, can I try your minds on a Senate amendment "B?"
All in favor, please say, aye.

SENATORS:

Aye.

THE CHAIR:

Opposed?

Amendment "B," Senate Amendment "B" passes.

Will you remark further? Will you remark further?

Senator Stillman.

SENATOR STILLMAN:

Yes, thank you, Madam President.

There are other aspects of this underlying bill, which I believe are very important in terms of providing some resources to school districts. Also it has realistic time frames for some other reforms.

And I did want to thank Senator Boucher for her support and her artwork on the committee. It's a pleasure to work with her as ranking member of the Education Committee. I appreciate that opportunity.

And Senator Bye, thank you for making comment about some

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very important aspects of this amendment and the underlying bill, and understanding that one size doesn't necessarily fit all, but we still have to move forward with some of these recommendations.

Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you.

Will you remark?

Senator Kissel.

SENATOR KISSEL:

Thank you very much, Madam President.

Good morning.

THE CHAIR:

Good morning, sir.

SENATOR KISSEL:

I have spoken on this bill it seems like a long time ago, but I think it was just last week, regarding the concerns that I have regarding the timeframe. And the amendment that was just added to this bill doesn't change those time frames.

So to underscore the concerns expressed to me by my local boards of education in North Central Connecticut, I would ask the Clerk to please call LCO Number] 6156, please.

THE CHAIR:

Mr. Clerk.

THE CLERK:

LCO Number] 6156, Senate "C," offered by Senator Kissel.

THE CHAIR:

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Senator Kissel.

SENATOR KISSEL:

Thank you very much, Madam President.

I would waive] a reading and ask leave to summarize and move for adoption of the amendment.

THE CHAIR:

The reading is waived and the motion is on adoption.

Will you remark, sir?

SENATOR KISSEL:

Thank you.

What this amendment does is essentially push out the timeframe for the teacher evaluations by one year. And I know that I'll probably be struggling upstream to try to get support from my colleagues here in the circle.

And indeed there are municipalities that have set the process in motion, but] I was told from boards of education, from towns as large as Enfield and as small as Granby, they felt that the State has not been a good partner regarding education reform.

And they felt that way because they felt that the timeframe initially brought forward with the education reform proposal was too fast without proper funding by the State. And I understand that they can either run forward with one kind of evaluation system or they can use a model that the State is creating.

And I believe that only one third of the teachers have to be evaluated, but] in going over this, not only with my local boards of education, but with my local teachers unions, they all feel that, absent adequate funding upfront in the process, it has put huge pressures on their budgets.

I am looking at communities that are going to be laying off teachers to help pay for the evaluation process. And the towns in North Central Connecticut said, we get it.

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We want to be willing participants, but] had you given us two or three years lead time we could have budgeted appropriately for this endeavor. But because the timeframe is so expedited you're giving us no wiggle room whatsoever.

And when I hear this from Republicans and Democrats, from small towns and large towns I have to say I don't think everybody in my district is wrong, that is not to say that these municipalities aren't trying real hard to get everything together in the timeframe that we are requiring of them, but it's making them have to make some real difficult choices when it comes to what we're doing in North Central Connecticut with our budgets.

My municipal leaders, first selectmen, finance chairs and mayors along with town managers have said, the State of Connecticut] consistently promises that it's going to get its budget passed before us, and yet you never do. We're not exactly sure what the details are for things that we can uniformly count on in the past, such as school transportation.

And at the same time that they feel that we're throwing things in the air that they could always depend on as far as grants and funding formulas, we are putting additional things on their plate. And I have superintendents of schools who say quite passionately, we're in education because we want to succeed. We're professionals in education because we want to make a difference in kids' lives. We're not in this to make millions of dollars, but] you're putting so many things on our plate year after year after year. You're making it impossible for us to shine the way we feel we can shine.

That Hartford, with all your best efforts in trying to cobble together reform proposals that will stretch from shoreline towns to the Massachusetts border, from Rhode Island border towns to New York border towns, Connecticut is not a cookie-cutter kind of place. And they felt somewhat, if not disrespected, taken for granted that they don't know what they are doing.

And they said, we know what we're doing. Give us the resources and we can make the effective changes. We are committed to having excellent education for each and every student, but you keep changing the rules of the game. You

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keep setting up goals that are very short down the road without the appropriate funding. And what do you expect of us? And I'm sympathetic to that.

If we put our money where our mouth was it would be a different story, but how can you give towns the responsibility to come up with these teacher evaluation plans in such a short period of time without adequate funding? It's an unfunded mandate. Once again, an unfunded mandate.

And my town leader have said, listen, just stop it. Can you go a session without doing any harm? And is it possible to cut us a little slack? And so that's what this amendment does.

It says, give them another year. Let them budget for this so that I'm not going to lose teachers in North Central Connecticut because we're evaluating teachers in North Central Connecticut. And I think that we need to look at the professionals who have put their entire lives in the classroom to teach kids and not look at them as just members of unions, but look at them as the true professionals that they are].

They don't just ask questions about process and what's coming down the road, but they want to know that we're good partners in other respects as well. Are we making adequate contributions to their retirement plans? Or are we playing games with it year to year and not exhibiting the commitment that we should show them?

So I stand up for my educators. I stand up for the volunteers that serve on that that most brutal local body, the board of education, a difficult and thankless job to the best of circumstances. They don't want to lay off administrators. They don't want to lay off teachers because they have to find money to pay for teacher evaluations, but unless we give them the resources along with the command to do what we're asking them to do, we're not giving them any choice.

And if at the same time things that are so common to our usual flow of events, school transportation funding and other revenue streams if they can't even count on that right now -- and I'm getting e-mails to this day. What do I tell them? I think we owe them a little bit more.

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And so I promised them, I promised my local boards of education, small town, big town. They said, you have our blessing. Please, please stand up on the Senate floor and tell them how we feel. We'll do what we have to do by law, but] we just feel that you just keep piling it on and piling it on and piling it on under the guise of, we want a quality education for every student, and you're making it impossible for us to succeed.

That is not a healthy environment for educators in our state. And maybe it's] different in other parts of the state], but that's the way it is in North Central Connecticut.

And some of the towns are far more affluent than other towns, but I'm hearing it uniformly from everybody involved in the process. When I hear it from wealthier towns to other towns, that may be more moderate as far as income, when I hear it from larger towns and smaller towns, there's got to be some element of truth to what they're telling us.

And what they're telling us is, Hartford, you don't have all the answers. Let us breathe a little bit. Let us work with our finance directors and local leaders. And if at all possible, we understand the financial strains that you are under, but we're under the same ones. And do not continue to give us things that we've got to do unless you're going to give us the money to do it.

And in the last two years I have observed that we have put tons more on their plate, and not only have we not funded it, but we've pulled out the infrastructure from underneath them so that they can't even predict day to day what the State is going to give them as far as education funding. And nothing jumps out at me more spectacularly than something as simple as school buses.

We don't do that anymore? We're going to start nibbling away at that? Parochial? Public? We're not going to support school transportation. And we want them to have the best quality education, but we're not even going to be good partners as far as sending the kids to school, the most basic thing in the world?

I don't know. There's a disconnect between what we say

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here and what we do. There is a disconnect between what we say the town should do and what we do. Do as we say, don't do as we do.

Well, I'm letting you know seven towns that I represent the hundred thousand folks I represent in North Central Connecticut have said, we've had enough. Stop it. Let us breathe and if you're going to give us anything more on our plates you better have the money to back it up. Because really, they're asking me questions about what if we don't do this? What are the legal ramifications?

And when my law-abiding, goodhearted people in my towns start talking like that I get concerned. I think that they've sort of had it up to their eyeballs right now. And we need to back off and let them have the time and the resources to do what they want to do.

We're talking about professional educators who want to make our children's lives the best that they could possibly be. I trust them. I have faith in them. I think if we work a little more cooperatively and give them a little more latitude we'll all end up in the best place possible, but it all can't happen overnight and it doesn't happen for free.

Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you.

Will you remark?

Senator Markley?

SENATOR MARKLEY:

Thank you, Madam President.

And I want to thank Senator Kissel for introducing this amendment, which I think is very appropriate and very necessary, and for his comments here on this, on the amendment which are to the point] and reflect the same things that I have heard, too.

And I would say he has said we need to give the time and

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the resources. I feel if we are in a spot in the State where we can't afford to give the resources necessarily, at the very least we ought to give the time, which is all that this amendment would do.

Senator Kissel also said that sometimes we say one thing outside of the chamber and do something different when we're voting here. Let me say, I've heard the same as he has from the boards of education locally, from the unions that I've spoken to, teachers unions that I've spoken to locally, again, and like his experience, both in small towns and in the large city of Waterbury.

I've also heard it when I've met with the Association of Boards of Education and other groups up here. And I have to say when we meet with those groups here in Hartford, I think there's a general acknowledgment that the State] has to be aware of the burdens that they're placing on local government.

But this is the moment if we want to make that acknowledgment, if we want to do something that actually improves the situation for these people who are doing their best to educate our children this is exactly the kind of amendment I think we ought to be supporting.

I don't see this as something that neuters the proposal that we've set forward with to go forward with education. I think it just acknowledges the fact that the towns are scrambling to make it happen. The feedback I get from the towns I've spoken to is that they're willing to go ahead with the evaluation. It simply has been more thrown at them than they're able to handle.

This is the flexibility we need to give them, to work with them and not to dictate to them and I would sincerely urge my colleagues here in the Senate to support this amendment.

Thank you very much.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Stillman.

SENATOR STILLMAN:

Thank you, Madam President.

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I rise in opposition to the amendment. We are more than halfway through the process. I believe this delay, as much as it is important to some districts, I believe it would -- it is ill served in terms of making sure that this evaluation process is carried out in its original timeframe.

In my conversations with the commissioner he has been very clear that an overwhelming number of districts have -- are meeting this guideline now. I believe the language that we put in the amendment will help bring the rest of them along because that will give them an opportunity to possibly change the process a little bit.

And just as importantly, the fiscal year that we are currently in, FY 13, there was 3 and a half million dollars put in the budget just for this issue of addressing the problems around -- that school districts might have in needing some resources to help meet the evaluation, the new evaluation guidelines.

It's my understanding, I believe, that there might be a few more dollars in the next year's budget, but please don't quote me on that one because I haven't seen all the numbers for the budget.

But with that, I urge rejection of the amendment and I ask for a roll call vote.

Thank you.

THE CHAIR:

A roll call vote will be had.

Senator Boucher.

SENATOR BOUCHER:

Thank you, Madam President.

Madam President, I rise to commend the good Senator for bringing the issues that are clearly on the minds of so many school districts in Connecticut, and if we could on this side of the aisle certainly support a change particularly as it involves the high-performing

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districts.

I know I've heard that from so many, that we're using the same brush for every school district, even those that far surpass our standards and should be relieved of a lot of mandates, particularly this one, because they obviously are getting results from their local processes.

And there's no question you've highlighted the issue of funding particularly for transportation. I've watched over many years of being on the local board of education, on the State Board of Education, on the House on the Education Committee watching this body erode a lot of the financial support for things that were held sacred in the beginning of the ECS process when that was first put in place in the mid six -- eighties, actually, through Ted Surgi-- who was then the commissioner and was then actually putting together what was now our ECS formula.

That all those systems would be held harmless from any changes or erosion of funding for special education, for transportation, for social services provided to our private schools and our parochial schools as well. But yet the State didn't keep that promise and it's been very disappointing to see that. But you would hope that the very last bit of support that it gives to transportation should be held harmless during this budget process.

So I do thank you very much for your amendment, because it does highlight the concerns that are very widespread throughout, Connecticut.

Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you.

Will you remark?

Will you remark?

Senator Fasano.

SENATOR FASANO:

Thank you, Madam President.

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Madam President, I rise to support the amendment and share my words with those of Senator Kissel and Senator Markley and Senator Boucher, that I believe we should also postpone the evaluations and some of the requirements that we have placed upon our teachers and our boards of education.

We did a good bill that came out a year or so ago and we worked hard to get that bill out. But moving at breakneck speed to what end is the question I have. I think we could still achieve our goals. We don't have to do them in a nanosecond. We could do it over time because quality matters more than doing it as quick as possible.

Madam President, I think the amendment makes sense. I understand the chair is not in agreement with the amendment, but I think the amendment makes sense. I think we want to give our schools, our teachers the ability to digest and move deliberately so that they can do best for what is the best for our kids.

So Madam President, with that I support the amendment.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you.

Will you remark? Will you remark?

If not, Mr. Clerk will you call for a roll call vote and the machines will be open.

THE CLERK:

Immediate roll call has been ordered in the Senate.
Senators, please return to the chamber. Immediate roll call on the Senate "C" ordered in the Senate.

THE CHAIR:

If all members have voted? All members have voted. The machine will be closed.

Mr. Clerk, will you please call the tally.

THE CLERK:

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Senate Amendment Schedule "C" for Senate Bill 1097.

Total Number Voting	33
Necessary for Adoption	17
Those voting Yea	13
Those voting Nay	20
Those absent and not voting	3

THE CHAIR:

Senate Amendment "C" fails.

Will you remark further?

Senator Stillman.

SENATOR STILLMAN:

Thank you, Madam President.

I urge approval of this bill going forward. I believe it's good legislation, and so I urge my colleagues to support it.

Thank you.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you.

Will you remark further? Will you remark further?

If not, Mr. Clerk, will you call for a roll call vote and the machine will be open on the bill.

THE CLERK:

Immediate roll call has been ordered in the Senate.
Senators, please return to the chamber. Immediate roll call has been ordered in the Senate.

THE CHAIR:

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If all members have voted? All members have voted. The machine will be closed.

Mr. Clerk, will you please call the tally.

THE CLERK:

Senate Bill Number 1097, as amended.

Total Number Voting	33
Necessary for Adoption	17
Those voting Yea	33
Those voting Nay	0
Those absent and not voting	3

THE CHAIR:

The bill passes.

At this time I would ask for any points of personal privilege.

Senator Welch.

SENATOR WELCH:

Thank you, Madam President.

I do rise for a point of personal privilege.

THE CHAIR:

Please proceed, sir.

SENATOR WELCH:

Thank you, Madam President.

We are very fortunate today to have three high school seniors from Terryville, Connecticut, Jeffrey Levins, Gabe D'Antiono and Haley Oulette. If you could stand in the corner there.

They are affectionately known in Terryville as Kangaroos. And these are some very hard-core political science aspiring seniors soon to go to college. In fact, they were here with their school earlier this year, but didn't see

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STANDING
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**EDUCATION
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efforts to be here, a chance to offer his testimony. The floor is yours.

COMMISSIONER STEFAN PRYOR: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Am I audible? Good. And thank you for acknowledging -- I know everyone has conflicts today. I will stay as long as humanly possible. There is a P-20 Council meeting simultaneous, so please forgive me if after I testify I exit. I thank you for the opportunity, Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, for the opportunity to testify. I'm back before you today to discuss several of the matters that are before you today at this hearing. Most of the comments I'm going to make pertain to Senate Bill 1097, but I will -- I will address other issues as well.

First, as pertains to 1097, I wish to reiterate my advocacy for no delay in the implementation of the evaluation and support system statement and in the adoption of the recommendations made on a unanimous basis by the Performance Evaluation Advisory Council. As you know, that organization, PEAC, was established by the General Assembly in statute as the advisory body on the evaluation process which we now conceive as the evaluation and support system in our state. PEAC -- though there have been tough discussions within PEAC to be sure among the stakeholders inclusive of the various school leader associations, district leader associations, and both statewide teachers' unions, RESCSs and others, those -- though the discussions have been difficult, we have always been able to reach resolution.

Most recently, to remind you, we tackled the question of implementation next year of the statewide eval and support system. We had heard loud and clear from superintendents,

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principals, teachers, their representatives, and others that there was concern regarding the burden of implementing all at once everywhere next year. Having heard that we had extensive discussions regarding options and did reach consensus, every stakeholder represented, every stakeholder affirming that we ought not delay.

As a matter of fact, there was a specific request or resolution you might say that emerged from the membership of PEAC, not presented by the administration of the Education Department, that a message be sent to this Legislature for your consideration that there not be a delay, and that a specific system be established for next year which is a -- a step up or a phase-in process where schools within a district -- a district may select a subset of schools, minimum of a third, a subset of the faculty and staff, minimum of a third once again, in order to conduct the evaluation for next year. I can answer additional questions beyond those that I've answered previously on this flexibility proposal, but we believe that it still represents the best approach.

Let me say a word in advance as to why. There have been recommendations we know regarding a - a more -- a delay altogether. We -- we really feel as if districts, teachers, their representatives in each district, deserve the opportunity to begin, in a phased in way, to absorb the various elements of the model and to implement in a way that is rational and sensible and phased in. And that they not be enabled and encouraged to abruptly begin at some future point in time without the benefit of that step up. We think that in the end this will be the best method in which to implement evaluation. And we advocate that you -- that

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you consider that rather than moving the date -
- simply moving the date within the statute.

In addition, we have some other points to make. There is a recommendation that the professional development committee that exists within statute and that exists with -- in the school districts of this state have its -- have its jurisdiction expanded to include evaluation as pertains to the selection of the model in the given district. We have been in discussions with multiple stakeholders, very welcome discussions regarding ways in which there can be more consultation, more collaboration, and more buy-in on the local level. This -- this mechanism aims in that direction and, therefore, its intent is laudable.

We think there are some nuances that ought to be contemplated if this Committee would be willing. One is that at present for well-intentioned reasons, the proposal aims to ensure that if the professional development committee at the local level and the local board of education do not mutually agree upon a model, that the default is the state model itself. We call that Model SEED, it's a fully-fleshed out state model for evaluation and support.

While we are pleased that the state model would be offered in that fashion because there really is a great deal of affirmation that's occurred regarding the sensibility of that model, we think that that might not be the answer that either the professional development or the local board actually aims for and that would be an unfortunate, unintended consequence under those circumstances. We can clear up that unintended consequence by ensuring that the role of the local board is clarified to ensure

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that it has the final decision making authority. And I believe that you will find that many if not all stakeholders would be agreeable to that approach. So that may be a friendly amendment on the specific proposal.

I know that there's also a discussion regarding the precise format and place to accomplish this, and I leave that for another conversation. I will also note that we believe a district and a union may be interested in another committee serving the purpose of this model selection. And just one last point on this question, we believe that it might be possible to have that committee selected at the local level. For example, the one-third solution, the flexibility solution for the evaluation model, will be -- there will be a committee established for that purpose. It might be possible to designate a committee and achieve the same goal so long as representatives of the district administration and the duly appointed representatives of the teachers' union are jointly serving on that committee.

So I want to move on to some other S.B. 1079 points. The point I wish to make subsequent to the evaluation points which I'll leave for the moment, are regarding the reading assessments that in the Education Reform Act of 2012 were included for certain categories of teachers. We have had the opportunity following passage of that bill to examine the provisions very closely and most closely with members of the Black and Puerto Rican Caucus who were heavily involved in the proposal thereof.

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And we have, I believe, all agreed that some of the intent of the original bill was inadvertently lost in some -- in some of the

translation to the final bill language. Technical aspects thereof, the way in which certification is treated as pertains to the reading test. So there's been a process underway that we at the Education Department have helped to initiative and participated in with the Black and Puerto Rican Caucus, with both statewide teachers' unions, with other stakeholders. And what we would suggest is this bill that you have -- that you have produced, S.B. 1097, goes a long way towards fulfilling the requests and the requirements and of those discussions among stakeholders.

We certainly support the direction in that there will be data-informed professional development, informed specifically by a survey of a teacher's reading instruction acumen and skill. That data-informed professional development is precisely the direction in which we aim to -- to go in general with the system. However, there are a couple of nuances that we think merit your examination. First, we need to make sure that all of the language permits the results of the survey to be available to educators, providing support or guidance in the form of coaching, mentorship, and supervision.

We think there may be a couple of cleanup sentences that are required, or I should say sentences that may require some cleanup in order to accomplish that. We also support the bill's clarification that the test should be administered at the pre-service level, prior to certification for special educators and remedial reading teachers and consultants. And we wish to ask for some clarification language regarding the examination of the appropriate testing and survey instruments. My written testimony contains commentary on that, I won't belabor the point with further testimony.

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get you out of here in 15 minutes. I'm going to ask some very concise questions. I'd request, to the degree possible, you give your answers briefly now and if there's more in writing that you want to give later, we can handle it that way.

COMMISSIONER STEFAN PRYOR: My pleasure.

REP. FLEISCHMANN: With regard to Senate Bill 1097, you mentioned that, you know, you would prefer not to have things put off by a year and instead take the approach that PEAC recommended of a third of the schools or a third of school personnel get the roll out of the new evaluation system in the coming school year. Two main objections that I've heard relate to, one, costs, and, two, the challenge of rolling out curricula locally that align with the new Core curriculum as the same time as there's roll out of eval. I'd like to give you a chance to respond to those two major concerns we've heard.

COMMISSIONER STEFAN PRYOR: Cost and Common Core alignment. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. First of all let me note it's a minimum of a third standard. In no way is it a -- is it a full prescription or limit for districts that are ready to do more or do a different configuration. The -- let me respond to both of your points. As pertains to cost, we -- the Governor's budget presents five categories of expenditure that we wish to make within the biennial budget to support evaluation activity.

Those elements include the acquisition of a data management system which is essential to the administration of the -- of the program; the creation of survey instruments for those districts that wish to conduct either parent or

student surveys; the provision of orientation and training to all personnel involved, teachers and leaders; the provision of calibration and proficiency training for supervisors in their capacity as supervisors to ensure that they carry out the model appropriately; and other such expenses.

We have budgeted for such activity, in the neighborhood of \$10 million in the new category within the Governor's budget as presented by OPM that refers to talent and Common Core. So I can answer more questions on that, but we do wish to offer relief to all districts undertaking the evaluation model as pertains to the expense. We also should not that for those districts that in my cases are larger and in many cases are coming from the furthest behind as to resources and sometimes in terms of implementation, the alliance districts, they have received disproportionately large sums for alliance district activity.

In addition to the talent allocations, the eval allocations that I described in those five categories, the alliance districts will be expended to and certainly will be given permissions to expend their alliance district dollars for the commission of carrying out evaluation. The other two categories that we expect in the coming year would be Common Core implementation and low performing school turnaround. If they wish to expend monies for other purposes, of course, that is permissible but that's an effort to provide them relief in that way as well.

The second question you asked, Mr. Chairman, was as pertains to Common Core implementation and doing so at the same time. This is an important question and we do receive it

frequently as well. I believe that it's important that we do both at the same time and that, in fact, they are mutually reinforcing. We are ever striving to help teachers improve their practice and now specifically do so in accordance with the Common Core State Standards which are appropriately nationally and internationally benchmarked and are the kinds of standards that we wish for our young people to be -- to be taught in accordance with.

I actually -- I think that it's essential that we use all of the data available to us in the evaluation and support systems and all of the coaching that will be associated the evaluation implementation to help teachers get there. I think that delaying would actually postpone the level of intensity of support and the level of intricate information that would be provided to teachers in carrying out their preparation for the Common Core.

REP. FLEISCHMANN: Thank you for those helpful answers. A couple of other quick questions related to SERC, you raised a question about FOIA. I do believe that the Freedom of Information Act implicitly applies, but that's -- that's really a drafting question. If you -
- wish to have --

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COMMISSIONER STEFAN PRYOR: I agree it is possible.

REP. FLEISCHMANN: -- to have it be explicit, we could do that. But I believe the way our state statutes work it would apply in this instance. But to a more important question, so the structure that's in this bill, one that was largely suggested by your department, is that of a quasi-public entity. Virtually all quasi-publics in the state have independent revenue streams. The -- SERC receives about 90 percent

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public statutes as pertains to the 12, I believe, quasi-publics, does not specify elements such as bidding procedures. Your statute and our letter clarifying our proposal both aim to ensure that the procedures be consistent with state bidding rules. So I believe that you are accomplishing all the goals that you would wish to accomplish in your model. I would be glad and our team would be glad to further analyze.

REP. FLEISCHMANN: Thank you. That's very helpful.

Representative Lavielle has a question to be followed by Representative LeGeyt.

REP. LAVIELLE: I do. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair, and I will be very quick. It's just one question and I hope I ask it in an informed way. You mentioned, Commissioner, earlier that there were some aspects of the literacy bill that were to your mind not present in the final bill that was passed last year. One of the ones you didn't mention was the requirement that any child who could not read to grade level at the end of third grade be held back.

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And I -- when I say ask it in an informed way, I understand that if a child is held back for that reason, there have to be all sorts of interventions to make sure that it works not just that they're held back. But I wondered how you felt about that, whether you saw any possibility of that eventually coming into play to really give as much teeth as possible to the literacy initiatives that we have taken.

COMMISSIONER STEFAN PRYOR: My -- my primary response would be that I -- I know that that subject was discussed extensively within the Black and Puerto Rican Caucus in the last

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session and more generally within the Legislature. I would wish to respect the process that the Black and Puerto Rican Caucus has established for discussing literacy issues in order to, with you, Representative Lavielle, and with others, probe the issue. I know that there are arguments on both sides, meritorious arguments, regarding the question of social promotion as it is sometimes called, or other accountability mechanisms or other measures associated with reading as pertains to students.

My sense is that, and Representative Rojas may want to comment, he's been in even the most recent sessions that we've had regarding these provisions of the bill and has exercised terrific leadership on this issue, my sense is that the bill aims first at positioning teachers for success and that this is a subject for future and further discussion.

REP. LAVIELLE: Thank you. Thank you for your answer. And I did support those initiatives, so I hope we will be able to move forward further. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

COMMISSIONER STEFAN PRYOR: Thank you.

REP. FLEISCHMANN: Representative LeGeyt.

REP. LEGEYT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good morning, Commissioner.

COMMISSIONER STEFAN PRYOR: Good morning.

REP. LEGEYT: I have two questions and they both focus on S.B. 1097.

COMMISSIONER STEFAN PRYOR: Yes, sir.

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REP. LEGEYT: You're talking about allowing a professional development committee and the local board of education to interact to develop an evaluation model and that the state model would be the default model if they can't agree.

COMMISSIONER STEFAN PRYOR: As proposed in the bill.

REP. LEGEYT: As proposed, and so I'm asking does that then assume are there no standards for that process such that the state board at some point could say, well, you know, you've -- the professional development committee and the local board have agreed on this model, but we're concerned that it doesn't address what we want it to.

COMMISSIONER STEFAN PRYOR: Yes. Two points if I may. First to clarify, the proposed bill specifies that the state model, currently called SEED, be the default. We think that is ill-advised even though well-intentioned and so do most of the stakeholders who I think -- who were involved in consultations regarding the drafting of this bill. We believe that the decision ought to be vested in the local board of education following a proper collaboration session -- collaboration process within the designed committee.

REP. LEGEYT: Locally?

COMMISSIONER STEFAN PRYOR: Yes, sir.

REP. LEGEYT: Local conversation?

COMMISSIONER STEFAN PRYOR: A local collaboration process, consultation and collaboration, with a designed committee, PD committee, or otherwise. What -- what I would say in response to your question about the quality of the model which

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is a very important question, very insightful question, the state -- the State Department of Education in the PEAC construct, the system as recommended by PEAC, adopted by the State Board of Education, the State Department of Education must approve the model. That is the -- that is the provision under which we ensure quality.

REP. LEGEYT: Thank you for that.

COMMISSIONER STEFAN PRYOR: Thank you.

REP. LEGEYT: And the other question I have has to do with the requirement that kindergarten through grade three teachers complete a survey --

COMMISSIONER STEFAN PRYOR: Yes.

REP. LEGEYT: -- of reading instruction which will identify not only the process that they're using but their ability to perform that process. And so my question has to do with whether or not and how would that dovetail with their evaluation -- their personal evaluation if they were in a district that was going to be implementing an evaluation model next year?

COMMISSIONER STEFAN PRYOR: In that the evaluation system is, in fact, an evaluation and support system, these elements would be stitched together. It's not intended that the evaluation be predominately premised or the determinative factor be the survey. Instead, the intent is that the survey inform the coaching, the imbedded professional development and other forms of support that are linked to the overall system.

So the evaluation system will pour in other forms of data, observation of performance and

practice by the given teacher in -- in the classroom, observation as conducted by a supervisor in accordance with a high quality rubric, the student learning indicators, multiple indicators of student learning that would be utilized, any survey instrument regarding parents or students or other feedback mechanism that is intended by the local -- local system in their design of their model as we've just discussed.

Those elements would combine with the survey in the tailoring of the professional development program for the given teacher. We think it's very important that all coaches and other professional development individuals, the professional development staff, be working in unison with that set of data to help the teacher improve.

REP. LEGEYT: And --

REP. FLEISCHMANN: If you could be brief, we've got two other folks waiting and the Commissioner has to leave shortly.

REP. LEGEYT: And so would that survey be used as part of the teacher's eventual rating through the evaluation process?

COMMISSIONER STEFAN PRYOR: My understanding is that the survey would not be used specifically for the rating purpose.

REP. LEGEYT: Thank you very much.

REP. FLEISCHMANN: Thank you, Representative.

Senator Bye to be followed by Representative Rojas.

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REP. FLEISCHMANN: Thank you.

Representative Rojas.

REP. ROJAS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll just SB 1097
offer some comments more for clarification
around the literacy portions of the bill. The
commissioner mentioned that we had been meeting
quite a bit with all stakeholders involved in
the literacy part of it and we've made great
headway. And I think we've -- it's reflected
in the bill to some degree, but we do have some
other clarification that we're hoping to make
going forward and we'll be sharing that with
the Committee and with leadership when the time
is appropriate for that.

You'll notice that there's a number of delays
in the bill on implementation of the reading
parts. And while none of us would like to see
delay of the reforms that we worked so hard on
last year, we felt as a Caucus that it was
important to make sure that we get this right
the first time. Implementation is currently
underway at the five pilot programs that are
working on literacy.

We've gotten some preliminary data from the
folks who are evaluating this at the Neag
School, and it's very positive information that
we're getting about the impact that it's having
on students, the efficacy among the teachers
who are implementing this program on our
behalf, and we think this is a great
partnership that's going to show fruition. But
with all the implementation efforts underway by
SDE and teachers at the ground level, we want
to make sure we get this right and that's the
reason why we agreed to the delay.

To Representative Lavielle's question about the

retention issue, that's still important to us and we're going to hold that out there. But we wanted to make sure that the program that we put in place and the interventions that we are now asking for that are currently being implemented, we want to evaluate them and make sure that -- that they are appropriate interventions before we try to broaden that.

And one of the financial realities of the retention issue is it probably would have cost us \$20 million to deal with the 50 percent of African American students and the 48 percent of Latino students that would've been impacted by that retention issue. So a significant cost, you know, those are the realities that we had to take into account when we decided to pull that back. But we waited far too long to deal with the reading crisis that exists in Connecticut, so just know, be comfortable knowing that the Caucus still has that as a -- as a goal for eventually getting there if the interventions that we have in place right now don't work out the way we hope that they do. So thank you.

REP. FLEISCHMANN: Thank you, Representative. Commissioner, am I right in sensing you must go now. Well, thank you for making the time and, you know, to the extent that people have follow-up questions, we'll follow up with your staff. But we appreciate your having worked it out and Godspeed.

COMMISSIONER STEFAN PRYOR: Thank you, sir. Thank you, members of the Committee.

REP. FLEISCHMANN: We go now to Representative Candelora to be followed by Bill Phillips.

REP. CANDELORA: Thank you. Good morning, Chairman

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Because what we don't have is we don't have a lot of really high performing schools. We have a lot of schools but not ones that are really treating our kids the way they should be treated.

REP. ROJAS: I would agree with that. Thank you.

REP. FLEISCHMANN: Any further questions for Ms. MacLean?

If not, thank you very much for your testimony and your good work.

PAIGE MACLEAN: Thank you.

REP. FLEISCHMANN: Randy Collins to be followed by Sheila Cohen and Mark Waxenberg of CEA.

RANDY COLLINS: Representative Fleischmann and members of the Education Committee, thank you and good afternoon. My name is Randy Collins and I'm currently Staff Associate for the Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents. But prior to my retirement in 2011, I had served as 30 years as the Superintendent of Schools, the last 20 of them being in Waterford, and worked very closely with Senator Stillman on a number of issues.

REP. FLEISCHMANN: And Senator Stillman sends her regards. She wishes she were here, she's voting right on transportation bills.

RANDY COLLINS: I'm sure she would love to hear this. The -- I speak today basically on the same two points on Bill 1097 that the commissioner mentioned. And I -- you've got written testimony from me and also from 30 plus superintendents across the state who share the same viewpoint. And they are the two points

that the commissioner mentioned.

The first one being the -- the shifting of the responsibility for the teacher evaluation system to the performance and evaluation committees...in school systems. And if they don't reach agreement with the board of ed, then it shifts to the state model which is really an untenable position to be in. My biggest concern on that, speaking just personally from experience, is that if that were to occur, you would in effect remove responsibility for -- or accountability from boards of education. They would have no say in the final authority if -- if it gets reverted to the state model.

Therefore, the people who are responsible for the results of the schools, who are elected to be responsible, and the superintendents that they hire, would have an interesting argument that they were not the ones who chose the model, in terms of accountability. So I think -- nobody that I know in my professional career, no superintendent that I know is opposed to working with teachers and all stakeholders to get us a model that would work within the system.

They would be foolish if they were to do it any other way because it would not work effectively. So that's one concern that we have. And the bill -- one statement in my testimony, the bill would give authority over a school system function that is directly related to results achieved by the school system to a body that has no responsibility for them, and the board of ed does.

The second point, and I'm going to be very brief because you've got many speakers, the

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second point is the delay that the commissioner mentioned. It frankly puzzles me why there would be a bill requesting a delay when the process that the Legislature set up for the PEAC Commission has reached a compromise with all stakeholders in terms of how to proceed with the evaluation process, the model. It seems to me that this bill would have some logic, if it had occurred last September when people were upset about the full implementation and no compromise solution.

The compromise is not, I would suspect, it certainly isn't for superintendents, but I would suspect for all stakeholders it's not exactly what they would have wanted. That's the nature of compromise. I mean I can tell you that there are people in our membership -- in our membership who would prefer to have other things, but that's not what compromise is. They've reached a compromise in the PEAC Commission. It's a process that was established by the Legislative Committee -- Legislature, and I think really is one that should be adhered to in good faith.

Secondly, on a more personal level, I have five grandchildren and two of them attend school in Connecticut. And they attend school in one of the 30th -- 30 lowest performing school systems in the State of Connecticut. And even though there are great people working in those school systems, and even though when I worked in Waterford there were great people working in New London school system, they can't -- my grandchildren and all the children cannot afford to wait another year for the reform to kick in.

Even though I was not a superintendent last year when the reform effort was going on and

even though I didn't have an opportunity to come to you, I suppose I could have as a taxpayer, and testify, I did watch. And I watched very carefully in the papers and through the CAPSS document -- newsletters what was going on. I as an individual resident of Connecticut was frankly very proud that the Department of Ed, that the Governor, that the Legislature took reform steps to move this state forward. And my reaction was finally. I regret that I'm not around to really help much with it.

But secondly I was proud of the Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents for the report they put forth on reform efforts. And I think we've begun. There's no point in stopping for even a year. And I'd be glad to take questions.

REP. FLEISCHMANN: Thank you. Just on that last point which is a major point for this Committee and this State, we've heard from a number of superintendents who've said we -- while we recognize that the PEAC Council has done what it's done, we ourselves, you know, we're not at the table. And for our district, we feel like this is rushed given the fact that the pilot is not complete, the study is not complete. And it's difficult for us to do this in the midst of roll out of Core Curriculum and other things that we're doing, so -- and the budgets that we're facing.

So we're hearing that from a fair number of superintendents and boards of education. In looking at the statute, we sort of came to realize that there was a logical progression that involved initially a roll out in the coming school year of training and then implementation of the new evaluation system in

2014-15. And that during the special session where there was an implementer, after the regular session last spring, this new date requiring roll out to start in 2013-14 was inserted.

So I for one was not informed of that, I learned of it long after that special session. And it doesn't quite align with what was in the statute that was passed in regular session where it says pilot, study of the pilot, training of people in districts that aren't pilot districts, and roll out. So having given you that history, why -- why would we not allow the kind of structure that was in the original bill to take place rather than the more accelerated structure that was sort of pushed through in special session?

RANDY COLLINS: There are many points that I would like to make and I'm going to try to make several of them quickly. Superintendents who say they were not at the table, well, obviously they were represented at the table. And we worked very closely with -- with CAPSS to get -- to get feedback. When you have 165 people and you have different systems, not everyone is going to be happy with the compromise. There are still individuals who are not happy entirely with the compromise. No one is happy with it period, but it is a compromise.

Secondly, I suspect that most of the reaction that you got from superintendents, although I do not know, occurred prior to the compromise that PEAC came out with which was just recently when there was no -- when we were just plowing forward, if you will. And so I do suspect that's the issue. I -- you will hear from a superintendent later, actually the current superintendent in Waterford, who -- which is a

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pilot site, which will be able to address that question I think better than I can.

But I still go back to the process regarding PEAC. Now it is my understanding that in that compromise that PEAC has come forward with that all stakeholders have supported, that in January of 2014 there is a chance to review where we are and where we go from there. And so it's not like this it, we're not making any changes. There is a chance to review in 2014. And I -- I'm a big proponent of if you set up a process, you should really follow it. When I was a superintendent if I had set up a committee to look at something and then after they looked at it for three to five years, I simply say, well, that's fine but we're going to go this way. There would be a lot of anger.

REP. FLEISCHMANN: Thank you. I appreciate that response.

Senator Bye.

SENATOR BYE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm going to ask you to follow up on Representative Fleischmann's question about the change in the special session that was outside of the process, and then I have a follow up. I didn't get your answer to that part.

RANDY COLLINS: Well, I don't think there was an answer to it because I don't think that I'm capable of answering that because I was not here. Later in the process you'll have a pilot superintendent, as I mentioned, and you'll have Joe Cirasuolo who is a member of PEAC who can answer it better than I can.

SENATOR BYE: Okay. Because I think that's important. I take your point as a leader that

if you go through a process and you set up a process, you want to keep it rolling forward. It puts pressure on systems to figure things out. And by the way, great system in Waterford, and you must have been there with the Friendship School which is just --

RANDY COLLINS: I was there with the Friendship School.

SENATOR BYE: -- wonderful, wonderful school.

RANDY COLLINS: It's a great school.

SENATOR BYE: It's a wonderful thing. But my question to you as a -- as a leader, and I think this applied to the network schools as well, is as we're rolling out this reform that I think many of us here really believe in and really want reform to go forward, there seems to be this theme of we say we're going to do a pilot and then before the pilot is done and we have the information back about how this could be better or what were the outcomes for kids or teachers or systems and what were the costs, there are a lot of concerns about costs with this system. What is your answer to the question that we don't have the outcomes of the pilot and yet we're still rolling forward with some superintendents feeling like we're guessing about what this is going to cost.

RANDY COLLINS: Well, I -- in my career I ran many pilots, we had a pilot of textbook adoption or something more significant. I think it's a, and I'm not attributing this to you, Senator, it's a misunderstanding that the pilot has to conclude before you get ongoing progress. I know that the pilots have been meeting, I know that there's been reaction to the state department, they've been meeting with them.

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This has been an ongoing process where what is going on and the progress that is being made doesn't wait until it's over and that it has been going on. There may be some other pieces that will come out, but things can be adjusted, they don't have to be stopped.

SENATOR BYE: Thank you. Thank you for that answer. I just wish we had a more concrete sort of report about how it went before we went and took the next step. So I'm thinking through this, your input is actually very, very helpful because the systems part is important that you're talking about when you're moving reform.

RANDY COLLINS: Thank you.

REP. FLEISCHMANN: Other questions for Mr. Collins?

If not, thank you for your testimony and for all of your public service.

RANDY COLLINS: Thank you.

REP. FLEISCHMANN: Sheila Cohen and Mark Waxenberg, to be followed by Laurina Schaefer, I believe. Welcome, the floor is yours.

SHEILA COHEN: Thank you. Good afternoon, Representative Fleischmann, members of the Education Committee, we thank you for this opportunity. And I have presented written testimony for you to consider, but would like to underscore a few points specifically with regard to Senate Bill 1097 and particularly with regard to the literacy survey.

The original language from last year's bill, although certainly well intended, did present some concerns for us. And in an effort to assuage those concerns, CEA along with AFT

Connecticut discussed remedies with the commissioner as well as with individuals who initiated that legislation. Consequently in genuine collaboration with those constituency groups that I just mentioned, we helped devise some suggestions which would provide, and I do indeed want to underscore this, which would provide opportunities to enhance the teaching of reading skills through targeted professional development based upon the unique needs perhaps of the district, perhaps of individual schools, and even more importantly to individual groups within those schools based on what the needs were determined to be.

Now that being said, I'll get back to that in a moment, but we -- we do have an ask of you. And that is that you consider pushing back the implementation of the pre-serve special ed majors to 2015. And we ask for this because that would allow pre-service teaching majors who are presently sophomores in higher education the opportunity to be provided with the course work that would indeed prepare these students for the Connecticut Foundations of Reading exam. Right now that is not necessarily the case for all pre-service special ed majors. And we want to make sure that rather than set these potential teaching candidates up for failure, we're giving them the course work they would need in order to pass such an exam. If we're going to recruit the most qualified candidates and also retain them, we certainly want to provide them with that necessary set of skills.

And in closing my personal statements, I do want to say that we are very, very supportive of this legislation resulting in any teacher certified to teach reading in elementary school to have the opportunity to enhance their

reading skills through targeted professional development, hoping to certainly help close the achievement gap. And we also are very appreciative of the collaboration that all of us -- in which we all participated in order to come to what you have before you as Senate Bill 1097.

REP. FLEISCHMANN: Thank you.

Mr. Waxenberg.

MARK WAXENBERG: Thank you. My name is Mark Waxenberg, Executive Director of the Connecticut Education Association. I appreciate the opportunity to speak before you, Representative Fleischmann, Senator Bye, and Representative McCrory. The issue I'm going to refer to is the one that was previously spoken to dealing with the evaluation and professional development aspect of the bill that you have before you in 1097.

My specific discussion is going to center on some of the things that may have been stated that I would like to clarify. Number one, we do agree that the present bill probably should be amended to allow local boards of education, should there not be agreement coming out of that committee for an evaluative tool at the local level, to allow boards of education to submit whatever tool it deems fit to the State Department of Education for them to -- to -- to digest and see whether it fits within the guidelines. So the exact language now mandates the SEED, we also agree it probably should be modified to allow for the local board to determine in its -- in its wisdom what it thinks is the best model to move forward to the state department.

In fact, there has been assertion or there may be some assertion in testimony that this would give the teachers the right to collectively bargain the evaluation that's presently prohibited by law. That's not true. It's not true at all. All this does is to create a vehicle for teachers to get input into the document. And that document to be transferred to the local board for its determination. It does not in any way -- in any way dilute the present authoritative power in the state statute that superintendents have or local boards of education have.

It's -- the issue for us basically is -- and I told a Legislator this, it's almost like in Thanksgiving where you know you go to Thanksgiving, you have an adult table and you have a children's table. Well, we want to be invited to the adult table because right now we're relegated by statute -- can be relegated to the children's table. There's been some magnanimous leadership folks across the state who involve teachers and there are others who do not and just move forward with their ideas that they believe are in the best interests of the school system. We believe we have good ideas also, we want to contribute to those good ideas, we don't believe that this structure is going to be all time consuming or would not be able to be worked within the time constraints of the PEAC model. So we're asking in effect for statutory recognition for the teachers to be able to help in the -- in the creation of the tool that's going to be used at the local level by the local district.

REP. FLEISCHMANN: Thank you for that clear and well-timed testimony. Would it be fair to say that since the initial discussions that CEA had with leaders of the Education Committee about

this desire for teacher involvement with the evaluative process, that you have been in conversations with the commissioner and that's -- and that that's the reason that right now both you and the commissioner have said, well, we'd like to modify what's in the bill to say if neither the teachers nor the board of ed like the state model precisely as is, then the default position should be a board of education plan to be submitted to the state, is that fair?

MARK WAXENBERG: We have been in contact with all of the stakeholders involved in this, CABE, CAPSS, ourselves, AFT Connecticut, and the administration, and you're exactly correct. As a matter of fact, the language is absent that the union will basically appoint the members to this committee, and all the stakeholders, well, I know the commissioner has and I believe the president's conversations with other stakeholders, there is no objection to that in the JFS language that we hope we will see at the end. So the answer to your question is yes, there's -- we're working together on this initiative, yes.

REP. FLEISCHMANN: Thank you. We appreciate it. Life is always much easier for you and for us when stakeholders talk together.

Other questions?

Representative Ackert.

REP. ACKERT: Thank you, Mr. Chair. And this is more of a clarification for myself, and thank you for your testimony by the way. Your last paragraph, Mark, I think helps clarify what I believe is -- was a kind of a change I believe. It's my understanding now that the board of eds

can develop their own plan reviewed by the -- right now and be reviewed by the SDE if they have the ability to do that. But from what I'm finding out, some of the local smaller districts don't have the focus -- not the focus, but the ability..to develop theirs, time, manpower, you know, administration.

So they're grabbing the SEED one and that's a pretty involved, with a lot of I don't want to call it intervention, but assessments, up to six potentially. And so they're now looking saying well may be we don't -- that's a tough one, let's come up with our own and they can now submit that to SDE, and that one can be approved right now without any teacher involvement, is that correct?

MARK WAXENBERG: That's correct.

REP. ACKERT: Okay. So if by chance that the -- and then so what it looks like in your last sentence, it looks like you would say, okay, if we -- even if the teachers can't come to the table or can't get an agreement, or let's say they're asked to come to the table and they can't get agreement, you're okay still with the fact that they chose not the SEED one but, okay, maybe the local board of ed is the better choice, is that correct?

MARK WAXENBERG: Correct. The board of education has the ultimate authority to -- to refer to the State Board of Education its evaluative -- evaluation tool. To be honest with you, even if that committee unanimously agreed to Model X and the school board said we don't like Model X, we want to do Model Y, the law allows them to do that. I don't know why they would do that, but the law allows them by statute to make the final decision as to what goes to the

board.

REP. ACKERT: Thank you, Mark, and thank you for your time, appreciate it.

REP. FLEISCHMANN: Other questions?

Representative Kokoruda to be followed by Senator Bye.

A VOICE: We're having technical difficulties, please stand by.

REP. KOKORUDA: Thank you for your testimony. And I apologize if you've answered this already, but I'm a little confused with this part of it. The professional -- first of all I have to say that, of course, teachers belong at the adult table. I think everybody agrees with that, and I would hope so. The professional development evaluation committee, who sits on it now as -- right now who would be expected to be on there?

MARK WAXENBERG: By statute -- existing statute I think it's -- I want -- I want to say 10-22a, but I could be wrong on that. Presently as the professional development committee we're asking that that be expanded to include the word evaluation as well.

REP. KOKORUDA: Okay.

MARK WAXENBERG: So it's professional development committee, teachers, administrators, the same group that would sit on the -- this committee that with the word evaluation on it.

REP. KOKORUDA: And does anybody from the board of ed sit on that committee?

MARK WAXENBERG: They're not prohibited from

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sitting.

REP. KOKORUDA: They're not prohibited. Okay. So that's up to -- it's a local issue?

MARK WAXENBERG: Correct.

REP. KOKORUDA: Okay. So -- and -- and what your issue is that -- that right now as it is set up, you don't think teachers would be at that table or they are, that's what I'm confused about.

MARK WAXENBERG: On the professional development committee by statute they are.

REP. KOKORUDA: Right.

MARK WAXENBERG: But on the evaluation -- the development of the evaluation committee, they are not required by statute. What you have happening in some districts is you have your professional development committee in accordance with state statute. And then there may be an evaluation committee unto itself with a membership. That membership may not include teachers, may or may not include teachers. So it's for the sole purpose to doing -- to doing -- to creating the evaluation document.

Or as Representative Ackert stated, in a small district where a superintendent may or may not have time, they'd just say we'll take the state model, we don't have time to deal with this. We are asking that a committee be established rather than that superintendent immediately grabbing it off the rack. There are ways that the local can make its decision in its best interest.

REP. KOKORUDA: Okay. Thank you.

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REP. FLEISCHMANN: Senator Bye.

SENATOR BYE: Thank you. Sheila my question is for you, I'm Chair of Higher Education so your pre-service question struck me. And so you're going to explain how this bill asks the system to work now and what change you're asking for.

SHEILA COHEN: There are two different designations with regard to the special ed certification and taking of the Connecticut Foundation of Reading test. In one situation if there -- if reading is a core content element particularly for the elementary schools, the reading is part and parcel of what happens in pre-service. If the certification is one that is K through 12 and is much broader in its scope, there is not necessarily the presentation of the course work that would be necessary for a special ed major in the broader certification to be necessarily successful in having the skills that are going to be required in order to successful pass this test.

SENATOR BYE: Okay. As a follow up to that, so is the expectation that after 2015 the teacher ed programs will add this -- the Foundations of Reading to the K-12 certification so after that they'll be ready?

SHEILA COHEN: That would certainly be our hope. I mean I don't have any crystal ball certainly to determine what higher ed is going to do, but if -- if higher ed graduates are going to be expected to be successful in their certification area, hopefully the scope and sequence of the coursework would reflect that.

SENATOR BYE: Okay. I have some concerns about that. I would say, you know, two of the

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previous speakers were talking about what an emergency we have in front of us. And I worked for an executive director who used to say every week education is an emergency, every two years, you know, that's two years where a student isn't -- and I know you agree and you work on these issues.

But I don't -- maybe don't know enough about the test, but I imagine if it was a requirement and their teachers were to get jobs and get certified, the higher ed programs might work really hard now to make sure that those students in the K to 12 system got what they needed to pass the Foundations of Reading classes. So I don't know what your reaction is to that, but I'm hesitant to push the date back because of the emergency --

SHEILA COHEN: Sure, and considering the fact that special ed is a DSAP area to begin with, I certainly understand that. I just -- it is our opinion that we want to be sure that if we're going to be recruiting the most highly qualified people we can possibly find, we want to be able to retain them as well.

SENATOR BYE: No, I hear you. I hear you. I just -
- I'm just going to be looking to our institutions of higher ed and asking some questions about pressing this and can they offer sort of tutorials or whatever it takes. Because frankly I'm married to a high school teacher, she's still teaching reading and writing at certain levels. So it feels like the K-12 certification needs this. And so I'm hesitant to push the date back, but I'll check with our higher ed programs and I'll talk to some of our teachers and folks like that --

SHEILA COHEN: Certainly, if it can be done within

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that timeframe especially considering the fact that special ed is a DSAP area, that -- that would be wonderful.

SENATOR BYE: Okay. Thank you.

REP. FLEISCHMANN: Representative McCrory.

REP. MCCRORY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I have just a quick question in regards to Senate Bill 1097. Is your organization -- what do you -- actually where do you lie on the implementation -- pushing back the implementation of the new evaluation program? Where do you -- where do you stand on that?

MARK WAXENBERG: We -- we have been operating under the existing statute that the implementation date will not change. We are not advocating any change for it -- any date change for it. We believe that the two newest member of PEAC, because last year you had two other members of the CEA, we are operating under the existing guidelines, existing statute. Our concern honestly, Representative, is more in the line of the document being flexible, being able to be implemented at the local level so we can have a meaningful evaluation document. We started with that flexibility and we believe that if that continues that there will be benefit over the years to come. So we are not advocating any change of date for this system.

REP. MCCRORY: Thank you.

REP. FLEISCHMANN: Any other questions for the witnesses?

If not, thank you very much for your time and the thought and energy you put into all of these issues.

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high schools that we're working with that would like to implement this in the near future and need this statutory change to occur.

We'd like to make one suggestion in the language. Currently the language says based on competency and performance standards adopted by the State Board of Education. We would encourage you to modify the language to allow districts to submit the standards and be approved by the State Board of Education. It allows for districts to customize their standards for their needs as well as having the State Department of Ed have an option there. I'll stop there and answer any questions you might have.

REP. FLEISCHMANN: Thank you for your testimony and for your sort of outside the box way of approaching this issue of time and learning.

Are there questions, comments for Lawrence?

If not, thank you very much.

And I'm going to turn the Chairmanship over to our distinguished Vice Chair as I have to leave the room for a couple of minutes, and I'll be right back.

But Representative McCrory, you have the floor.

REP. MCCRORY: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I think we have Rae Ann Knopf next followed by Jamie Lazaroff.

RAE ANN KNOPF: Good morning, Vice Chair McCrory and esteemed members of the Education Committee. Thank you for hearing me this morning. I am Rae Ann Knopf, I am the Executive Director of

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the Connecticut Council for Education Reform. And we are a nonprofit, the voice of business and civic leaders who support reforms to help close Connecticut's achievement gap and raise achievement for all students. I'm here to testify today on Senate Bill 1097, AN ACT CONCERNING REVISIONS TO THE EDUCATION REFORM ACT OF 2012. And you have my written testimony, I would just like to offer a few additional statements.

You know, 2012 we all remember was a watershed moment for Connecticut children, policymakers, and citizens. And we really renamed our rightful place as a haven for enlightened education and a leader in championing the civil rights of all of our citizens. And I want to remind us it was not easy, but in the end we came up with a comprehensive bill that was supported on both sides of aisle, and a framework for meaningfully reconstructing public education in Connecticut.

And we didn't piecemeal and we didn't build in a lot of delays. We built in meaningful pilots and study elements to help inform our work along the way. So for this reason, we are concerned that any delays in implementing any portion of that law will only lessen the State's commitment to ensuring that we can look every child in the eye in Connecticut no matter where they live and tell them that we are doing all we humanly can in order to ensure they have an exceptional education.

Therefore, we have concerns about S.B. 1097 for the following reasons. One is that we believe it would delay full implementation of the new educator evaluation support system which is designed to provide essential feedback to teachers and principals in their work and it

would override a collaborative process that is already in place, as you've heard about earlier in the testimony, to assist districts where needed to implement a phase-in process. It would also defer decisions about ineffective educators, delaying their receiving the necessary training and support for improvement.

And we also believe it would mandate the formation of a professional development and evaluation committee, as you've heard earlier, which could potentially override local authority and their ability to develop a model that uniquely addresses local need. It would also postpone the implementation of critical K-3 literacy initiatives designed to ensure we identify early when children cannot read, and ensure teachers are well prepared to provide high-quality reading instruction.

I recognize the need to do our work and have it be done right and be responsible for children in our -- in our schools, in our state. I would just encourage you to allow the process to continue as it was designed. I know this is difficult, I know it's difficult for people in schools. And I would encourage any legislation that we pursue to support the needs of those districts who are struggling as opposed to changing the requirements for all districts including those that are already moving forward. Thank you. I'll take any questions that you might have.

REP. MCCRORY: Thank you for your testimony.

Representative Ackert.

REP. ACKERT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I do have -- Rae Ann, thanks for your testimony and your advocacy for children in this state in

education. You mentioned that the -- we had a process in which we put a reform bill together, the original bill actually had the -- this date that's now in this legislation. It had a process in which we had ten pilot districts chosen, and then a pilot review after that, and then a full implementation in 2014. I believe that was supported by most, I mean obviously I even made a mention it's a good start for the reform package, we still need to keep tweaking it.

And then it got tweaked in a way in the implementer that very few of us were aware of were in there. So it kind of -- as many of the districts had said, you know, you've got a pilot, why don't you find out the results of the pilot and then actually look at implementing the reform bill after you've reviewed that and see what works. Obviously PEAC came up with, you know, I would almost say a default method in terms of using the one-third basis, so we actually have lessened it.

So it seems that if we're looking at the original reform package as it stood, the (inaudible) pilots, one of my towns that I represent, is in the pilot. They are struggling with it, it's a very small district. They're -- they don't have an extra body to do six reviewed per teacher in the SEED program. So if that was good in terms of what it was then, and then we thought that that was the right process, we kind of changed the process midstream. So your comments in terms of, obviously, I believe you supported the original package before the implementer, and do you think that going the third basis, is that better than implementing it for all teachers?

RAE ANN KNOPF: Well, I think you raise some very

important questions. And as a former educator and state education leader myself, I know that pilots are very important. I know the feedback from pilots are very important. I know that training in the context of implementing new evaluation systems is absolutely critical. And I know what's even more critical is having in place the kinds of supports and training the teachers and principals are going to need as they're receiving the feedback that they're getting. And so pilots are typically designed, as you heard earlier, to give feedback as you go along the process.

It's not really a linear process that would be pursued. And so I guess what I would say is we know several districts are already moving forward and other districts are considering moving forward. And we would prefer to see the emphasis be placed on how we support them in moving forward than making a statement that we should wait and delay. I think that's our biggest concern of sending a message that this is too hard, we should delay, as opposed to sending a message that says we are -- this is really hard, we should actually put some things in place to help districts more quickly and effectively implement these systems.

REP. ACKERT: No, I, no, I do agree, but the -- what we found out to help the districts, we're going to eliminate evaluating two-thirds of our teachers potentially. So we went from full -- our full implementation of all teachers, now we're going to do a third of those that in terms of the certain districts that can get an approval.

RAE ANN KNOFF: You mean in terms of the flexibility?

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REP. ACKERT: Right. Right, the flexibility portion.

RAE ANN KNOPF: But that's to start. That's the pilot with a third is my understanding --

REP. ACKERT: It is.

RAE ANN KNOPF: -- so it doesn't preclude them from full implementation, but it says if you -- we agree -- I mean the states that have done this right have really started with a portion of their teachers or a portion of their district, evaluated how it was working, and then, you know, continued to roll this out, districts that have done this right. So it would seem to me that the current law could allow for that, but not mandate the way in which districts accommodate that.

REP. ACKERT: Right. Well, thank you again, Rae Ann, I truly appreciate your testimony.

RAE ANN KNOPF: Thank you, Representative Ackert.

REP. MCCRORY: Senator Bye.

SENATOR BYE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you for your testimony. And I think you're hearing from Representative Fleischmann and from me and Representative Ackert some frustration with the way the process changed. So, you know, people are testifying we need to keep it as it's going, this is the process we agreed on. And then we're sort of saying, understood, but we did change the process. So I just wanted to echo Representative Ackert's frustration.

There were a number of things in that bill that we don't really understand the genesis of and that were, I think, pretty major policy shifts.

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So -- but I do appreciate your advocacy on behalf of teacher evaluation and the PEAC. I think the PEAC process has been one that has tried to be as inclusive as -- as possible. I want to get to sort of the pragmatics of it because you have some experience in education. So we're about to shift to the Common Core, so what teachers for 5, 10, 15, 20, sometimes 30 years have known and that is the Connecticut Mastery Tests and the CAPT is about to change.

And so districts are working really hard on that change and the student performance is going to count. So how do we manage that, the timing of a brand new assessment system and trying to see -- use growth as a measure, right, because I think this is designed that way. So now it's a different assessment that no one has tried before and we're looking at growth, so we're going to look at growth over two totally different assessments, you know, how, if you were a teacher in the classroom and you're taking a risk with the new assessment.

And you're an administrator and you say to your teacher, this is new, we're learning Common Core, we're going to have this new kind of test, and then on top of that you're going to be evaluated and this is going to count. So now you're a teacher, you've got to take a risk on a new assessment, it's changing from the year before, you're measuring growth, I'm just trying to put these pieces together in a way that makes sense. So maybe you can do that for me and say how we can do that effectively and bring teachers and administrators along.

RAE ANN KNOPF: Senator Bye, I think that's a very important question. And as I was a part of the group of states that not only developed and adopted the Common Core before I came to

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Connecticut in this role, I'm very familiar with what you're talking about and the challenges that you reference. So I'll try to be brief, but what I would suggest is that the teacher and principal evaluation process is a process of setting goals and measuring yourself against those goals the same as we think about student growth over time in their coursework and in their work in schools.

And so we all know -- we were all aware when we said we wanted to move forward with the Common Core, these really important not just higher but richer standards that would really develop our students in a stronger way for success. We all knew that students are going to be subject to different expectations as well almost overnight, you know. You may have been in the sixth grade, but you were prepared for the other standards for grades one through five, and then now you will be tested on the new standards.

So what I would say in response to your question is I think we have to do the same thing that we're going to need to do with students, that we're going to do with our state accountability system, we'll need to do with teachers and principals, and that is to say here are your goals from this period until this point, and when the new systems come out, we have to develop new goals and new baseline to assess how people are progressing and how they're incorporating those new expectations.

SENATOR BYE: I -- I appreciate that answer. I guess as someone who wants to see teacher evaluation move forward, I'm afraid that the timing could jeopardize some of what we're trying to accomplish. And I guess I'd feel more comfortable going back to the original

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timing that everyone had agreed on. But I hear your answer and I think it's a -- it's a good answer. There's no perfect way to do this, and change is hard. And we do need to set goals and meet those goals.

But I want to make sure it works because I would hate to go forward with a new evaluation system that we really believe is one of the most important levers to improve student achievement and do it at a time of such disequilibrium that it -- the people, the stakeholders, might -- might not be able to get behind it because of -- but I know there are always new things going on, I understand.

RAE ANN KNOPF: Yeah.

SENATOR BYE: This is a pretty major shift in terms of it. But, so that -- I guess that would be my last point and feel free to respond. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

RAE ANN KNOPF: Yes, if I could just offer one comment in response. I think I would encourage us to think about the fact that there is always, you know, timing is always going to be difficult. This is, I agree, a major shift. But I think if we plan with the major shift in mind, it will give teachers and principals the opportunity and boards of ed to consider that in the work that they're doing over the next couple of years. And you know me, I -- I am an advocate for this, so I always err for children with having to wait years to get what they need over the uncomfortability of adults.

REP. MCCRORY: Representative Kokoruda.

REP. KOKODURDA: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Hello, Rae Ann, it's always great to hear your

perspective. I just wanted to go back a little bit and I just asked these questions before about the whole local board of ed issue, because I'm hearing from my board of ed in one of my towns. And right now we have a committee -- it's a committee-driven process that I thought included teachers, right, as it sits now as far as evaluation. Now we have this new professional development and evaluation committee that does include teachers or doesn't, and how is this impeding a board of ed from the authority that they've been given by their town?

RAE ANN KNOPF: So as I understand it, first of all, our position is that boards of ed should be, since they have the responsibility and the accountability, they should be free to decide the level to which they -- how they're going about this work. So whether or not -- which teachers they're including, how they're including people in the process in their local school district, we believe that's their authority and their responsibility. So we certainly advocate that teachers be involved in the process, we think that's critical.

We're not opposed to that. What we're opposed to is legislation that mandates how that gets done for every single district, particularly since districts like yours are already wrestling with this issue and moving forward on this issue. So laws that might say, no, wait, stop, this is not right, we missed a few things, I'm totally paraphrasing, I apologize, but, you know, we want you to go back and do it this way, we feel could really impede the progress that many districts are already making.

And the way the bill is written currently what

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it says is that the local board of ed only has the authority to adopt what is proposed by the -- so they have to form the professional development and evaluation committee, the committee must develop the evaluation framework and present it to the local board. The local board has the authority to adopt or not adopt. If they can't come to mutual agreement, it's automatically defaulted to the more intensive SEED model as you heard earlier. And so really it doesn't -- it gives the local board only the option to adopt or not adopt, not really pursue another avenue for development.

REP. KOKORUDA: Why -- why would you think -- what do you think the reason is for this proposed legislation? Why would the state ever want to do that to a state board of ed -- I mean a local board of education? I'm sort of confused to why this is even here?

RAE ANN KNOFF: Why would the State -- I didn't think the State had proposed this bill.

REP. KOKORUDA: Who proposed this bill?

RAE ANN KNOFF: S.B. 1097?

REP. KOKORUDA: The Committee bill? All right, so this came from Committee. Okay. Thank you.

REP. MCCRORY: Thank you. I have a question for you and you can take your best crack at it. Are there human resource issues with evaluating one-third of your teachers one way in a school year and then evaluating the other two-thirds a separate way? Are you opening yourself up for maybe a possible lawsuit down the road if you -- if we were to move forward in that modified capacity?

RAE ANN KNOPF: I think that you have to have evaluation systems that are fair and consistent and appropriate to the context of the job that you're expecting people to do whether you're a teacher or, you know, in some other capacity. So I think depending on how it's done and how it's delivered, you could create problems. But I think those problems could be ameliorated by moving the rest of your teachers forward in a way where their evaluations are also moving in that direction.

I think the challenge that people are facing is that, you know, we don't test in all subjects in all grades. This is one of the challenges. And so if you are using standardized testing as a part of the evaluation measure, who owns the results of that? And there have been different approaches to that. Some school districts, the whole school owns it, the whole team owns it, and every teacher is evaluated based on those results. So I think there are ways to ameliorate the concerns that you might have.

REP. MCCRORY: Thank you. And thank you for your testimony.

Jerome Belair followed by Dr. Kishimoto.

JEROME BELAIR: Well, good afternoon, members of the Education Committee. I want to say that yesterday afternoon I had the opportunity to speak to Senator Stillman and share with her what I was about to share with all of you today. So I feel like I'm about to do a snow cancellation. My name is Jerry Belair, I serve as the Superintendent of Schools in the Town of Waterford. Waterford is one of the districts that's piloting SEED, so I'm kind of anticipating there will be a few questions today.

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We're implementing each of the components 100 percent. That means all administrators, all teachers, are part of this process. This Wednesday, on March 13th, I brought together the entire administrative team and the teacher representative from each of our schools who is partnering with our school administrators on the implementation of SEED to share the proposed legislation, the Education Bill 1087. This was just one week after I had shared with that entire team the recommendations that PEAC had made in regards to the implementation of SEED. So that it would be a bridge year with a number of options for districts which would ensure full implementation of SEED over a two-year period.

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I need to say to you that our team was stunned by the proposed bill which quite frankly ignores the recommendations of the pilot districts thus far. Top of the list for us is that we need to implement it well and it needs to be done over time so that it truly impacts teaching practice in student learning. Teachers and administrators asked of me so what happened? Why were the recent PEAC recommendations ignored? I wasn't able to answer either of those questions. They felt that their feedback along the way throughout the course of the year and their dedicated implementation of SEED had fallen on deaf ears.

See as a district we've met on three different occasions, teachers, administrators, central office, with UCONN representatives. We've met with the state representative sharing our concerns with the implementation of SEED. All of our staff had volunteered to partner in the pilot with the understanding that we would implement the SEED with Fidelity and have the

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opportunity to provide feedback to improve the process for their colleagues throughout the state. They felt that their risk-taking and tremendous dedication of time was all for naught.

As one teacher, and it was the Federation of Classroom Teachers in Waterford stated, "When you're teaching someone to swim, you don't start in the deep end first. You wade into the pool and you support the heck out of the beginner." I asked if they wanted me to represent them today and our school district and testify in opposition to this bill. The sentiment was unanimous. So my remarks today represent them. And based on our experience, we believe it's not doable to implement SEED 100 percent, that it's important to phase this in over time.

And as you look at this proposed bill, it's putting it on pause and then implementing it 100 percent of the time, exactly what we're doing right now. And really quite frankly not paying attention to the feedback that are coming from teachers and administrators in the pilot. I work with a very talented group of administrators who have dedicated themselves to the training to implement SEED well throughout the course of the year. And it's their very strong recommendation that the next year be a bridge year with full implementation in '14 - '15. We've experienced that implementation firsthand. The commitment of time, and I mean the quality of time with this process, demands time to adapt to the SEED components. Meanwhile you have to keep in mind the rest of the administrator's responsibilities still continue each and every day.

Many aspects of this pilot have been very well

received in our community and quite frankly they've made a difference in our school system. The dialogue between and among teachers is different, it's richer than ever before. It's elevated to a deeper level. There's a focused conversation on student learning. The options that are provided by the PEAC really are tailored to each district making a selection as to what's the best implementation process so that each community can do it well.

Perhaps the best lesson that we've learned thus far by fully implementing SEED is that every district needs to be prepared to put everything else on pause. You talked about Common Core and other things, in order to do it well and to do it right in the first year. If you're having all-in, 100 percent all of the time, other things will go by the wayside. Bottom line, the full implementation with 100 percent of the staff in a single year is not doable. It's important to listen to those districts that have participated in the pilot. That is the purpose of a pilot. So I strongly urge you not to support S.B. 107 as it's presently written and instead refer the issues back to the PEAC.

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And the final comment, because I know I'm over time, I also want to share the disagreement with section 1(b). And I really want to refer to Rae Ann Knopf's comments. We involve teachers at the evaluation table. I'm not aware of any districts that close out teachers. There's a professional development committee, there's an evaluation committee. I can tell you in the districts in my region, they're all involved in the development of the evaluation plan that will go forward this spring. And it's important that the boards of education hold on to that responsible. Thank you.

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REP. MCCRORY: And thank you, Jerome. I just want to clarify, I made a mistake. The next speaker will be Jamie Lazaroff. I skipped her as we moved forward.

Any questions.

Senator Bye.

SENATOR BYE: Thank you. Thank you so much for coming, it was really good, rich testimony. And that's who we need to hear from, people who have been trying to -- to make this work. Were there extra costs this year as you were implementing this? I think that's one of the big concerns is what are the extra costs of this richer evaluation system?

JEROME BELAIR: As a pilot, we had the opportunity to have it fully funded. So the training and all of the support has been part of the pilot. And as I listen to your question, and I think one of the things that we need to keep in mind is that as you're developing your professional development budgets for your district, this really needs to be part of it. And as I listen to your question about Common Core and the other initiatives, this was a conversation we had as a team the other day around this.

And it was one of the things as a superintendent that I tried to do as we rolled this out and we rolled it out slowly and sanely within our district, is let's not view this as one more thing. How does Common Core connect to this? So this year we're implementing a new math curriculum in our district, it's all aligned to the Common Core. If I'm a teacher, when I sit and write my goal, it ought to be about that. When the administrator is

evaluating for SEED, they ought to be observing and doing their evaluation on the implementation of that new math curriculum.

So it's not one more thing. And sometimes that's our biggest challenge, it's another layer. So for us it's important that we integrate those. And so I would also say related to the cost, you really probably need to, as we've done for next year, is really say how does this align with our professional development budget. But there will be some additional tools that I think we can use especially from a software piece. And what's been shared with us by the State is they're in the process of developing that and being able to go out to bid to get the very best cost for that. So there are some costs, the training as well as perhaps some software.

SENATOR BYE: What about costs of extra supervisors because of the additional observations?

JEROME BELAIR: Well, as I said to you, we're doing it with fidelity because we wanted to do the honest feedback as a pilot. So a couple of things to keep in mind, the guidelines don't dictate that it's six observations. We're doing the six observations, we're doing the three formal and the three information. But quite frankly we could do two informal -- two formal, two informal. In year two it's not the same as year one.

Any teacher that hits proficiency or exemplary isn't involved in three formals or three informals the second year. And as you implement this in a phased-in basis, your current evaluation plan stays in place. It's not that you're not evaluating the rest of your staff. And if we had a teacher on performance

improvement, they're not part of the SEED. There's another method -- model that you need to follow. So I just want you to know that just about every plan has those components in it across the state. So hopefully, you know, that's helpful.

SENATOR BYE: That is helpful. So -- so do you think the reason, maybe you don't know this, but why the timeline changed, you know, which was something that districts weren't quite ready for --

JEROME BELAIR: So when you say timeline change --

SENATOR BYE: -- so with the -- we voted on a bill that sped up the timeline with which districts needed to jump in and get involved in this evaluation. Do you think it might've been based on the feedback that the pilot districts were giving the State Department of Ed to start with a third of the schools and start there?

JEROME BELAIR: I can tell you that was the feedback from Waterford, very much so. And as we met with other pilot districts, we shared what was working, the challenges we were having. In fact, the training was collaborative. The administrative training really brought the ten districts together so we could talk and learn together. And I think, number one, that was our biggest challenge, year one, 100 percent all-in, it's a big leap. And the key is is you want to build capacity in order to do it well. Bottom line is you want this to make a difference, it ought not to become a checklist. So I as an administrator have done each of these things, but all's I've done is go through the act. Same thing with the teachers.

SENATOR BYE: Okay. And do you think it needs to be

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a third of the schools or could it be, you know, two schools, like, you know, it's pretty prescribed, but could it as a compromise could it be --

JEROME BELAIR: Here are I believe four options. So in just talking together as our team, if we were to start over, if we did -- we would do all of our schools, but we would do a third of the staff. Right now every administrator has 32 staff members assigned to him or her. I said, imagine, it's 10 or 11, there would be life again. So I think the key is is that that's very successful. The other two-thirds of your staff are still involved in professional growth and part of the evaluation process. They're not on hold, they're setting goals for their particular year. So -- but a third are going through the model, whichever your plan is.

REP. FLEISCHMANN: Representative McCrory.

REP. MCCRORY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. And I'm going to be very brief today in this session also. Mr. Superintendent, I value your testimony so much. If it ever been an opportunity for someone to express something that we're doing in education the way you did, you hit the nail right on the head. As you know, I'm an educator and I'm in a school district that is piloting this program, and I echo your sentiments 100 percent. It is challenging, but it's needed.

And with the compromise that has been laid out with PEAC so far, we will be doing the students in Connecticut a disservice if we continue to put this off. And what I'm hearing for -- one of the reasons I'm hearing that we want to put this off is because of money. If money is a

problem this year, money will be a problem next year in all districts. So I don't think we should use dollars as an excuse for doing something that so many people labored in putting together. You expressed what I was thinking in my head so well, and I really wish our colleagues pay attention. Thank you.

REP. FLEISCHMANN: Thank you, Representative McCrory.

Any other comments or questions from members of the Committee?

If not, thank you very much for your testimony.

We go back to Jamie Lazaroff to be followed by Dr. Kishimoto.

JAMIE LAZAROFF: Good afternoon, members of the Education Committee. My name is Jamie Lazaroff and I am the Self Advocate Coordinator for the Arc Quinebaug Valley. I want to comment on H.B. 6626. The bill as written is not clear as what you would like to study regarding special education issues. To this point I would like to comment on a few issues that you may be looking at. By the way, it would be helpful to know the subject matter before coming all this way to testify, as I live over 50 miles away and on a limited budget.

It is well known that the costs -- that it costs more to outplace a student in special education out of their own district than keep them -- out of district than keep them in their own school district. I know this is not always possible to keep all students in their own school district due to circumstances out of control of the local system. However, it is the job of the educators to identify a

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at what are the costs of the Common Core and what the practices are. Now that some states are ahead of us a year or two, we can perhaps look over our shoulder and see how is it working out for those other states as well.

SENATOR BOUCHER: Thank you, Madam Chair.

SENATOR STILLMAN: Thank you, Senator.

Anyone else?

Thank you very much.

ROBERT COTTO: Thank you, Senator Stillman.

SENATOR STILLMAN: Don Macrino. Welcome, it's nice to see what I think are friendly faces from home.

DON MACRINO: Nice to see you.

SENATOR STILLMAN: And I want to thank you --

DON MACRINO: Thank you, members of the Committee. My name is Don Macrino, I'm Principal at Waterford High School. And I'm here today representing the Connecticut Association of Schools to provide testimony on Senate Bill 1097. And I will begin by saying that we are not in support of Sections 1(a) and 1(b) of that bill, 1(a), of course, being the delay of the evaluation until the year '14 - '15, and the second being the diminishing of authority given to boards of education regarding the evaluation plan.

I would like to say I can bring news from the front. I am a principal at a high school that is in the pilot. I'm only 28 years old and this is what it has done to me. I should begin

by saying that there are many very excellent qualities in the program and in the evaluation program, and I have seen already benefits to my school and to our district. However, I will say that living up to the SEED tenets completely is impossible and it has been impossible this year. I share with you from a personal perspective just a few numbers to put it into perspective.

I'm responsible for 30 teachers at Waterford High School, I have two assistants each of whom also have 30 teachers that they're responsible for. Doing the six evaluations, three formal and three informal, along with the pre- and post-conferences that are required requires of me 360 meetings per year, and that's just my portion of it. Now the significance of that is, number one, that it is not possible to do well, and it's not possible to run a high school well if -- if you have to do that.

You begin to see very quickly an erosion in -- in the way you run your high school and the relationships that you're able to form on a daily basis. When I would be able to go into a classroom and just have a friendly visit and speak to students and speak to teachers, I'm not in there with pad and pencil evaluating what's going on. So the -- the PEAC recommendations, I believe, allow for a much more reasonable roll-out of this plan where one-third can go forward and do this work in a much more measured -- measured way where I think the quality of the evaluation will be much better, and the school climate will follow in that that we'll be able to keep our eyes on the store and all the other important business that goes on.

I realize I'm near the end of my time so I will

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move very quickly to 1(b) and will simply say that it's our belief that in that the responsibility of student performance lies ultimately with the superintendent and board of education, there too should lie the responsibility for choosing the evaluation plan. That being said, it cannot be forgotten that an integral part of that must be input from staff and teachers. And in all of the cases that I'm aware of, that has been the case and would continue to be so. I'd be happy to answer any questions.

SENATOR STILLMAN: Thank you very much for your excellent testimony. I'm looking at 1(b), you've capitalized it so I think that's why I'm in your testimony which is why I think I'm thrown off here. It's the section in the bill, I believe, that talks about being unable to develop the plan, is that -- is that the area? I don't know if you have the bill in front of you.

DON MACRINO: I'm referencing the portion in which authority is dispersed among the professional development and evaluation committees and the board of ed to select the evaluation plan. Did I reference the wrong number?

SENATOR STILLMAN: No, I'm -- I'm not sure. Do we know from staff -- what lines, John?

A VOICE: Line 32.

SENATOR STILLMAN: Oh, so I'm in the right area.

A VOICE: Starting at line 32.

SENATOR STILLMAN: Okay, starting at line 32. Okay. So you would -- obviously you're suggesting it be very clear that it's the boards of

education.

DON MACRINO: Yes, ultimately, of course, with input from the other constituents.

SENATOR STILLMAN: Right. Mr. Macrino, how many years have you been teaching?

DON MACRINO: Forty.

SENATOR STILLMAN: Okay. And I know you are retiring this year --

DON MACRINO: Yes, I am.

SENATOR STILLMAN: -- so I want to publicly thank you for your years of service. I know you've taught in a variety of school districts, but Waterford has been very lucky to have you --

DON MACRINO: Well, thank you.

SENATOR STILLMAN: -- as were the other districts. And you will be missed.

DON MACRINO: Thank you very much, Senator.

SENATOR STILLMAN: So we appreciate hearing from you in a professional capacity right now, and maybe we'll hear from you in the future on other issues when they come up.

DON MACRINO: I hope so.

SENATOR STILLMAN: But the one reason why I asked that was that I just wanted folks to realize that this testimony comes from someone who has a long -- who was a long-time educator and principal, and is expressing what I think are even more valuable opinions on this matter.

So and I think there are some folks who have questions.

Representative Fleischmann followed by Senator Boucher.

REP. FLEISCHMANN: Thank you, Madam Chair, and thank you for your testimony and all of your public service. So one of the points you raised to me cuts in two directions. You pointed out that the -- PEAC with its recommendation of essentially a one-third roll out in 2013-14 is making good sense, and that from your personal vantage point, it would be much simpler to do your job. But that's just an interim step, right, it's a way that the council found to get through 2013-14. By 2014-15 or '15 - '16, you know, at some point there will be full roll out.

DON MACRINO: Yes.

REP. FLEISCHMANN: And so the challenges that you mentioned regarding a principal having to do 360 different observations will come back. And I'm wondering if based on your experience, you have thoughts about ways that we could tweak what's being piloted so that there would not be so much pressure on administrators like yourself. We -- we obviously want those kind of quality evaluations that involve classroom visits, but not to have a person like you running from classroom to classroom with a pad in hand. So what are your thoughts about that long-term concern?

DON MACRINO: Thank you for the question. Two points, as I understand the SEED process and the evaluation plan, after the first year you go into a second phase where the number of actual observations are diminished. So it does

become far more reasonable the farther out you go. So our second year, for example, at Waterford will be much less difficult because we will have taken those teachers who have met the standard and they will not undergo the same number of observations that they did the first year. So I think by virtue of the way it's designed at this point, I think it will even out and make it tenable for administrators to do.

The second thing is I firmly believe that we're working with a number of reasonable people on both sides of the desk and that this is an evolution and that as we've listened to the PEAC and taken into consideration some of their concerns, and some of the concerns from the 19 districts who are piloting this, there will be -- there will be further refinement as we go.

REP. FLEISCHMANN: Thank you. That response makes good sense. I appreciate it.

SENATOR STILLMAN: Senator Boucher.

SENATOR BYE: Thank you, Madam Chair. And likewise I thank you for your tremendous service to the school children of the state.

DON MACRINO: Thank you.

SENATOR BOUCHER: It's truly an -- most of us here, in fact, all of us do believe that the educational community is involved in the noblest profession that we have to our society. So we thank you for that. And also the fact that you're retiring, as was pointed out, you -- you are not prejudiced in -- in your testimony and what you tell us is extremely important. Were you a member of the PEAC Committee yourself?

DON MACRINO: No, I was not.

SENATOR BOUCHER: Okay. And based on the fact that they did -- but I -- what I'm hearing from you that they did reconvene to address some of the concerns that were brought forward after the first year, and in such they put in this bridge year with certain changes that -- and also are proposing to absorb significant costs at the state level such as data management, training, and technical assistance surveys, and creating a system evaluation informed professional learning as well. What was your reaction, and, in fact, it was stated by the commissioner that the PEAC members unanimously affirmed their support of this as well as the roll out timeline and were supporting it not to be delayed even further based on this change. What was your impression of this and your feelings regarding this?

DON MACRINO: As far as the not delaying it, I believe that Connecticut must get on board and must -- must begin this process. Though it may be imperfect at this point, I think we do have to begin. I'm very fortunate to serve on the National Association of Secondary School Principals, their board, there are 22 of us from around the country. And I had an opportunity just last week at the national conference in Washington to speak with many of them.

Many of the states have engaged in this process, and they're finding it across the country to be imperfect. However, they're not hesitating, they're on board and they're moving forward. This feeds directly into our preparation for Common Core, and it creates a new paradigm for education and Connecticut has

to be in the forefront of that.

SENATOR BOUCHER: Thank you very much for that. And I also very much enjoyed hearing your perspective on the timeline and the -- the level of intensity with regards to the evaluations that would be diminished over time once this was put in place. In the private sector when there's large numbers of employees, there tends to be different levels of management that will be involved and has a smaller population group to assess.

Have you -- you any thoughts, and this is my final question, any thoughts about that in creating that kind of different level of observation so that you could almost deputize certain senior level teachers to actually help in that evaluation system maybe in certain years, out years, and would that be something that you would favorably to or even would recommend to your peers?

DON MACRINO: Yes, there's been informal discussion both in our district and across the state, I believe, in allowing different levels of evaluators to do the task. And that's certainly, depending on where we end up, that certainly would lessen the load. Not -- and it's not a matter of diminishing work so we can go out and read the daily news, it's so that we can do what we're doing well.

And when crises arise, as they do often, some large, some not so large, we're able to deal with those in the way that our parents and our students expect us to. You hate to be placed in a position where you're trying to prioritize and you know that you've set up an evaluation with a teacher, you've had the pre-conference, you're all ready to go into the classroom,

they've prepared a lesson.

And suddenly a parent calls with really a very important issue to the parent and you have to say, no, I can't speak to you now, I'm busy doing other things. That's just a small example. And I have found myself a few times this year with that brief hesitation, and I don't like the feeling of it at all.

SENATOR BOUCHER: Thank you again for your tremendous service to the state.

DON MACRINO: My pleasure.

SENATOR BOUCHER: Thank you, Madam Chair.

SENATOR STILLMAN: Thank you, Senator.

Senator Bartolomeo.

SENATOR BARTOLOMEO: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Clearly it's overwhelming and you've explained to us situations that I can certainly relate to when you have to do that many evaluations and meetings within one year. You've just actually started to answer my question in response to Senator Boucher when you mentioned about your needing to sometimes make hard choices between conversations with parents and doing what you need to do. What else has had to be sacrificed in order for you to comply with the conditions of these evaluations in this first year of the SEED? What other aspects can you point to that your time may have been I'm going to guess better spent? What would you -- could you point to other things?

DON MACRINO: Well, I don't want to diminish the importance of the evaluation process. However, given the volume that has been involved in SEED

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this year, I would say, and I've talked to the other administrators in my building and sort of anticipated this question and got a few answers from them. I would say that because of the vast amount of time we're spending really on this clinical aspect of evaluation, much of the intimacy that can exist in a school has been sacrificed, and that -- that is really the core of the school safety and the core of I think a good school climate.

And it's those moments that we spend time with kids that we begin to detect the issues that are really important. If a kid is struggling, if his -- great difficulty at home, our radar is more in tune. Now there is no plan that's going to come forward that would stop us from doing that. The point is, we can't do both as well as we would like to be able to do them. And if this was done in a more measured fashion, I believe both would be possible.

SENATOR BARTOLOMEO: And I appreciate that, and I think that's very important especially at a time where we're now all focusing so much on trying to be in touch with and in tune with what's happening in our schools, with our children, at home, mental health-wise. So on the one hand we're looking at trying to make sure that you have the support that you need in the school systems to be able to address the -- the needs of the children, and at the other hand we're giving you restrictions on that time, and we're making life more challenging. So I absolutely share concerns with you about that.

I also wonder, you said that you have two other staff members who are able to do the evaluations. Are you aware of your colleagues in the field, if you will, I don't imagine that

all schools have that much support as far as people that are able to do the evaluations.

DON MACRINO: No, they don't. And when I go to a regional meeting with the Eastern principals, for example, there's terror on their faces. They anticipate what's to come because some are not as fortunate as I. We're a school of 850 students and there are three of us who are able to do the work. And there are about 95 staff members. So, you know, our ratio is a difficult one, as I've just explained to you, but there are those who are colleagues of mine who have it much more difficult and will find it even more so an impossibility than I have.

SENATOR BARTOLOMEO: And do you have a feel for how your school compares to others within the community as far as numbers of children with special education needs and IEPs? Because my son has special education needs and I know that you have to have an administrator in all of those PPTs. So if you have a school that has a high percentage of children with those needs, I guess I'm wondering how on earth you would ever comply.

DON MACRINO: Well, that -- that certainly has been one of the burdens, and it just is -- is one more step in the wrong direction with -- with the number of PPTs that we do. And I would say that we have probably an average number, if I may use that term. I don't have the percentage off the top of my head. But we're doing PPTs every day. And you know that a PPT can go for 25 minutes or it can go for three hours, and you never know sometimes going into it how long it's going to last. So that's one of the other things that pushes planned evaluations out of the way. And it just creates a tension in a school system, in a building that's not

necessary, it's avoidable.

SENATOR BARTOLOMEO: Well, and I can say that my meetings typically go two hours to three hours. And I usually tell them plan on it, but it's a constant tension for them. But the parent of a child with special needs, or any child, we want your attention there and fully and we don't want you distracted and feeling like you have to run off to other places. So I can imagine that challenge. And the last question, if I may, do you have an idea for us what would be, in your opinion, an ideal number of evaluations per year to balance the importance of the evaluations versus the demands upon your schedule?

DON MACRINO: I don't know if it's the power of suggestion or not, but just based on my own experience and having heard that one of the options is a third. We sort of did the calculations amongst ourselves at -- at my high school, and that -- that's doable. We could do that. And it would give us time, yes. A third of the staff, if we did a third of the staff, that would -- that would make it doable.

SENATOR BARTOLOMEO: Thank you. And thank you to my Chairs for their indulgence.

SENATOR STILLMAN: Thank you -- thank you, Senator. Those questions were extremely pertinent.

Representative Ackert.

REP. ACKERT: Thank you, Madam Chair. And thank you for your testimony and your service. Just a I guess a question, you had in your system before had an evaluation system prior to this?

DON MACRINO: Yes.

REP. ACKERT: Have you seen that this became a tool for you to help and maybe that, and I don't mean to sound -- make this sound disrespectful in any way, that you -- that there was teachers identified more with this process in terms of their skills, in terms of lacking skills? Did you see it as helping you or the administrators in saying, you know, I didn't know that such and such was having -- was struggling. Has this, I guess has this made your school a better -- a better system for teaching?

DON MACRINO: The answer is yes. I think it has -- it's done -- it's done a number of things. It's focused our school-wide goals, everybody is on board, they have to create -- they have to create their SLOs, and those are directly related to the work at hand. It's very concrete and it's measurable. So finally we can say, okay, has Teacher A accomplished anything this year?

And we can look at the data that's reported to us in -- in our meetings with the teachers after an evaluation, and at our mid-year, and our final meeting during the course of this process. And we can see growth, we can see it in actual numbers. So there are, yes, it's been very positive in that regard. And again I think if it were rolled out a big more reasonably, it's going to grow and teachers are going to embrace it because I think they see the benefit of it too, and it puts everybody on the same page.. .

REP. ACKERT: Thank you so much. And thank you, Madam Chair.

SENATOR STILLMAN: Thank you, sir.

Any other?

Yes, Representative Kokoruda.

REP. KOKORUDA: Thank you, Madam Chair. Thank you for your testimony and it's just wonderful to hear about your great career.

DON MACRINO: Thank you.

REP. KOKORUDA: A couple years ago or maybe it was a year ago, I lose track, New Haven came in and talked about their model of reform. And I remember the principal from Wilbur Cross saying that the reason she was, and I heard now she's retired, but gave a presentation, and she talked about the reason she was able to get out of the office and into that classroom to really see what the teachers were doing and really to evaluate them properly.

And she said she was allowed to do that because somebody else in her building picked up certain responsibilities, whatever, you know. And then also -- we've also heard from our commissioner that he has seen over the years that there's an awful lot of data collection and requirements that he sees as unnecessary. So has any of that worked in your school?

DON MACRINO: Well, there's no one else to do the job if I'm out. But I -- we -- before SEED we tried to get out as much as possible because that's really the only way you're going to know what's truly going on in your school is to be out in the hallways and in the classrooms and in the cafeteria and the gym as often as you possibly can be.

I would agree that there is a great -- a greater responsibility for us to collect data

now. And I think if that's kept in perspective and it's used properly and it's not just useless data, that as we together, meaning myself and the staff members with whom I work, learn more about the use of data and smart ways to use it, and we get better at it and feel more confident, that data is very, very useful. I'm not certain if that answers your question.

REP. KOKORUDA: Well, it does partially. Hopefully we'll continue to look at that data collection and not be doing -- requiring something that's unnecessary as identified by our State Department of Education.

DON MACRINO: The data that I speak about is the specific data that relates to individual students in terms of their growth based on the instructional practices that we're using in a classroom. If five of our teachers are doing extremely well with a particular level and the sixth teacher isn't, there's a wealth of knowledge to be learned from looking at the data of the five other teachers and the one teacher who is not doing so well. And we come together as groups of teachers finally in this midnight of my career, and we're looking at that specific data that's very easily understandable and it tells us the story of what we're doing right, and what we're doing wrong, and how we can help the kids who are struggling.

REP. KOKORUDA: Thank you. One final thing, as this progresses and moves on, do you foresee the evaluation -- a qualified evaluator being a master teacher and not an administrator? Do you see that -- I mean I know master teachers are important in one of my school districts. And I know they're involved prior to this new bill, do you see that happening in school

districts?

DON MACRINO: Well, I -- I suppose it's somewhat difficult to comment on that because I don't know of all the legal ramifications regarding unions and so forth. But it's often times quite difficult to place a colleague in with other colleagues to evaluate them. As far as auxiliary evaluators, people who have been trained and who perhaps have been administrators in another life, that would be a Godsend I would imagine to most administrators.

REP. KOKORUDA: Okay. Thank you.

SENATOR STILLMAN: Thank you, Representative.

Anyone else?

Yes, Representative Davis.

REP. DAVIS: Thank you, Madam Chair.
Congratulations on your work and your --

DON MACRINO: I'm not retiring because of SEED.

REP. DAVIS: I understand. I just want to clarify the concerns you have with the language in section 1(b) concerning evaluation. Currently there is language in statute that makes it incumbent upon boards to I guess consult with the bargaining units or these committees in developing an evaluation plan, is that correct to your knowledge?

DON MACRINO: I don't -- I don't believe that that's -- that's not my understanding of what this proposal --

REP. DAVIS: I know that's not what this is. I'm looking for how we handle it currently. When

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an evaluation plan is developed, it's not exclusively developed by the board of education, there is some consultation.

DON MACRINO: My understanding, however, is that it is the board of education who makes the final decision, yes.

REP. DAVIS: Right. So the objection here is -- this actually almost imposes another bargaining point for -- between the bargaining unit and the board of education.

DON MACRINO: Yes, that's my understanding.

REP. DAVIS: Okay. I just wanted to clarify that. Thank you very much.

DON MACRINO: You're welcome.

SENATOR STILLMAN: Thank you, Representative.

Any other questions?

Don, just one more before we let you go, in your comment about the fact that after the first year the number of observations will decrease, now and I know you have to -- they have to be -- the teachers have to be observed on a regular basis. Now as we -- let's say by year three where we're now sort of on a roll, is this really only most -- most difficult in terms of time when a new teacher comes into the system, because those that are there already will have -- have gone through this initial process and have already had the initial evaluation? I'm just trying to figure out what the workload might be --

DON MACRINO: A new teacher coming in is going to undergo the full depth of the evaluation

process, but that's manageable as the other numbers begin to level out. So as best we can project in understanding the SEED as it presently exists, I believe that as time goes on while it will still maintain a very watchful eye on the progress of each teacher and the entire school, the responsibilities and the volume diminishes. So it goes even out.

SENATOR STILLMAN: Okay. Because I hope you shared that with the other administrators who are in a state of panic when you spoke with them.

DON MACRINO: Well, I did share some of the recommendations of PEAC. And you could've heard the shouts across the Southeastern Connecticut. They were very pleased with what appeared to be a moderation in what might come next year.

SENATOR STILLMAN: Thank you very much.

Anyone?

I think we're all set.

Thank you.

DON MACRINO: My pleasure. Thank you.

SENATOR STILLMAN: Thank you, Superintendent Belair, as well.

Erika Haynes and Pamela -- followed by Pamela Aubin.

REP. FLEISCHMANN: Welcome, the floor is yours.

ERIKA HAYNES: Thank you. I would like to thank the Chairs and the members of the Education Committee for the opportunity to provide

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testimony in opposition to Senate Bill 1097. My name is Erika Haynes, I'm a parent to four children and live in Windham. I have submitted testimony, so I'd just like to expand on it a little and explain why I've chosen to testify.

I have lived in Windham for over 20 years. My children are ages 4, 7, 14, and 18, and I've been actively involved in the school system in my town for as long as I've had children, taking leadership role via town council and chairing our town's Education Investigation Committee prior to the placement of the special master. As this Committee knows, the challenges in Windham are many and there is no one solution to fix our solution. There are necessities to improvement and performance evaluation is one.

When I look at performance evaluation, I look at it as a way not just to focus professional development to be relevant, but also to optimize our tax dollars and get the best return on investment that we can get in our school system. The phase-in that we currently have really I think helps this along. It's necessary because it builds momentum, it moves progress forward, and yet it does so at a controlled pace rather than 100 percent.

And moving forward, at least in my district, is important. Delay is deadly for us. So I'm asking, and I've heard today all of the concerns about the changes and the -- the evaluation phase-in, but I'm asking for you to please consider keeping this phase-in, not delaying the timeline for evaluation. I think it's very important. Thank you.

REP. FLEISCHMANN: Thank you for your testimony and for all of your public service in Windham.

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Obviously the -- all communities need people like you who -- who engage the way that you have.

Are there questions or comments from members of the Committee?

Senator Bye to be followed by Senator Boucher.

SENATOR BYE: Thank you. I want to thank you for coming and also just ask how do you see this system as different from the system that might be in place now for your children? What do you see as the advantages?

ERIKA HAYNES: I think the problem at least in Windham we've experienced is changing systems continuously. And this provides some focus, some understanding of where we are going, the direction we need to be at, and what we are trying to achieve consistently. It provides a strong framework that hasn't existed. To be fair, my children were taken out of the Windham Public School System, it didn't work for my kids. I drive two hours every day to get my children to schools that they need to be in to meet their needs. And this is a piece of it. Feedback and holistic evaluation, like we do for our kids to allow them to improve, we need to do for the teachers.

SENATOR BYE: Thank you. I wish the feedback that we got on our kids was more holistic myself, but I know it tries to be, but it's pretty -- could be much better (inaudible) other things. But thank you for your testimony and really for taking the time to come here today.

ERIKA HAYNES: Thank you.

REP. FLEISCHMANN: Senator Boucher.

SENATOR BOUCHER: Thank you, Madam Chair. Just very briefly, you are certainly the ideal stakeholder. I mean you have four children at every age group and you've experienced what obviously was a challenging environment for them, and you actually got involved in and were trying to do something about it, and you're here today so that is incredibly important to us. What I heard you say that struck me the most was in answer to Senator Bye's question about providing a stability and a process that works for really reviewing the -- the pluses and minuses in a system.

And it sounds to me that that's reflective of a breakdown in a system that didn't have that continuity and that strong leadership to make sure that there was observation being done. And I would imagine that's incredibly frustrating for the very teachers themselves in a system like that. And unfortunately it seems to be that, you know, that teachers try very hard to do the right thing, and the kind of management and support they function under often can be the deal breaker in situations and the children pay for that. And so thank you for showing up here, in fact, and if things were to improve in your system to some measurable degree, would you consider returning them to that system?

ERIKA HAYNES: I put my child in for the lottery for the new magnet school in Windham this year, the STEM Academy, with some trepidation and some assurances that -- that things are changing. And I think the stability that we got in Windham came in part from the special master. And I think what's important is recognizing where some of the things went wrong so that other systems don't fail to the degree that we

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did, and evaluation definitely is one of them. I'm very hopeful. I've home schooled, I've taken kids out of district, and I would love for them to be in school in district.

SENATOR BOUCHER: Thank you very much.

SENATOR STILLMAN: Anyone else?

Thank you very much.

ERIKA HAYNES: Thank you.

SENATOR STILLMAN: Appreciate your input.

Pam Auburn -- Aubin, excuse me, followed by Robert Rader. Pleasure to see you, another superintendent from my area. At least you didn't have to travel so far.

PAMELA AUBIN: Pardon me?

SENATOR STILLMAN: You didn't have to travel so far as to Hartford.

PAMELA AUBIN: Oh, that's all right, not too long, not too far.

SENATOR STILLMAN: Welcome.

PAMELA AUBIN: First of all, I just want to thank you, Senator Stillman, Representative Fleischmann, and the members of the Committee for inviting us to have this opportunity to present testimony with regard to S.B. 1097. In particular I'm going to address section 1(b), but I -- I also want you to know a little bit about myself. I'm the Superintendent of Schools in Montville. I'm also a member of the Executive Board for the Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents. And I see --

serve not as a member of the PEAC group, but the PEAC Workgroup that designed the administrator evaluation plan. So in our district, even though we're not a pilot district, we are -- have made ourselves a pilot district for the administrator plan using the rubrics, setting SLOs with our principals, to try it out, so to give you a little background.

So I'm concerned with section 1(b) that removes the board of education as the final authority regarding the system that would be used to evaluate teachers in every school system in the state. In AN ACT CONCERNING EDUCATION REFORM, passed last year, it does require that members of the local educators' bargaining unit be consulted. Now in our district we have I would call it a flat organization. We involve the teachers collaboratively in many, many ventures including the design and the review of the SEED document core principles.

But we set norms for what our expectations are and what the degree of authority is to that group. So certainly we all have to agree that we must abide by the core principles. We want something that aligns with our theory of action and how we work together as a -- as a district. And that we believe developing their capacity, developing the teacher's ownership in the process and the administrators really only enhances our work.

I would also say that we've worked hard to review the SEED document, we are planning a hybrid proposal to go before the board that aligns with our core principles and the board's. The -- we have aligned this and made sure -- done crosswalks with the rubrics we've selected both for the administrators and the teachers to ensure that they align with the

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revised Common Core -- the standards for school leaders and the Common Core of leading and teaching.

Despite all of the focused, collaborative effort, eventually you need to allow the board to be the final arbiter and the superintendent on which is the -- for approval. They work hard to provide enormous resources to the district to make sure that we are well equipped to teach our children. And 80 percent of the funding of a typical school budget is in staffing. So we believe that we have an obligation to provide reciprocal accountability for all the resources they provide, small class sizes, materials, time to meet, time on our calendar, all of that.

So basically I'm just objecting to section 1(b) with regard to the -- making the committee the final authority. We want it to rest with the board. I'm open to any questions you might have.

SENATOR STILLMAN: Thank you very much.

Questions?

Representative Fleischmann.

REP. FLEISCHMANN: Thank you, Madam Chair. So I -- thank you for your testimony. I believe you were here earlier when both Commissioner Pryor and representatives from the Connecticut Education Association indicated that they were inclined to have a system where teachers and the board are involved in discussing the evaluation plan and ideally come to mutual agreement on one. If they don't, they look together at the state SEED plan as a possibility.

But if they don't agree or, I'm sorry, if they -- if the parties feel that that state model is not right for them, then final authority for creating the evaluation plan rests with the board of education. So that sounds to me like the outline of a -- of a compromise, middle ground that's a little past the bill we have before us. Does that work for you given the concerns that you've stated?

PAMELA AUBIN: I believe so. I was not here during that particular testimony, however.

REP. FLEISCHMANN: Thank you.

SENATOR STILLMAN: Thank you very much.

Senator Boucher.

SENATOR BOUCHER: Yes, thank you very much and -- for your testimony. My question arose just as the last conversation took place, having serving on my local board of education for many years and negotiating a lot of contracts, I'm just concerned that this language and this compromise discussion that's being had may not end up being the final arbiter. If, in fact, the final decision ends up with the board of education, could you also see where this would be a possible grievance and a possible matter for arbitration and going through the whole legal process on this once you set the stage to putting this in the collective bargaining rights arena?

PAMELA AUBIN: Well, presently we don't negotiate under collective bargaining for a particular evaluation plan. In the past, the board has always -- past practice has been that the board approves the whatever they plan, they truly

respect the process of the committee work with teacher representatives. However, if there is strong objection to a particular requirement, ultimately it is the district's responsibility to have the final say.

SENATOR BOUCHER: Well, thank you for that. I would need a little further clarification. In other words if the language in this bill were replaced with -- and any collective bargaining language were removed having to do with evaluations and replaced with a process of approval and negotiations, then that would be clearly what you're in support of. Or are in you support of the collective bargaining to remain in the bill and that that process would ensue that would ultimately fall to local board of education but that collective bargaining would be a part of that. I just wasn't clear, through you, Mr. Chair.

PAMELA AUBIN: Presently, as I said, this is removed from the collective bargaining process. You know, certainly we develop a plan and -- and consult with the union. And I'm telling you, it's yeoman's work, the work that they have done at the district level. And then go to our E&E committee within the board, and they make a recommendation to the board whether to approve or make -- suggest changes. However, we have a process but it's separate from our contract in terms -- so I just want to make sure that we're speaking the same language on that. So I -- certainly if an administrator did not follow the timelines that are laid out in the legislation with regard to teacher observations and evaluation, that could be grieved.

SENATOR BOUCHER: Thank you. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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SENATOR STILLMAN: Thank you, Senator.

Any other questions?

Thank you very much. Great to see you.

PAMELA AUBIN: Thank you. Good to see you.

SENATOR STILLMAN: Thanks.

Next is Robert Rader followed by Steve McKeever.

ROBERT RADER: Hi, I was wondering if the Committee would be okay with me bringing up the President of CABA at the same time, Lydia Tedone. Thank you. We were told I had to ask permission.

SENATOR STILLMAN: Just read your name into the record, that would be great.

LYDIA TEDONE: I am Lydia Tedone, I am Chair of Simsbury Board of Ed and President of CABA.

ROBERT RADER: Hi. And thank you very much all members of the Committee, and Senator Stillman, and Representative Fleischmann, for allowing us to speak on this important bill. I have been a member of the PEAC Committee for about four years or five years, however long it started way back when. And I think it is very important that we continue to have full discussions on what PEAC comes up with and to be able to explain to you what we think is important about the -- what we're talking about today.

SB1097

Boards are a little removed from the work of the actual implementation of the evaluation and support system. They don't evaluate teachers, they don't evaluate principals, they as a rule

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evaluate superintendents, which they feel is one of the most important things they do. So we understand the importance of evaluations. We understand also the importance of support, and that part, support, is very important to all of us.

We oppose S.B. 1097 for two reasons. First of all, section (a) which changes the timeline, we're very concerned about it. Not only because we thought, as did the CEA and others that you are hearing today including CAPSS, individual superintendents, and so on, that it is necessary to work together. That is something that we all hold in this state with the first few letters of Connecticut say to connect. We think it's very important that we continue to show our willingness as a state to go with people who work together to solve problems.

We believe we solved the problem, and we believe it was not easy, there were lots of meetings, there was shuttled diplomacy, there were phone calls. It's sort of like the peace negotiations in the Mideast. But we came to an agreement and we hope you will honor that agreement. One of the things I'm a little concerned about, and I apologize for not having this in my testimony, is that we -- when we put together the waiver for NCLB, we included the timelines as they were. And I am very concerned that if we go forward with this bill, it might put that waiver in jeopardy.

The other thing I just want to mention is the idea of taking the board of education out of the role of making the final decision on which plan works for the -- for the district. I would tell you that it is the board as you know, as you try to -- have seen budgets across

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the state, it is the board who has got to be able to sell the budget to the community. And it is very important that they maintain the role. This has never been a mandatory subject of bargaining, we want to keep it that way. We are certainly willing to do some discussion beforehand. And again this is what PEAC all agreed to together. Thank you.

LYDIA TEDONE: I would just like to reference a few things, a lot that you have heard before in previous testimonies is much of what I would say. But I would like to speak in particular from my experience as chair in Simsbury Board District. This past year the evaluation committee worked very diligently using the guidelines from SEED and also CREC to -- to develop a plan that they will be presenting to the board of education as we speak which, you know, will be subject to adoption by the board.

But and you also know Diane Allman, my former superintendent, was the chair of PEAC. And PEAC did a great job with a lot of recommendations and adjustments. But with that being said, there are still a lot of challenges that are facing districts such as the teacher rating and the data that's going to be used in the districts. So the other piece of this is that PEAC really should give more flexibility to the districts and -- and also should address the concerns and issues that districts around the state do have not only including mine. And the flexibility piece is something that they can work with superintendents and work with the actual committees within the districts to establish the implementation pieces.

So with Common Core Standards on our forefront, as board of education members on our agendas that is looming, we know that. We are working

to -- with superintendents and committees on that, the evaluation piece is very important and we're concerned about that. We want to support our teachers, we want to support our teachers to be fully prepared for Common Core to be able to deliver instruction and the best teaching they possibly can, quality teaching and curriculum to -- to our students, not only for my district, but for students around the state. I think we owe it to both our teaching staff, administrators, and more importantly to our students. Thank you.

SENATOR STILLMAN: Thank you very much.

President Tedone, do you -- are you -- what kind of flexibility are you talking about? You just made a statement that PEAC should give more flexibility to the district.

LYDIA TEDONE: I think in the implementation, there still are some questions and concerns that districts in regarding implementation with year one and in year two. So I think these are things that are best addressed with PEAC Committee, as they have before, and possibly looking at the individual districts and how are they best to implement for that district.

SENATOR STILLMAN: I assume you've expressed that to the PEAC Committee and not just to us because we're not on the PEAC Committee.

LYDIA TEDONE: Right. Right. It's been -- it's been expressed. So I think as we move forward with that -- and honestly I think once superintendents really unveil plans to boards of education, we, you know, will have time for question. Because this is really new for us too as boards, and as you know, a piece of this is the final control and authority, you know,

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for that. And that will be something that we will also have questions because we were really, the board of education is really not the one that is part of the committee, the evaluation committee within districts. So we within ourselves are going to be looking at this very carefully. And we also will be having questions for administrators and superintendents how best to work with this.

SENATOR STILLMAN: Also, Mr. Rader, I don't have a copy of your testimony in front of me, so I'm assuming your comments about the NCLB waiver is in your testimony --

ROBERT RADER: It's not there.

SENATOR STILLMAN: It is not there, okay.

ROBERT RADER: Certainly I have the -- the page which I copied from the waiver I did this morning, and I apologize. But it calls for September 2013 statewide rollout of our new evaluation systems across the state.

SENATOR STILLMAN: Okay. So it specifically has that date in it?

ROBERT RADER: Yeah.

SENATOR STILLMAN: Okay, which we could find out anyway. Thank you for mentioning that. I was not aware of it.

ROBERT RADER: Sure. And it was one of the things I thought of last night, otherwise I would've been glad to put it in my testimony.

SENATOR STILLMAN: No, no, that's fine. I'll look forward to reading your testimony when I get my hands on it.

ROBERT RADER: Thank you.

SENATOR STILLMAN: Anyone else have any questions?

Representative. Fleischmann.

REP. FLEISCHMANN: Thank you. Thank you very much for your testimony. And I'd like to also thank you for your collaborative spirit. I've been at this Committee for many years, and it's an unusual moment when CABA is coming forward to say please do not slow down the imposition of this mandate. So I will remember it long. My question relates to the other key area that you brought to light or brought into the discussion about who shall be involved with the local development of the local eval system if you're not using the state model.

And I don't know if you were here earlier, but essentially the commissioner of education and leaders of the CEA said that they believed a good approach -- first of all, the bill does not contemplate putting evaluations into collective bargaining. That's not something that's ever been considered. So this is just a question of mutual agreement which means that the parties are coming together and talking about it and trying to design a system together.

And what we heard the CEA folks and the commissioner say is that they both felt something that went past the bill before us could work, namely the parties come together, try and reach mutual agreement. If they don't, they look at the state model, decide whether or not they think it's good. If so, they can use the state model. If they have concerns about that model, then there's a final model that is

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developed by the board of education and put forward by the local board of education for review by the state department. Does that approach, which those parties have said they both think could work, work from a CAFE vantage point?_

ROBERT RADER: I don't see it being a problem. I think it's just a continuation of the discussions that the committee would have in the first place. I would hope they'd look at all their options. They want the best for their district, and that's just the committee, the board of education feels the same.

LYDIA TEDONE: Right. With that being said, Representative Fleischmann, yeah, each individual is as we in our district, you know, we -- we are developing our plan, but we've also used, you know, from the SEED model and we've also used from, you know, the CREC evaluation plan. So there are pieces and components that are being derived to have a final -- final developed evaluation plan to present to us. And we will want to see that, you know, the pieces that are -- that are -- and this has been done over the past year, so it has been -- they have been working very diligently within district.

At board meetings we are always appraised of how things are going, we do have questions because again Common Core, you know, as I mentioned is in the forefront. And as board members, you know, we have the due diligence to -- to prepare for the following school year, next September of September of, you know, what is the best plan, what are we best delivering to our students. And that's where we have that continual communication of how we are -- how we are working.

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REP. FLEISCHMANN: Thank you.

SENATOR STILLMAN: Thank you, Representative.

. Any, oh, yes, excuse me, Senator Bye.

SENATOR BYE: Thank you for coming, both of you.

And, Lydia, especially thank you for -- I can't imagine how many hours you've put into improving education in Connecticut over the past couple decades, but it's breathtaking. My question is to you as a school board member, so what is Simsbury's plan for next year right now?

LYDIA TEDONE: I wish I could answer that, because as we speak we are going to be actually this weekend superintendent will be emailing us the plan to look at. And so I can't speak exactly what the plan is, but they have pieces of it that they will be implementing. And from what I understand, it's been a very collaborative effort of the committee. And I think it's going to be somewhat positive for us to receive and to look at.

SENATOR BYE: That leads to my next question, where are you in your budget process right now in Simsbury?

LYDIA TEDONE: We are -- actually we had a public -- presentation before board of finance, so we will be having our public hearing on April 9th.

SENATOR BYE: And is money set aside in the budget for the implementation of the new teacher evaluation system?

LYDIA TEDONE: Yes, it is. Yes, it is. And actually with that being said, we do have in

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the evaluation plan for four staff positions for FTEs for a literacy -- literacy coaches that are part of this evaluation plan and moving forward. So that is something that we have talked about. It is something that is going to be needed within our schools, and this is where we -- we hope in delivering budget to public hearing that we will be talking about.

SENATOR BYE: So you're adding -- the four positions you're adding are specifically to help with teacher supervision so they will be 092s?

LYDIA TEDONE: Teacher, well, to help with that and Common Core, yeah. We've been -- we -- as we looked at this in budget, this is something that we plan for next year.

SENATOR BYE: Okay. Because I'm trying to get my hands around the costs, and I have heard from some districts that it could be up to a million dollars. So how many students in your district?

LYDIA TEDONE: We have close -- about -- a little over 4,000 -- 4,000 (inaudible).

SENATOR BYE: Okay. So four people, that's at four 092s, how much is that?

LYDIA TEDONE: I wish I --

SENATOR BYE: It's got to be -- it's got to be half a million dollars before fringe.

LYDIA TEDONE: It is. I mean this is something as we go through with public hearing is and as we expressed also to board of finance that the teacher and the administrator evaluation plan, it is a cost. It's going to be a cost to district, and we have said this right along

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since last year when we knew as a district that we were going to have to develop plan and work toward where we need to be, that there are costs associated to that. And we made it known to public, we made it known to the board of finance who is the fiduciary commission over our budget. So this something that there will be no surprises, and that's where we, you know, we have planned and working toward it.

ROBERT RADER: And certainly all districts are hoping for help on some of the things that the state can do to help districts, training and software and --

SENATOR BYE: And I'm not so hopeful if they said they're just putting out an RFP to procure the proper software, if we're already March, I know how long things can take. But that's okay, I'm sure they'll do it. My concern is the -- so this is a fixed operational additional cost to districts. So if I translate to West Hartford, that's a \$1 million if they had to hire the same proportion of supervisors to support a new evaluation system. That's a pretty big nut in their budget.

ROBERT RADER: But what we found out through the PEAC process and talking to principals and others, is that there may be ways to change things around, assign other people to different things to do. I mean it sounds like \$1 million might be right for West Hartford, I have no idea, but I would say that certainly districts and especially principals and superintendents with the help of boards, will be looking at how do we do this best so it really works and we don't lose some of the other things we do for our kids.

SENATOR BYE: Right. I'm just -- I'm just thinking

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I had no idea the cost was that -- was that high for the districts. And I'm sitting here very mixed today, I've had some testimony particularly from Waterford that is -- is very supportive and lends me to think that because they've been doing the pilot that they have some good advice.

I didn't ask them how much it costs because I didn't realize the costs were anywhere near that. I just see, Lydia, I know what you do on the school board so I figured you would have a sense of what the additional costs are. So I think we have to go in with our eyes open that this is not -- this is an unfunded mandate basically. Even if you get 90 percent passing your mastery tests under the current system, I don't know what you get in Simsbury but I bet it's pretty high, this is -- this is what you need to do.

LYDIA TEDONE: I think -- I think when we talk about this, you know, the evaluation system, and as I said, you know, our -- the committee has worked very hard, very diligently on this. And we want what's best for kids, and we want our teachers prepared. And I think in the district this is something we want to move forward collaboratively, together, as administration, as teachers, and as the board of education because ultimately we own it and we have to be able to -- I have to be able to sell this evaluation plan to the community, it is part of budget just as Common Core, because this is going to be something new for communities to look at and to understand.

So it's been a year's worth of work of education for us to on all this. And I did not sit on PEAC Committee, but Bob did, so it's been this constant communication to be able to

understand it enough to be able to also sell it. At the end game, we want our budgets to pass, we go through referendum in May, we want that to pass. So we also want the positive piece of the evaluation system to move forward and also do what's best for teachers and staff because it is something new that we are facing, this is new territory that we've never been faced with before.

SENATOR BYE: Thank you for that. And I would say listening to you and thinking about, you know, teachers say, well, we get blamed, but no one is supervising so in a way it's been a deficit in the system that there hasn't been enough supervision to help teachers who weren't quite there and help people out who maybe weren't quite there. You know, help people get people or help people out. And this gives -- this sort of forces that tool or more supervisory tools to be there, but those costs may come at the cost of higher class sizes. I mean that -- I mean districts don't have an extra \$1 million hanging around.

LYDIA TEDONE: We don't. We don't and on top of, you know, it's very difficult, we, providing our budget passes, we don't have extra dollars here for even new initiatives that we want -- as districts want to do. And because this is something that we have to do and also with Common Core, and it's an important piece of education as we move forward. And I think if, you know, if you ask teachers, it's something, it's new for them too. And we really want to start out of the gate the right way.

SENATOR BYE: Thank you, Madam Chair, for indulging me. And thank you, like Representative Fleischmann said, for your collaborative spirit. It seems like you're trying to work at

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all levels, bringing as many voices in as possible.

LYDIA TEDONE: We are. Thank you.

SENATOR STILLMAN: Thank you, Senator.

Anyone else have any other questions?

Senator Boucher.

SENATOR BOUCHER: Thank you, Madam Chair. I wasn't really going to be asking any questions, but I believe that my colleague, as always, Senator Bye, has engaged in a very important conversation around -- around the roles and responsibilities. You know, putting on a hat of the general public, if I were to reverse that, and a general public that works in say a private sector environment where a annual evaluation is just a standard practice, it's a matter of course.

And now we're talking about a profession who's -- who's engaged in evaluating students every day, sometimes formally but mostly informally to see if they're making progress or learning what they have learned. It astounds maybe some to -- to hear you say that this is new, that this is new for everyone or this process is new because maybe there's a sense that this should've been something that was always being done and is ongoing, and that were we not doing it well enough.

And if, in fact, there is costs associated with it and even to make the case if there's additional staff being required to do it, to what level or how much staff and the public would question that, but maybe that is a very important investment. In fact, maybe that is

one of the most important investments and costs we should be assuming because that probably could have the biggest impact both on a teacher's work environment and the fact that they have nurturing support and people recognize what they're doing -- doing well.

And if they need some help in some area, they'll get that support and help as well. And that should translate into an improvement in the classroom as well. So this exercise, I think this discussion is extremely important and the cost associated with it may be a priority. Thank you, Mr. Chair, and Madam Chairman.

ROBERT RADER: Can I respond to that?

SENATOR STILLMAN: Surely.

ROBERT RADER: Okay. I would just say I totally agree, it should've been done for years. I know in districts, some of them because of other things that principals have to do and superintendents have to do, that there hasn't been time. Now there's a new focus on this as a priority. We are very concerned about there being enough money in the districts. Everybody wants to cut down on central -- central staff, it's called the bloat of bureaucracy and so on, I think it's what you need to make sure all kids get the education they need, including those we are most afraid of falling through the cracks.

SENATOR STILLMAN: Thank you both for your back and forth here. Quick question about that and the cost. We heard previous testimony that once this new eval system is up and running and the intensity of it will diminish quite a bit, so I would assume that the cost would as well, that

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the most intensive parts going forward would be for new teachers into each system. Am I correct in that assumption?

ROBERT RADER: Sure, but the training -- you wouldn't have to train all the teachers and the principals all over again. I think you're right and once we get the technology to help and make this really work, I think it can be fabulous for our schools.

SENATOR STILLMAN: You're on record saying that, thank you.

ROBERT RADER: Was that a trap?

SENATOR STILLMAN: If it was, I wasn't even sure I said it. Anyway, thank you both very much.

ROBERT RADER: Thank you.

SENATOR STILLMAN: And thanks for all the work you do as well. We appreciate it.

Steve McKeever followed by Peter Cummings and then Gina Fafard. Welcome, sir.

STEPHEN MCKEEVER: Good afternoon. Good afternoon, Senator Stillman, Representative Fleischmann, and other members of the Committee. I'm Steve McKeever, I'm the First Vice President of AFT Connecticut. I'm here to talk on three different bills. You have my testimony, I just want to take a few seconds and hit the highlights of those.

The first one I want to talk about is H.B. 6624. The last couple of lines of that bill ask for complementary, I'm sorry, competency-based mastery as part of graduation requirements. I have some serious concerns

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over this because I just wonder who decides what's competent and what are the standards that are being used to go on. There's a lot of details that I think really need to be looked at before we start turning that into some sort of a law or alternative.

Another bill I want to talk about, S.B. 1097. This has come up quite a few times today and I just wanted to thank the Black and Puerto Rican Caucus for working with us on some language regarding the literacy survey. We believe that a survey would help to identify the professional development needs of -- of the teachers in the school district, and then implement those so that everybody can become better along those ways. I think Representative Rojas had said it earlier today that this is way too important and we have to get it right. So I do appreciate all of the efforts that they have put into this.

The one thing that I did want to talk about and Sheila from CEA had mentioned it earlier was the requirement that the special ed teachers for their initial certifications must pass this test by September 2013. My only concern there is that if they've gone through four years of school and have not had the coursework, they graduate in May and then suddenly they can't get a job in September because they have to go back and take some courses.

So I would suggest that maybe we push it back to 2015 for that category. I'm not saying push back the survey by any stretch, just for that category. That will give them an opportunity to get the coursework that they need. It will also give the higher ed schools, the colleges and universities, an opportunity to offer those courses. And by pushing it to 2015, the kids

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that we're talking about right now are really sophomores and that gives them enough time to alter their course of study.

The final one that I want to talk about is S.B. 1096 regarding the SERC transparencies. I have a lot of concerns within this bill. In the audit that was performed on SERC, they had asked for a board of directors to be developed. As it's written the board of directors -- if you can give me a second I'll finish up -- the board of directors he calls for -- it calls for seven members, a quorum of four, and three could act on that. That just kind of concerns me that you would have three people out of seven making decisions on policies and how money is being spent and where it goes.

Another concern I have is that people on the board could be working for companies that are, in fact, being contracted to work with them and it says that that is not a conflict of interest. To me that kind of sounds like it is a conflict of interest. The final point that I want to make is that at the very end of the bill, they cut out a whole section and then pasted it earlier in the beginning with the exception of they left out "where available appropriations". And this is regarding the school reform center.

It's in the very end, you're giving me a look, do you want me to point it out to you? Okay. The very end of the bill, sort of, line -- where's the section on the resource center? It's on line 313, part (c) there is being deleted, but "within available appropriations, the Department of Education shall establish the Connecticut School Reform Resource Center." That is part of what's in the language up front with the exception of "within available

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great opportunity before us and the impact it can have on our state and our children. And I also urge you to vote in favor of House Bill 6622. Doing so will go a long way in helping to build upon incredible education reform progress that we've already made during the past few years. And I want to thank you all for letting me speak with you today, and thank you very much for your time. I still don't know how you do it sitting here all day like that. This is not a job for someone who is ADHD.

SENATOR STILLMAN: Thank you. And you've testified before us several times so you understand the difficulties because you're also experiencing them.

Questions, comments from anyone?

I know the ISAAC school does an exceptional job. The relationship within the district is extremely collaborative as well. So I'm glad to hear that you're supportive. Thank you.

GINA FAFARD: Thank you.

SENATOR STILLMAN: Joseph Cirasuolo followed by Erik Good and then Jen Alexander.

JOSEPH CIRASUOLO: Good afternoon, Senator Stillman, Representative Fleischmann, thank you for this opportunity to speak -- and members of the Committee, thank you for this opportunity to speak to you. I'm the Executive Director of the Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents. You've received written testimony from us and I think there's about 33 other -- 33 superintendents in opposition to Senate Bill 1097, I'd like to summarize that quickly by making three points.

The first is that section 1(b) profoundly changes the process whereby evaluation systems are established in districts. CAPSS is very much in favor of as much collaboration as possible between staff and administration, but the final decision has to be made with respect on this issue by the board of education. Because the proposed language calls for mutual agreement between an administration and staff, and then says if that doesn't happen you automatically have to do the state model, you've taking the board of ed out of the -- out of the picture.

In addition, you've already forced people under those circumstances probably to implement a model that nobody wants. The state model is an option for districts right now and 150 districts have already chosen what they're going to do next year, the vast majority have not chosen the state model mainly because it requires those six observations per teacher. If you don't do the state model, you can go down to the core requirement which is three, cuts in half the -- the burden on the administration. That's point number one.

Point number two, section 1(a) deals with the implementation schedule. We're dealing here with a major paradigm shift, and if you're going to implement successful a major paradigm shift, you need to pilot. But you can't go from pilot to full implementation, you need to phase in one way or the other. So even if the implementer bill had not changed the deadline, and others have been asked how that happened, and frankly you folks have to answer that, that was not something that came from the field.

But even if that had not happened, we'd be

pushing for a phase-in next year and not going to full implementation a year from now without it. PEAC has offered to districts at least four options for phase-in, probably a few more would even be acceptable. And we see that as a viable way to move forward. Without doing that, we really have in front of us a recipe for failure.

The final point to be made is about the PEAC itself. The Legislature, the Governor, two or three years ago whenever it was, established PEAC, and I've been on it from the beginning. I think it's fair to say, from my knowledge of what's going on in the other states, it is unique. This is the only state that I'm aware of where people from very different constituencies and perspectives have come together and worked this thing out and continue to work it out. This has not been easy.

There have been a lot of very heated discussions. Sometimes we've even gotten angry at each other, sometimes we left the room angry at each other, but we've come back. And we've established an evaluation system that needs to be put in place. And we've also established an implementation schedule that makes sense. So we urge you to leave that in place and let the PEAC continue with its work. With that I'll be happy to answer any questions.

SENATOR STILLMAN: Thank you, sir. Welcome, we always enjoy your testimony and the opportunity
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JOSEPH CIRASUOLO: I always love being here.

SENATOR STILLMAN: -- to discuss it. Yes, I know you do.

Senator Boucher.

SENATOR BOUCHER: Thank you, Madam Chair. And thank you, Dr. Cirasuolo, for being here as a regular, so to speak. In this Committee it's very important to get that perspective especially as you've been very involved in the PEAC process. I'm very happy to hear you make a clarification because there's been some discussion back and forth today, I apologize if I wasn't here earlier in the day, we had Transportation final JF deadline dates, so it kept us kind of late.

But I think the clarification on whether or not this new process set up for approval of the evaluation system is, in effect, leading to a collective bargaining process or not. And there seems to be a difference of opinion in that, so could you clarify again why you might think that that's the direction this might take us with this language that's being proposed.

JOSEPH CIRASUOLO: Well, presently under the statute there's supposed to be consultation with the members of a bargaining unit before you establish an evaluation system for them. And then whatever comes out of that process goes to the local board for a decision. Once you call for mutual agreement, now you're saying that -- now you're -- it's a different kind of discussion. You can get into negotiations very quickly.

And if there is no mutual agreement, it still doesn't go to a local board, you automatically have to do the state model whatever that might be. We've had that looked at, by the way, but an attorney in the state who is really an expert on school law. And his words were it profoundly changes the -- the approval process

and, in fact, negates a decision by the State Labor Board back in 1986, which decision said that evaluation systems are not a mandatory topic of collective bargaining.

I was pleased to see -- let me -- let me expand on that just a little bit, pleased to see, and I was here for the testimony from the representatives of the CEA, and I think they're saying the same thing we are, same thing CABE is saying. And I would just piggyback on my comments with respect to PEAC. PEAC, when you're before this Committee, you've got CABE, CAPSS, and the CEA saying the same thing. I think you see the kind of progress we've been making in PEAC. Not that we're not going to have major disagreements in the future, but there's trust, there's a willingness to collaborate at this point that I haven't seen in my whole career, frankly.

SENATOR BOUCHER: Thank you very much for that testimony. This is why these public hearings are so important, and particularly to get someone with your knowledge that has actually been in those positions to do the negotiations and also to get expert feedback also from the legal minds in education law. So I believe that your testimony is incredibly important to this process. Thank you very much.

JOSEPH CIRASUOLO: Thank you.

SENATOR STILLMAN: Thank you, Senator.

Any other questions?

Representative Fleischmann.

REP. FLEISCHMANN: Just very briefly because I want to be clear, so you're talking about the kind

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of agreement that there is among all of the stakeholders. Would that include the notion that the commissioner put forward, I'm not sure if you were here, but the commissioner and CEA both said, hey, we'd like to see a process on the evaluation where the board and the teachers seek to reach a mutual agreement on a local plan. They look at the SEED plan, decide whether that's for them. If they don't like that, the board of education has final say on a local plan to be submitted to the state department. Does that -- does that make sense to you as well?

JOSEPH CIRASUOLO: Yes. Yeah, I mean I don't know why they'd have to go through the process of looking at the SEED plan in between. But if that's one of the requirements, then fine. But I don't -- we have no problem with every attempt made, in fact, I think most school systems operate this way. I did and I haven't been a superintendent for 11 years. I operated this way in Wallingford.

We sat down with the bargaining agent when we revised our evaluation program, we reached agreement. We brought it to the board of education, they agreed with it. Had we not reached agreed, the board would have had to make a decision on what it would have been. If you want to insert in there the necessity to look at the state model, I don't think that's a necessary step. But if that's going to get us to where we need to be, it doesn't hurt.

REP. FLEISCHMANN: Thank you.

SENATOR STILLMAN: Thank you, Representative.

Thank you very much.

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JOSEPH CIRASUOLO: Thank you.

SENATOR STILLMAN: We really do appreciate your input.

JOSEPH CIRASUOLO: Thank you.

SENATOR STILLMAN: Thank you, very valuable.

Erik Good followed by Jen Alexander and then Alan Addley. Welcome, sir.

ERIK GOOD: Thank you. Good afternoon. You've already heard Peter Cummings a couple of witnesses ago speaking about mastery-based learning, I'm also here to speak to that. I'm Erik Good, I'm the Building Leader at High School in the Community in New Haven. We are in the first group of the Commissioner's Network Schools, so I want to thank you all for the legislation that created that network and the opportunity that it has allowed us to experiment with mastery-based learning.

SB1097

In New Haven and in some other districts in Connecticut, mastery-based credits are going to have a slightly different import. I don't have to tell anybody here that students from high poverty areas come to school two, three, four years behind. But we still have a system that says you go to school for 12 years or 13 years, and when you're done with that then you go on to college. And we've created that expectation for our students, and it's hard to change the conversation from a conversation about time to a conversation about learning. But we've begun to try to change that conversation to say in -- in an English class these are things that you will demonstrate to us that you are able to do before we will allow you to move on to the next level, to the next grade, let alone before we

say you are ready to go to college.

I'm also serving on the advisory board for PA-1240, so I'm seeing this from the community college aspect and the struggles that they're having to remediate these kids who have come two or three, four years behind including two or three or four years behind in student-like behavior, in knowing how to function as a student. And we're asking students who don't know how to function as students to not just do the normal 12 years, but also to make up for the two or three or four years that they came behind. And I don't think I have to tell you, it doesn't work.

These kids need more time and they need to be focused on what they need to be able to do, and not focused on I've served my 12 years and I've got my -- I've done my seat time and I need to get my credit. So we're very much in favor of -- of shifting that conversation and continuing to shift that conversation to the mastery of competencies and standards that we want students to have whether they're leaving us for career or for college.

SENATOR STILLMAN: Thank you very much. Your written testimony, I was glancing at it as you were speaking. So I apologize if I was looking down. But your testimony as well as your comments are greatly appreciated.

Questions anyone?

Representative Ackert.

REP. ACKERT: Thank you. And thank you, Erik, for coming here and testifying. A kind of an alarm went off on me when you kind of said that, you know, these, you know, students now, you know,

and I'm kind of -- I asked Peter earlier about any negative potentials in this -- in this legislation. And he -- I mean he had said there's a lot of good things. And I guess my question comes down to -- and I don't want to sound that students don't want to be in school and they don't want to be there to learn, but if somebody is behind in credits because of a lack of focus, a lack of commitment, and then they find themselves, you know, many, many credits short. And it said, it's okay, I can just go through this process and say, you know, I'd rather go this route and just try to test out rather than have the commitment of education that was offered to them at that time. Can you see that at all being a possibility?

ERIK GOOD: I think it is a possibility. But I think the mastery-based system is actually going to be -- is actually going to create more reality to the work that they're going to have to do once they're behind. You know, we -- we have kids like that all the time, and when they come to us with one credit and they need 26 to graduate, we're talking about four more years.

And this allows us to change that conversation to it's not about four more years, it's about you must perform these tasks and demonstrate this mastery which might take you four years, but could well take you two or three years. It could take one and-a-half years. A lot of the kids who come to us who are behind in credits don't lack the ability to do things. What they lack is the home structure or the life situation that allows them to attend school on a regular basis and get the seat time that allows us to say, yes, you've got the credit and you can move on. You know, that's a whole other conversation, the wrap-around services

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that are needed.

I don't think that -- I don't think the concern that you're raising would be my concern. I think the downside for us and the downside that we've taken a little bit of flack for as we've started this conversation is saying to some parents, school may take more than 12 or 13 years for your student. We may be looking at 14 or 15 years. And my answer to that is generally for most of the kids we're talking about, it already is taking longer than that.

REP. ACKERT: Well, thank you for your -- for your answer to that. And it wasn't -- I believe this is a very good concept, and I believe in it. And after hearing some of the other states that are -- that are, you know, that already have it in place, I just, you know, you always look at unintended consequences. And, you know, giving people vehicles that we don't want them to be on in terms of, you know, saying I've got an out, you know. So -- but thank you for your testimony. Thank you, Madam Chair.

SENATOR STILLMAN: Thank you, sir. How -- how long is this High School in the Community, the Academy for Law and Social Justice, that's quite a title, how long has -- has the school been around?

ERIK GOOD: Just over 40 years ago.

SENATOR STILLMAN: How many?

ERIK GOOD: Over -- 40 years ago.

SENATOR STILLMAN: Four-zero?

ERIK GOOD: Four-zero.

SENATOR STILLMAN: Wow.

ERIK GOOD: In 1970 I believe, so 43 years.

SENATOR STILLMAN: Okay. Your -- so what you have expressed about the concern that the children going to school are really not prepared -- well prepared for the challenges of college. And your comment in the beginning that you've watched some of them go off and return empty-handed because they weren't prepared, have any of them come back and asked for any advice?

ERIK GOOD: When they come back and they've been unsuccessful, it is often to ask for advice. You know, the conversation starts with I had no idea that that's what I was going to have to do. And we've known that and not been able to have the structure to have that conversation with them. But they are coming back to us for advice, and that advice is, you know, you may have overshot a little bit in your initial thoughts about what college might work for you.

If you're still really invested in that, then you may need to think about a different option with a little bit more support. So I'm glad the colleges are thinking about how to make that support better and shorter for them, because, you know, our kids don't have the money to extend their college experience as long -- as long as they might need to otherwise.

SENATOR STILLMAN: It's sort of interesting because over the last few years we've heard about all the remedial work that's been necessary on that -- that first year or sometimes two of college for some of the students. They're sort of emphasizing that that really is a problem.

ERIK GOOD: And we don't want to shirk the responsibility for that. We -- the kids we get are behind as far as high school level skills as well, so the mastery-based system is really our way of being able to say here -- not just here are what the 12th grade masteries are and the college and career masteries are, but here's what you should've been able to do when you came to us, this is what eighth grade mastery looks like.

And so we can start the conversation at the beginning of their high school career to say you're not able to -- you're not able to cite appropriate evidence in -- in written arguments, that's something that you're going to have to work on because you are not at a grade-level standard for that right now.

Which is for the kids and for the parents who are -- who are a part of this conversation, they say, well, I had a B and I thought -- in eighth grade English, and I thought I knew what that meant. But now I see exactly what it is that you want me to do, and I know exactly what it is that I need to be able to work on, what I -- exactly what I need to develop in order to be ready for what I say I want to do.

SENATOR STILLMAN: So based on the comment you just made, it seems as though maybe we should be utilizing the mastery challenges in middle school as well, and not just think of them on a high school level to better prepare them for high school. I don't know if I want to go all the way back to elementary school to prepare them for middle school. But I mean there are so many challenges there to begin with as some children are still adjusting to going to school. But that -- have you noticed over the last few years now you're switching to this

sort of mastery type of system that there's been a change in the number of students that have been able to achieve once they leave?

ERIK GOOD: We're pretty new in the process. We're not requiring it yet of our seniors, we're requiring it of our ninth grade students. But it has created a different anxiety for the seniors even in some of the classes where we've shifted expectations a little bit. It's been difficult and we've had some pushback from the kids because we're holding them to a different standard. But once they begin to understand it, it's getting better for them, it's clearer to them exactly what is expected.

It does require that -- that districts and teachers and schools have long conversations and have very clear maps and very clear menus of things that kids can do in order to demonstrate mastery. And you mentioned the elementary and the middle schools, and New Haven is watching us closely to see how this turns out. Because New Haven wants to very much to shift all of the schools to what we're trying to do, their four high schools that are planning to follow us next year and then it will spread down to the middle school and the elementary schools as well.

SENATOR STILLMAN: I meant to ask -- I should've asked you earlier, is this a public school within the New Haven system or is it a charter school or a magnet?

ERIK GOOD: We are a teacher-run interdistrict magnet school, a public school.

SENATOR STILLMAN: Okay. How much parental involvement do you have in the school?

ERIK GOOD: Not enough.

SENATOR STILLMAN: It's never enough. But I mean in terms of preparing, you know, the students in the school, when you mention, you know, the district and the teachers and the administration, I didn't hear you say anything about the parents.

ERIK GOOD: And that was an oversight. We -- when -- we've been talking about this for a long time, about eight years, we've been talking about it. And joining the commissioner's network gave us the opportunity to move ahead and the freedom and the flexibility to move ahead a little faster than we thought. But we had talked to parents first three years ago when I became the leader of the school.

And their reaction once we described the program that we were talking about is that they wished -- these were mostly parents of juniors and seniors, kids who are getting ready to graduate, and their reaction was why do you have to pilot it next year, we wish our kids had gone through this. This is -- this is what we want for our kids. And the kids who -- and the kids who have come back to us and seen what we're doing are saying to us you should've done that when we were here.

SENATOR STILLMAN: How many students in the school?

ERIK GOOD: Right now there are 230.

SENATOR STILLMAN: What's the max? Do you have a --

ERIK GOOD: Three-fifty.

SENATOR STILLMAN: Three-fifty. Okay. Thank you.

Anyone else have questions?

Thank you very much, you've been helpful.

ERIK GOOD: Thank you.

SENATOR STILLMAN: Next, Jen Alexander followed by Alan Addley and Richard Murray. Welcome, Jen.

JENNIFER ALEXANDER: Good afternoon. My name is Jen Alexander, and I'm the acting CEO at ConnCAN. Thank you, Senator Stillman, and Representative Fleischmann, and members of the Committee for the opportunity to talk with you today. I submitted written testimony on four bills. I will quickly summarize our positions on three of those bills and then want to go more in depth on Senate Bill 1097.

First, ConnCAN supports House Bill 6622, AN ACT CONCERNING DISTRICT PARTNERSHIPS. You've already heard quite good testimony on that today. To support the growth of high-quality public school options in Connecticut, we need to promote collaborative efforts between public schools of choice and school districts. This bill can help accomplish this by extending and making permanent a district charter collaboration option that, as you heard, is working right now in Hartford and is beginning to work in New London. If we're serious about closing our achievement gaps in Connecticut, we have to facilitate these kinds of partnerships in order to support and sustain schools that are delivering results for kids.

HB6624

Second, we do not support Senate Bill 1098, AN ACT CONCERNING THE EDUCATION COST-SHARING FORMULA. This bill would commission yet another study of the issue of school funding, an issue the State has studied several times

over the past few decades including the recent ECS Task Force Study. We don't need yet another study to conclude that our system is broken. We have enough information to start creating a new funding formula that funds all students fairly at the public schools they attend.

Third, we support House Bill 6624, AN ACT CONCERNING MINOR REVISIONS TO THE EDUCATION STATUTES, because it builds off of the good work of this Committee around data systems and transparency and it expands the definition of a school course credit to include demonstration of competency in a particular subject area. We think this is an important first step in moving towards an individualized approach to education that is tailored to each student's learning needs.

Finally, I want to talk about Senate Bill 1097, AN ACT CONCERNING REVISIONS TO THE EDUCATION REFORM ACT OF 2012. We urge you to reject this bill because it aims to unnecessarily delay implementation of the essential teacher and principal evaluation program. Providing regular feedback and support based in part on student outcomes is a core responsibility of our schools and districts. We must proceed with timely implementation of this program to ensure that children across our state have access to the best teachers and principals.

This bill is flawed for several reasons. First, as you heard Bob Rader testify earlier, this bill would put Connecticut in violation of our ESEA waiver timeline and put our state's -- could put our state's ESEA compliance at risk. Second, this bill removes implementation authority from boards of education and gives it to a professional development and evaluation

committee. Boards must retain final decision making authority over these matters.

Third, the bill would unnecessarily delay implementation of the timeline by at least one year. This delay overrides the PEAC and State Board of Education decision to phase-in the model gradually and would keep us farther away from ensuring all kids have access to great teachers. Just one more thing, research is really clear on the long-term and positive impacts of effective teachers for kids and it's also quite clear on the long-term negative impacts of just one ineffective teacher on students. We really can't wait any longer to move forward with this program. Thank you.

SENATOR STILLMAN: Thank you very much.

Questions anyone?

Yeah, Representative Fleischmann.

REP. FLEISCHMANN: Just one question, the commissioner testified on many of the bills that you spoke to including the measure that would delay implementation of the teacher eval system by one year. Like you, he was in opposition. He did not mention, however, the waiver. So I'm just wondering, I mean that waiver has a lot in it. This is one of many elements and if this bill passed as currently drafted, the eval system would still move forward, it's just that 2013-14 would be a year of training of people as opposed to a year of roll-out. So given all those facts, I'm just curious why that point about the waiver was raised by you and Mr. Rader but perhaps -- not in any way by the commissioner?

JENNIFER ALEXANDER: You'd have to ask the

commissioner, I don't know. It's my understanding that he submitted written testimony and perhaps it's in there. I don't know. On page 166 and 167 of our waiver application is the timeline. And my understand -- my sense is that given the importance of educator evaluation systems in numerous federal initiatives, I would expect that this would be quite important in terms of our compliance with the waiver.

And, you know, to the point that you just raised, I think it's really important, and Joe Cirsuolo talked about this too, that a program as difficult as this is allowed to be phased in gradually. And I do think that the compromise that the PEAC reached about allowing some phase in next year so that districts can gear up for this program for full implementation is really important and not something that we should back away from. And if you look at, for example, what New Haven did with their model, they actually had a more aggressive implementation timeline than the one that's being proposed, even under the PEAC agreement.

REP. FLEISCHMANN: Thank you.

SENATOR STILLMAN: Thank you very much. Thank you, Jen.

Oh, one more question.

Representative Walko.

REP. WALKO: Sorry, I was quiet over here. I'm looking at page two of your testimony, it is, concerning S.B. 1098 where you put that "Connecticut needs a comprehensive overhaul of school finance that fairly funds all public school students based on learning needs", et

very much.

SENATOR STILLMAN: Thank you. Thank you very much.

JENNIFER ALEXANDER: Thank you.

SENATOR STILLMAN: Alan Addley followed by Rich Murray, Patrice Peterson, and then Ray Rossomando.

ALAN ADDLEY: Good afternoon, Senator Stillman, Representative Fleischmann, members of the Committee, thank you for this opportunity. You do have my testimony, so I'll just sort of cut to the chase and we'll get out of here for St. Patrick's Day. I am Alan Addley, I'm the Superintendent of Granby Public Schools, I'm also a member of, obviously of CAPSS, I'm on the Governor Board of CAPSS, and I'm also President of the Hartford Area Superintendents Association. I'm here simply just to reiterate some of the comments this morning on House Bill 1097.

And if I could just very quickly say, first of all, I do think the final decision, if there is difference of opinions on what the evaluation plan should be, should reside -- that's why we do what we do, it should reside with the superintendents and also the boards of education. Let me give you a simple example. In full disclosure, the Granby Public Schools will be doing 100 percent of its teachers, 100 percent of its administrators next year. We're not going to be adding anybody.

And the reason fundamentally why we're doing that is because it's what we've always been doing. It's a fallacy to say the school systems around the district haven't been doing anything. So we can do that comfortably and

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probably -- this year it's about \$100,000, it will probably be about 60 moving forward. So there's a sort of just general description. But it would say in terms of the implementation of the teacher evaluation plan, it's important that we hold (inaudible).

In the example I can give you simply is this, we've got a consensus, everybody does consensus, okay, but the bottom line is there's sometimes there's decisions have to be moved on. In our district right now, our teacher unions are saying they're at the table, they have designed this, we are doing our own, not the SEED, so it's taken over a year to do our own plan. They are saying that we have a different opinion around they would like to be paid for any time we have a discussion around the teacher evaluation during their prep period. Now if we can't resolve that, are you telling me we're really going to go to the SEED plan after a year and-a-half of planning and -- that's crazy.

And at the end of the day we should be able to resolve that. That's why superintendents do what they do, that's why board of educations do what they do. That should just simply be moved off the table. I actually don't think there's a need to go to the state plan at all. So there's an example of how it actually gets into the bargaining arena if you need to get into bargaining. I don't know how I'm going to resolve that at the moment. I would like us to take the final say if it resides with us.

Secondly, in the implementation phase-in, I would just say that this is a PEAC responsibility, it went to PEAC, I would suggest it goes back there to PEAC. But in all candor, we cannot in the State of Connecticut,

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my respectful opinion, do Common Core simultaneously at the level we're talking about and do the implementation of the plan simultaneously. I still say it should go back to PEAC.

The Governor actually talked to me the other day and said to me why don't you look into Tennessee. We could do -- they could do both simultaneously. I did. They have 400 people working in the state department helping with Common Core, we have none. That's a big difference. So I would just say in terms of the actual play itself, if you're looking -- what would you suggest? I would just suggest that PEAC goes back a little bit and gives a wee bit more flexibility for the people on the -- yes, there are people on PEAC, and yes there are people who represent superintendents, boards of education, but there are 169 times with people.

And I'm just saying, on the floor I think just a little bit more compromise around -- around what? Primarily around the Common -- the core requirements, there's be no flexibility in the core requirements. If you were to give a wee bit of flexibility on the core requirements, I think that would ease things for everybody. Many districts will continue to do the same thing, 100 percent implementation or whatever, but I think it would ease the pain and the anxiety that people are feeling about it.

But I do commend the -- you on your work, and I would recommend you do go back to the PEAC. But I would also recommend PEAC to give a little bit more. I think if you look -- if you ask any -- any educator, get them in a room one-to-one, is this the way we should do it? It's not quite the way we should do it. I

think there's -- I think there's a fair compromise between both. So thank you for the time, and thank you for the work you do on behalf of our kids.

SENATOR STILLMAN: Thank you. And congratulations for all you're doing in helping to move this process forward. It's good to hear that there's another district that's busy working on this.

Representative Fleischmann.

REP. FLEISCHMANN: Thank you, Madam Chair. Thank you for your testimony. I'm -- you definitely caught my attention with much of what you said particularly about the challenge of simultaneously rolling out the Common Core curriculum and the new evaluation system. That -- you're not the first superintendent to bring that concern to my attention. You -- I'm not sure if you were here, the commissioner addressed that. He essentially said he viewed it as doable, he viewed the two things as mutually reinforcing.

And he -- I guess I'd be interested to hear sort of where the rubber meets the road for you as a superintendent, how much time, effort, and resource from your administrators and teachers is going into rolling out the Common Core and how would simultaneously having to roll out the new eval system for a third of your schools or school personnel effect what you're doing on Common Core?

ALAN ADDLEY: Both the Common Core and the implementation of the teacher evaluation are just competing for time and resources, and primarily time. Look there's a couple of ways we're going to improve education in the State

of Connecticut. One is improved engagement of kids, two is improving the rigors of curriculum and your Common Core will do that for us, and three, build the capacity of our staff around that. I think the biggest leverage is a Common Core curriculum at the moment in terms of adequate preparation around that. It's just competing for time. I mean a simple example would just simply be the amount of professional development time that schools have next year will be primarily devoted toward, I'm guessing, teacher evaluation. I don't want to speak for everybody, but that's probably what it's going to be. It's not going to be around a continuation and preparation of the Common Core. So that's a simple example of just sort of time and resources.

REP. FLEISCHMANN: Thank you. That's a simple example but it's a very evocative one since obviously there's a limited time window for professional development. Thank you.

SENATOR STILLMAN: Representative Ackert.

REP. ACKERT: Thank you, Madam Chair. So you're -- and I understand, did you bring on any curriculum developers or anything to help with the Common Core at all?

ALAN ADDLEY: Yes. We contracted out with some private consultants to help us, and also we reached out to -- CREC is very helpful in terms of liaison with us with their professional development personnel.

REP. ACKERT: Okay. And how long is that? Is it a short-term contract or?

ALAN ADDLEY: This has been ongoing for nearly two years.

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REP. ACKERT: And the length of that would be?

ALAN ADDLEY: I honestly -- it's going to be continuous where we are. We think we're reasonably prepared, but this is going to be a continuous process for -- for many years to be honest with you with certain aspects of the curriculum aligned, but we -- but it's not completely fleshed out.

REP. ACKERT: And then a follow up to that then on the evaluation, are you bringing any staff on to help with the evaluation process?

ALAN ADDLEY: No. As we look at the core requirements that -- we are designing our own plan. Again that's been facilitated by an outside facilitator, but we're not bringing anybody else on primarily because we have been doing exactly the requirements that -- the core requirements (inaudible) we've essentially been doing it, so we can meet that requirement with the personnel we have.

REP. ACKERT: Thank you. Thank you, Madam Chair.

SENATOR STILLMAN: Thank you, sir.

Anyone else?

Thank you very much.

ALAN ADDLEY: Thank you very much.

SENATOR STILLMAN: Richard Murray followed by Patrice Peterson. Welcome.

RICHARD MURRAY: Good afternoon, Senator Stillman, Representative Fleischmann, and members of the Education Committee. My name is Richard

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Murray, I am a Board member in Killingly and First Vice President of CABA, and I was also a member of the Student and Educator Support Service Workgroup of PEAC. I submitted my testimony so I'm not going to take too much of your time. I also won't repeat what my colleagues from CABA said about their concerns about 1097.

I wanted to specifically speak about what we've done in Killingly to get ready for teacher evaluation. A committee was comprised of teachers and administrators from each of our schools, and they've been reviewing and discussing the core requirements for the evaluation system, the SEED model, as well as a plan developed by EASTCONN, our RESC, all with the individual needs of Killingly's public schools in mind. With all that said, we've actually developed a hybrid program pretty much based on EASTCONN, which I think addresses Representative Fleischmann's concerns about section (b).

Our schools have committed a tremendous amount of time and effort to this process, and we understand there is much work ahead. Our school district is committed to improving student learning with -- with a measured new teacher evaluation plan in place for the next school year. We hope to be better prepared to support teachers and improve instruction. Our kids cannot afford a delay.

And I wanted to address questions I heard about cost. We have spent \$20,000 this year and we plan to spend it next year for professional development, and we're hiring a full-time assistant principal at the elementary school level partially because of the evaluation system but more for need, probably 20 percent

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for the evaluation system. And I'm happy to answer any questions.

SENATOR STILLMAN: Thank you. Thank you very much.

Representative Davis.

REP. DAVIS: Now I know the implementation of the evaluation system is something that maybe more extensive that you've been doing currently, and that's why you hired the additional administrator. How much different is this new evaluation system than the one that you have in effect at the present time?

RICHARD MURRAY: It would be hard to quantify, but I would say significantly different and more involved. And hopefully we'll be able to identify teachers that need support and improve instruction for our children.

REP. DAVIS: Based on what you've done before and what you're doing with the new program, do you feel that there -- there's going to be a significant difference in your ability to really support the teachers and identify their needs and go on to support them in improving those shortcomings?

RICHARD MURRAY: Could you elaborate? I'm not sure what you mean -- finally?

REP. DAVIS: We've, yeah, we have put a tremendous amount of time, effort, money, statewide into this evaluation system. And to your credit, you've taken this to heart, you've really worked on it. My question to you then is do you really believe that now that we've done this, it's going to have a tremendous impact on your ability to identify the shortcomings or the problems that teachers are having in the

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jmf/gbr EDUCATION COMMITTEE

11:00 A.M.

MIDDLESEX COMMUNITY COLLEGE, MIDDLETOWN, CT

classroom, really improve upon them or are we just implementing a different system that, yeah, maybe is better?

RICHARD MURRAY: No, I think it will have a significant difference.

REP. DAVIS: Okay.

RICHARD MURRAY: And I think it will improve the -- I'm not in favor of the phrase student achievement because I think speaks to the test, I like to say student learning. And I think it will have a tremendous effect on every student in our school.

REP. DAVIS: Prior -- prior to this process, were you of the belief that the system you had in place was effective in doing the job?

RICHARD MURRAY: No.

REP. DAVIS: Okay. So this really pushed you to make -- do it better. Okay. Thank you very much. I appreciate that. Thank you, Madam Chair.

SENATOR STILLMAN: Thank you, Representative. Thank you sir..

RICHARD MURRAY: Thank you and have a good afternoon.

REP. DAVIS: You too.

SENATOR STILLMAN: Patrice Peterson. Patrice Peterson.

Ray Rossamando, he's on deck there, followed by Laura Harvey. Welcome, Ray.

TESTIMONY OF CT ASSOCIATION OF PUBLIC SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS ON SB 1097

JOSEPH J. CIRASUOLO, ED.D.
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

RANDALL COLLINS, ED.D.
STAFF ASSOCIATE – PUBLIC POLICY

The CT Association of Public School Superintendents (CAPSS) which represents the superintendents of CT's school districts and the members of the superintendents' cabinets is opposed to the enactment of SB 1097 because of very serious concerns about two provisions of the bill. One of those provisions in essence makes the evaluation system for teachers and principals a mandatory topic of bargaining with the bargaining agents for both groups and because another provision substitutes an ineffective implementation plan for the one that was developed by the Performance Evaluation Advisory Council (PEAC).

Under present statute, the local board of education has final authority over the teacher and principal evaluation system as long as representatives of the bargaining unit involved are consulted prior to a decision being made. Section 1 (b) of the proposed bill, however, removes from the Board of Education this final authority regarding the system that will be used to evaluate teachers in every school system in the state. The authority would rest with the professional development and evaluation committee unless the committee and the Board could not agree. If that is the case, the district would be obligated to implement the state model plan.

Members of professional development and evaluation committee, however, have no responsibility for the results achieved by a school system. Only boards of education and the superintendents whom they hire have this responsibility. The bill, then, would give authority over a school system function that is directly related to the results achieved by a school system to a body that has no responsibility for those results

The bill would also constitute a significant departure from over thirty years of history by making moot the 1986 Wethersfield case that holds that teacher evaluation systems are not a mandatory subject of bargaining

Section 1(a) of the bill would require every district to implement the new evaluation system with every certified professional in the district in 2014-15. There would be no phase in and no resultant opportunity to learn from that experience before every district goes to full implementation. To avoid this kind of situation, the PEAC reached consensus on a process whereby 2013-14 would be a bridge year during which districts could choose among acceptable phase in options. During the bridge year, relevant administrative staff would be trained to implement the new system and a vital part of that training would be the phased in implementation that would occur.

The PEAC consensus, while it does not necessarily represent all of the phase in options that CAPSS would like to have seen offered, at least recognizes the fact that going to full implementation in every district in the state in any one year with no bridge year before that is a recipe for failure

We urge you, therefore, not to support SB 1097 as it is presently written and instead, to refer to the PEAC the issues which the bill attempts to address. That body which was established by the Legislature and which is meeting the charge given to it by working for five years to get us to where we are at present has shown that it is best equipped to make recommendations regarding implementation schedules, phase in options and decision making processes.

PEAC members have shown that the various caretakers of our public school system can integrate the different perspectives and agendas that they represent with those of the other PEAC members to put in place a teacher and principal evaluation and support system that will greatly benefit the children who are served by the public schools of the state. The work that PEAC has done has been hard to do. But PEAC has done it and it would be in the best interest of the children served by the schools to allow PEAC to continue its work.

Enactment of SB 1097 as presently written would seriously compromise the ability of PEAC to continue making the kind of progress that it has made. It is not too dramatic to say that if this were to occur, it is the children who would lose.

**Erika Haynes, Parent
Written Testimony
Education Committee Public Hearing
Friday, March 15, 2013**

I would like to thank the members of the Education Committee for the opportunity to provide testimony in opposition to Senate Bill 1097. My name is Erika Haynes. I am a parent to 4 children and live in Windham.

Senate Bill 1097, An Act Concerning Revisions to the Education Reform Act of 2012, revises the timeline for the implementation of educator evaluations. This bill specifically delays the start of the educator evaluations until July 2014.

The Performance Evaluation Advisory Committee (PEAC) and the State Board of Education both unanimously approved the statewide phased-in approach to evaluation, beginning in the 2013 – 2014 school year. A phased-in approach allows for districts, working with the union, to determine the efficacy of a model before execution of a mandatory 100% participation.

SB1097 eliminates this phased-in approach. The trial year would require all districts to participate, but not at 100% participation. With the removal of a trial year districts lose the ability to learn how to best implement evaluation. Districts and unions also lose key partnership building opportunities, via dialogue regarding the analysis of the trial year execution of evaluation.

We must keep in mind that these evaluation measures are meant as support measures: measures to support teachers, districts and, most importantly, students.

Evaluation is critical to our schools' success. Financially, it allows districts to best target their professional development dollars in areas that are most needed. Professionally, it allows districts to identify successful teachers and best practices in a meaningful way to support other teachers.

The PEAC and State Board of Education unanimously approved the original, phased-in approach to evaluation. Their process to do so was thoughtful. Their outcome was comprehensive. I urge you to support the initial work they did, rather than change the timeline.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to submit testimony about Senate Bill 1097.

TESTIMONY ON SB 1097
Pamela W. Aubin, Superintendent of Schools
Montville Public Schools

Good day. I would like to express my appreciation to members of the committee for providing me with the opportunity to present my testimony on SB 1097.

As Superintendent of Schools from Montville, Connecticut and as a member of the Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents, I wish to submit the following testimony to voice my opposition of Sections 1 (b) of proposed legislation contained within raised bill HR1097 AN ACT CONCERNING REVISIONS TO THE EDUCATION REFORM ACT OF 2012.

Section 1 (b) removes from the Board of Education the final authority regarding the system that will be used to evaluate teachers in every school system in the state. In AAC Education Reform passed last year, requires only that members of the local educators' bargaining unit be consulted on the design and form of the teacher evaluation system selected to meet the core principles of the new educator evaluation plan. Currently, the Montville Public Schools Teacher and Administrator Evaluation Committees have worked hard to design a rigorous system that aligns with the Core Principles outlined in the document, "Connecticut's System for Educator Evaluation and Development (SEED). In addition, the Connecticut Standards for School Leaders-revised (CCL) and the Common Core of Teaching outline the specific practices and performance expectations for teachers and administrators.

Despite a focused, collaborative effort by our committee of teachers and administrators, I strongly believe that the final authority to approve the plan must remain with the Board of Education and Superintendent since they have ultimate responsibility for the quality of the district. This aligns with past practice for the approval process for all previous teacher evaluation plans in Montville. The Board must be assured that the plan reflects the core values of the Board of Education and the community it serves. Furthermore, this decision should be made in open session where stakeholders have the opportunity to share their opinions. It appears self-serving to allow a solitary group removed from public scrutiny to design a plan without some level of accountability to the Board of Education. The community would be ill-served if authority is usurped from the Board of Education. The Board of Education, in partnership with the Superintendent, works hard to procure resources (personnel, time, money, and professional development) to ensure that the district is engaged in continuous improvement. In fact, personnel expenditures account for about 80% of the typical school budget.

By removing the Board's decision making authority in the design of the educator evaluation plan, a critical accountability tool would be eliminated. I urge you, therefore, not to support SB 1097 as it is presently written and instead, to refer to the Performance Evaluation Advisory Council (PEAC) the issues which the bill attempts to address. That body is best equipped to make recommendations regarding implementation schedules, phase in options and decision making processes.

Testimony of the Connecticut Association of Schools

RE:

**S.B. 1097 AN ACT CONCERNING REVISIONS TO THE
EDUCATION REFORM ACT OF 2012.**

Good afternoon, my name is Don Macrino. I am the principal of Waterford High School, a member of the Connecticut Association of Schools' executive board, and a board member of the National Association of Secondary School Principals. As principal of Waterford High School, a SEED pilot school, and CAS, I am here to express my concerns regarding two provisions of S.B. 1097.

Section 1A of the bill would require districts to implement the new evaluation system with every certified professional in the district in school year 2014-2015. This would eliminate the options developed by PEAC, all of which allowed for a phase in during school year 2013-2014. My school is in the midst of the full implementation of the SEED plan this year. As a high school in the SEED pilot, while the plan holds many valuable and positive elements, there are two major flaws.

The training program is not sufficient to produce qualified evaluators in its present form. I am referring to the Teach Scape training program using the Danielson model. The training method and the assessments contradict the very instructional practices that Charlotte Danielson promotes. The other is the number of evaluations required by each administrator.

For example, I am responsible for one third of the ninety high school staff which is thirty teachers. Thirty teachers times six evaluations are one hundred and eighty evaluations. That number does not include the pre and post conferences which must take place for the formal observations. This adds one hundred and eighty additional meetings to the administrator's schedule for a total of three hundred and sixty evaluation related time commitments. This is an impossible task if I am to carry out evaluations and my other duties, and do each well. I strongly support the PEAC options which allow for phasing the evaluation plan in during the 2013 - 2014 year.

Section 1B of the proposed bill gives authority for the evaluation of teachers to professional development and evaluation committees. It removes that authority from boards of education. It is only boards of education and superintendents who are ultimately responsible for student achievement, not professional development committees nor evaluation committees. In that an evaluation system is designed and implemented solely to improve instruction and raise student achievement, evaluation system should not be a mandatory subject of bargaining and should not rest in the hands of professional development or evaluation committees, rather with boards of education.

Testimony On SB 1097

Jerome R. Belair
Superintendent Of Schools
Waterford Public Schools

My name is Jerry Belair. I serve as Superintendent of Schools in the Town of Waterford. Waterford is piloting SEED. We are implementing each component with 100% participation throughout our district—*all administrators, all teachers.*

On Wednesday, March 13th, I brought together the entire administrative team and the teacher representative from each school who is partnering with our school administrators on the implementation of SEED to share the proposed revision to the Education Reform Act of 2012—Bill #1097. This was just one week after we met to share the PEAC recommendations that would have created a bridge year with a number of options that provided full implementation of SEED over a two-year period.

The administrators and teachers were stunned by the proposed bill which ignores the recommendations of the pilot district to implement SEED—to implement it well—so that it truly impacts teaching practice and student learning. I was hit by: “What happened?” I couldn’t answer that question. They felt that their feedback throughout the course of the year and their dedicated implementation of SEED had fallen on deaf ears. They had volunteered to partner in the pilot with the understanding that they would implement SEED with fidelity and have the opportunity to provide feedback to improve the process. They felt their risk-taking and tremendous dedication of time was all for naught. As one teacher said on Wednesday, “When you’re teaching someone to swim, you don’t start in the deep end first. You wade into the pool and you support the heck out of the beginner.” I asked them if they wanted me to represent them, our school district, and teachers and administrators across Connecticut today to come here before you and testify in opposition to SB 1097 Section 1(a).

My remarks today are representative of 11 Waterford administrators and the 5 teacher representatives and our union leadership. Based on our experience, it’s not doable to implement the SEED standard all at once. If Waterford started over, based on what we know today, and had two years to implement, in Year 1, one-third of our teachers or approximately 12 teachers per administrator would be engaged in the SEED process. In Year 2, each administrator would evaluate 24 teachers; and full implementation of SEED would have been accomplished in two years. Administrators need to build capacity to do the SEED model well. There is a learning curve for everyone; in fact, quality time with timely feedback is absolutely necessary if SEED is to work.

I work with a very talented team of administrators who have dedicated themselves to the training throughout the course of the year. It is their very strong recommendation that next year be a bridge year with full implementation in 2014-15. We have experienced that full implementation first hand. The commitment of time and quality time to this process demands time to adapt to; meanwhile, the rest of the responsibilities that any building administrator has, do not go away.

Many aspects of the pilot in Waterford have been well-received and have made a difference in our school system. The dialogue among teachers as well as between teachers and administrators is different. There is a focused conversation on student learning, and that dialogue is elevated to a more rigorous level. The various options that are provided to districts as recommended by PEAC really allow each district to have a thoughtful roll-out plan rather than experiencing what Waterford experienced with all-in—all at once.

Perhaps the best lesson that we learned by fully implementing SEED is that every district needs to be prepared to put everything else on pause in order to do it well and do it right in Year 1 with 100% of the staff, it's all-in; otherwise, it will turn out to be a checklist and never realize its goals of improving teaching and learning

Bottom line, for Waterford, the full implementation with 100% of the staff in a single year is not doable. It's important to listen to those districts that participated in the pilot. That is the purpose of a pilot. So therefore, I **strongly** urge you **to not support** SB 1097 as it is presently written; and instead to refer to the PEAC the issues which the bill attempts to address. That body has been assembled for a while and is best equipped to make any recommendations regarding implementation schedules, phase-in options, and decision-making processes. I am here today because the staff and administrators in the Waterford Public Schools have urged me to share their voice and their dismay with the proposed SB 1097

I also wish to comment on Section 1(b) of the proposed bill. Currently, per Statute, local Boards of Education have the final authority over the teacher and principal evaluation system. Districts across Connecticut include representatives of the bargaining unit before any decision is made on the district evaluation plan. Section 1(b) however removes from the Board of Education the final authority regarding the system that will be used to evaluate teachers in every school system in the state. The authority would rest with the Professional Development and Evaluation Committee unless the Committee and the Board could not agree. If that is the case, the district would be obligated to implement the State model. The responsibility should lie with the Board of Education. This would be a significant departure from over 30 years of history by making mute the 1986 Wethersfield case that holds that teacher evaluation systems are not a mandatory subject of bargaining. I urge you to **reject** this part of SB 1097; and if this current concern needs to be addressed, I believe it should go back to PEAC with recommendations coming forward.

Thank you for your time today.

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 Connecticut Council
 for
 EDUCATION REFORM

EDUCATION COMMITTEE PUBLIC HEARING

MARCH 15, 2013

Good afternoon, Senator Stillman, Representative Fleischmann and esteemed members of the Education Committee. My name is Rae Ann Knopf, and I am the executive director of the Connecticut Council for Education Reform (CCER). CCER is a statewide non-profit 501(c)(3) organization formed in 2011. I represent business and civic leaders who support comprehensive education reform efforts designed to close the achievement gap and raise academic outcomes for all students.

I am here today to testify on Senate Bill 1097, An Act Concerning Revisions to the Education Reform Act of 2012. Connecticut passed landmark education reform last year, and it happened with strong support from Democrats and Republicans. Any attempt to delay the implementation of any portion of that law will lessen the state's commitment to providing world-class educational opportunities to all of Connecticut's children.

Therefore, CCER is opposed to S.B. 1097 because its provisions would:

1. Delay full implementation of the new educator evaluation and support system, overriding a collaboratively created phase-in process;
2. Mandate the formation of professional development and evaluation committees, a process which overrides local authority in their ability to develop a model that uniquely addresses local need;
3. Defer decisions about ineffective educators; and
4. Postpone the implementation of K-3 literacy initiatives.

The reason CCER opposes these provisions is because we recognize that, in order to succeed in school, every child needs an effective teacher every year. In their research about the highest achieving schools in the world, McKinsey and Company found that "the top-performing school systems recognize that the only way to improve outcomes is to improve instruction."¹ When fully implemented, one of last year's pillars of education reform, the educator evaluation and support system, will give our schools the infrastructure to consistently acknowledge classroom excellence and to identify areas of necessary improvement quickly so all educators have a greater chance at success. If educators succeed, so do Connecticut's children.

However, the bill before you attempts to unnecessarily delay the implementation of the educator evaluation and support system. While we recognize district capacity for implementation of this new system varies, nearly 25% of Connecticut school districts are already moving to revamp their evaluation system to incorporate new guidelines established by the Performance Evaluation Advisory Council (PEAC) and the State Board of Education. This year, there are ten districts piloting the State Board of Education approved evaluation model. The Neag School of Education at the University of Connecticut is monitoring these programs and providing reports to inform next year's statewide implementation efforts. Moreover, a number of other districts have initiated modified evaluation models and support programs incorporating state guidelines as defined last year.

¹ McKinsey and Company, *How the Best Schools in the World Come Out on Top*, 2007. Retrieved from: http://mckinseysociety.com/downloads/reports/Education/Worlds_School_Systems_Final.pdf

So, while the process of implementing this new system may be challenging, it is certainly doable. Nonetheless, recognizing district capacity to implement such complex and comprehensive change is variable, the Performance Evaluation Advisory Council (PEAC) was reconvened and reached consensus on providing flexibility regarding the roll-out of the new educator evaluation system. The State Board of Education (SBOE) embraced the modification of the teacher evaluation roll-out on February 6, 2013, and Commissioner Pryor communicated the parameters of this flexibility to education leaders around the state in a memo dated February 22, 2013 (Appendix I). We fully support the differential implementation options as defined by this plan. Unfortunately, this bill would obviate the collaborative agreement between PEAC and the SBOE, which created a process that is both flexible and responsive to the needs of individual school districts. This collaboratively developed phase-in process permits districts to choose one of the following three "bridge" scenarios:

- a. All teachers and administrators in one-third of schools;
- b. Classroom teachers and administrators in half of schools; or
- c. At least one-third of all certified staff using a committee process that includes teachers, for development.²

This bill also mandates the manner in which local teacher evaluation models are developed by requiring a newly established professional development and evaluation committee to develop the model in lieu of the local board of education. As part of the flexible roll-out agreed to by PEAC and the SBOE (see Appendix II), there is already an option for boards of education to use a committee driven process that includes educators and others to help design an alternative roll-out schedule. Mandating another method in statute (as this bill would do) would severely limit the ability of both PEAC and the SBOE to expeditiously and flexibly respond to local school district concerns, and would impede the ability of local boards of education to exercise appropriate authority and responsibility in developing the new evaluation model.

The bill before you would also defer decisions about ineffective educators until school year 2015-16. That means Connecticut teachers, principals and children would go yet another year without the necessary feedback and supports for raising achievement and closing learning gaps. We cannot ask the children of our state to sacrifice another year of education. They cannot afford it, and neither can we.

Another critical element of last year's education reform bill was K-3 literacy, key components of which would be postponed in this bill. There is a vital need for these programs since, on last year's third grade reading Connecticut Mastery Tests, over forty percent of children did not reach goal levels.³ If K-3 literacy programs are further delayed, the approximately 161,000⁴ children in those grades will miss another year. They will waste more time during which their reading skills could have been assessed and their deficiencies addressed. That is another year Connecticut children with reading difficulties will never get back.

Members of the Education Committee, we at CCER urge you to consider the serious implications of this bill in its ability to delay, defer and pre-empt promising advances made during last year's legislative session.

² SEED, retrieved from: http://www.connecticutseed.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/PEAC_Flow_Chart_Eval_Rollout.pdf

³ Retrieved from CT Reports:

<http://solutions1.emeinc.net/cmt/public/CMTCode/Report.aspx?data=8F9E92802D8160E990BA20141585EC6>

⁴ State Department of Education, Data Tables from 2011, Retrieved from

http://sdeportal.ct.gov/Cedar/WEB/ct_report/EnrollmentDTViewer.aspx

APPENDIX I-COMMISSIONER STEFAN PRYOR'S LETTER TO STAKEHOLDERS
ABOUT PHASE-IN OF EDUCATOR EVALUATION PROCESS

TO:

Superintendents of Schools
 Chairs, Boards of Education
 American Federation of Teachers-CT (AFT-CT)
 Connecticut Association for Adult and Continuing Education (CAACE)
 Connecticut Association of Boards of Education (CABE)
 Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents (CAPSS)
 Connecticut Association of Schools (CAS)
 Connecticut Education Association (CEA)
 Connecticut Federation of School Administrators (AFSA-AFL-CIO)

FROM: Stefan Pryor, Commissioner of Education

DATE: February 22, 2013

SUBJECT: Greater District Flexibility Surrounding Statewide Implementation of Connecticut's Educator Evaluation and Support System for 2013

In response to concerns expressed by you, your colleagues, and other stakeholders regarding the implementation of the new educator evaluation and support system in your districts in the coming academic year, we have been working to increase flexibility and decrease burden associated with this implementation.

On Wednesday, February 6, 2013, after consideration of feedback from stakeholders including superintendents, education associations, and Connecticut's teachers' unions the State Board of Education (SBE) adopted a modified implementation plan for rollout of Connecticut's Educator Evaluation and Support System for the 2013-14 school year. This plan reflects the consensus opinion reached by the Performance Evaluation Advisory Council (PEAC) on February 4, 2013.

The Council was reconvened to review feedback regarding the pilot of the state model, Connecticut's System for Educator Evaluation and Support (SEED), gathered from the Neag implementation study and other sources, and to discuss options for statewide rollout scheduled by statute to begin next school year.

This "Bridge Year" implementation plan incorporates the feedback of educational stakeholders throughout the state and was developed collaboratively by the members of PEAC. The Implementation Plan for the 2013-14 "Bridge Year" is as follows:

Existing and Continuing Assumption: Implementation of the Whole Model

The existing and continuing assumption of the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) is that districts across the state will implement the whole model, consisting of all components of both teacher and administrator evaluation, as outlined in the Guidelines for Connecticut's Educator Evaluation and Support System, district-wide.

However, those districts that choose not to implement the whole model district-wide with all certified staff during the 2013-14 school year have the following flexibility options available for consideration as they build towards full implementation in 2014-15:

APPENDIX I-COMMISSIONER STEFAN PRYOR'S LETTER TO STAKEHOLDERS
ABOUT PHASE-IN OF EDUCATOR EVALUATION PROCESS¹

Preferred Alternative Approach

Whole model, in at least 1/3 of schools, all certified teachers and administrators within those schools.

Additional Alternative Approaches

- Whole model,
50% of schools, classroom teachers only and administrators within those schools;
or
- Other locally-determined options.

NOTE: Those districts that choose an alternative approach must convene a committee that shall consist of representatives of local bargaining unit(s) and superintendents' representatives. In making a final determination about an alternative approach, it is important to note that the alternative approach must (1) involve implementation of the whole model; and (2) represent a minimum of 1/3 of the district's certified staff, including administrators. Recommendations of this committee will be forwarded by the superintendent to the local board of education. The SDE will look for evidence of meaningful committee process in reviewing a submitted plan.

NOTE: Per statute, the superintendent of each local or regional board of education shall [continuously] annually evaluate or cause to be evaluated each teacher in accordance with guidelines established by the State Board of Education. For purposes of this section, the term "teacher" shall include each professional employee of a board of education, below the rank of superintendent, who holds a certificate or permit issued by the State Board of Education (Sec. 23, 24 of P.A. 12-2). Therefore, those not being evaluated under the new evaluation system must be evaluated under the district's existing evaluation plan.

Superintendents, on behalf of their Boards of Education, must submit to the CSDE a decision regarding their implementation plan for the 2013-14 school year by April 15, 2013, for review and approval. The district's plan must meet requirements as outlined in the "core requirements" of the Guidelines. A rubric for both teacher and administrator evaluation is available for use by districts to assist in the development of their plans and to ensure alignment to the "core requirements."

The rubrics, as well as many additional resources, can be located at www.connecticutseed.org. The State recognizes that there are costs associated with implementation and intends to provide districts both technical and financial assistance to help offset some of these costs. Additional information will be provided in follow-up correspondence. Finally, as a result of additional challenges associated with implementation in special settings, implementation of Connecticut's Educator Evaluation and Support System will occur in the following settings in 2014-15:

- Unified School District #1 (U.S.D. #1);
- Unified School District #2 (U.S.D. #2);
- Connecticut Association of Private Special Education Facilities (CAPSEF);
- Adult Education; and
- Pre-K.

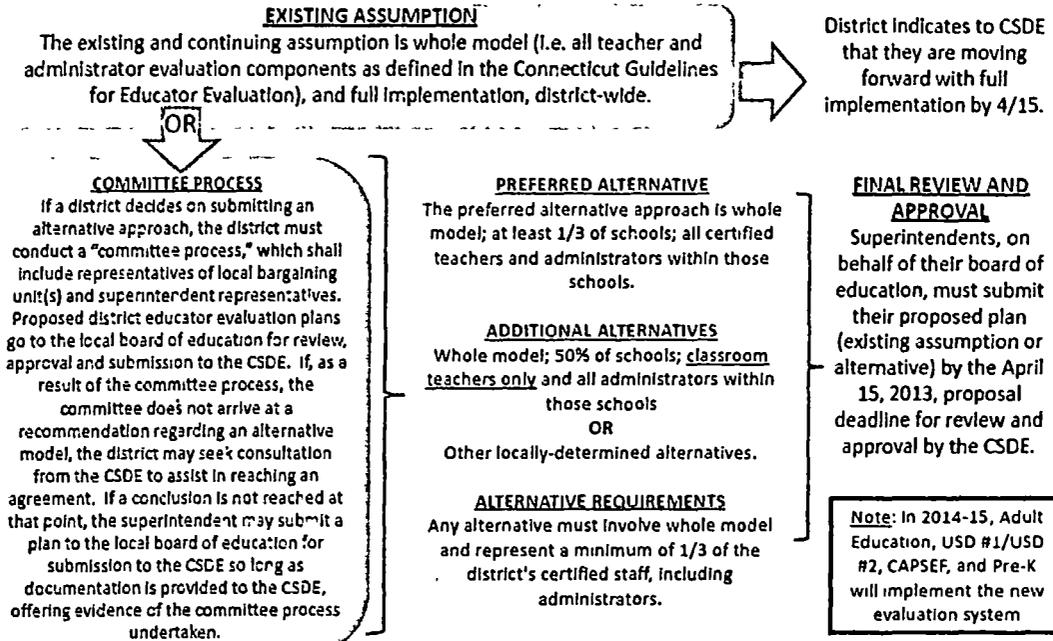
APPENDIX I-COMMISSIONER STEFAN PRYOR'S LETTER TO STAKEHOLDERS
ABOUT PHASE-IN OF EDUCATOR EVALUATION PROCESS¹

As you begin to consider the most appropriate course of action for your district, please do not hesitate to contact a member of the Talent Office team at the CSDE. Additionally, consultants at the Regional Educational Service Centers (RESCs) and the Connecticut Association of Schools (CAS) are prepared to provide technical assistance as you continue to work towards implementation in 2013-14. For further information regarding this mailing, please contact Dr. Sarah Barzee, Interim Chief Talent Officer, at 860-713-6848, or via email at sarah.barzee@ct.gov

Retrieved from: <http://bloacea.files.wordpress.com/2013/02/educator-evaluation-and-support-system-2013-14.pdf>

APPENDIX II- GRAPHIC OF ROLLOUT OF EDUCATOR EVALUATION AND SUPPORT SYSTEM

SBE RESOLUTION FOR ROLLOUT OF EDUCATOR EVALUATION AND SUPPORT SYSTEM: 2013-2014 SCHOOL YEAR



[full implementation for all districts expected in 2014-2015]



CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

updated February 19, 2013

Connecticut State Board of Education, SEED, retrieved from: http://www.connecticutseed.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/PEAC_Flow_Chart_Eval_Rollout.pdf

APPENDIX III- ORIGINAL SCHEDULE OF EDUCATOR EVALUATION PROGRAM

Last year, Public Acts 12-116 and 12-2 (June Special Session) established an implementation schedule for the new teacher evaluation program. For the first year (school year 2012-13), there would be a pilot roll-out; full implementation would be in school year 2013-14. The following ten districts/collaborations requested to be included as pilots this year:

- 1) Bethany
- 2) Branford
- 3) Bridgeport
- 4) Capitol Region Education Council (CREC)
- 5) Columbia, Eastford, Franklin, and Sterling
- 6) Litchfield and Region 6
- 7) Norwalk
- 8) Waterford
- 9) Windham
- 10) Windsor

Retrieved from Governor Malloy's Press Release of June 4, 2012
<http://www.governor.ct.gov/malloy/cwp/view.asp?Q=505420&A=4010>

APPENDIX IV-NEAG INTERIM REPORT ON EDUCATOR EVALUATION

The Neag School of Education at the University of Connecticut is evaluating the pilot programs and providing periodic feedback with a final report due on January 1, 2014. The State Department of Education has committed to consider adjustments to their evaluation model (SEED) based on UCONN's recommendations.⁵

Neag's January, 2013 evaluation of the pilot programs included both positive and negative observations. On the positive side, educators were generally supportive about the new evaluation process and the opportunity for them to be observed more frequently in their classrooms.⁶ The educators also thought they could have benefitted from a longer implementation process with more information available.⁷

On February 4, 2013, Neag presented this report to the Performance Evaluation Advisory Council (PEAC). At the same meeting, the State Department of Education presented its recommendations to provide a flexible "bridge" year option (in school year 2013-14) for school districts that believed more time was needed before full implementation.⁸ For those school districts that would not be ready for full implementation next year, they could choose one of three "bridge" year scenarios; implementation could be in:

- d. One-third of schools and for all teachers and administrators in those schools or
- e. Half of the schools with classroom teachers only and administrators in those schools or
- f. An alternative way but which included at least one-third of all certified staff (this would have to include a committee process which included teachers).⁹

PEAC reached consensus on the teacher evaluation flexibility (the "bridge" year) model on February 4, 2013. The State Board of Education (SBOE) embraced the modification of the teacher evaluation rollout on February 6, 2013.

⁵ SEED FAQs, Retrieved from: http://www.connecticutseed.org/?page_id=453

⁶ Donaldson, Morgan, et al; *SDE Implementation in the Pilot Districts, Progress to Date*, Neag School of Education, University of Connecticut, January, 2013. Retrieved from: http://www.connecticutseed.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/PEAC_Meeting_2-4-2013_w_Neag.pdf

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ The 10 pilot districts/collaborations would continue to move forward as well as other districts which had planned on full implementation (all schools, all certified staff) in school year 2013-14.

⁹ SEED, retrieved from: http://www.connecticutseed.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/PEAC_Flow_Chart_Eval_Rollout.pdf

APPENDIX V-OTHER STATE'S EXPERIENCE WITH EDUCATOR EVALUATION PROGRAMS

Other states have successfully used or are in the process of using a gradual roll-out of their new teacher evaluation programs including:

- 1) Colorado- two years of pilots with a third year (school year 2013-14) for full implementation¹⁰
- 2) New Jersey- two years of increasing numbers of pilot districts with a third year (school year 2013-14) for full implementation¹¹
- 3) Pennsylvania- three years of increasing numbers of pilots with full implementation in school year 2013-14¹²
- 4) Tennessee-one pilot year with full implementation in school year 2011-12¹³
- 5) Delaware- one pilot year with full implementation in school year 2012-13¹⁴
- 6) New Hampshire-two years of increasing numbers of pilot districts with a third year (school year 2014-15) for full implementation¹⁵

¹⁰ McGuinn, Patnck, *State of Teacher Evaluation Reform*, Center for American Progress, November 2012, retrieved from http://www.americaprogress.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/McGuinn_TheStateofEvaluation-INIRO.pdf

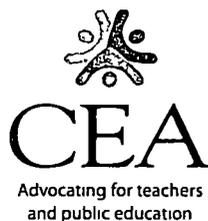
¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Barry, Virginia, *New Hampshire's Model Teacher Evaluation System*, New Hampshire Department of Education, June 26, 2012, retrieved from <http://leasweb.state.nh.us/IntermCommittee/2012/NHModel.pdf>



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*Testimony of
Mark Waxenberg, Executive Director
Connecticut Education Association
March 15, 2013*

*Education Committee – Raised Bill 1097
An Act Concerning Revisions to the Education Reform Act of 2012*

Good morning Senator Stillman, Representative Fleischmann, and members of the Education Committee. I am Mark Waxenberg, Executive Director of the Connecticut Education Association, and I would like to comment on Raised Bill 1097, "An Act Concerning Revisions to the Education Reform Act of 2012."

We believe that the 2012 legislation will be truly successful if teachers genuinely have a shared responsibility in the implementation of new policies—a shared responsibility that the bill, as written, addresses, but not fully.

By way of context, please remember at the state level, there already is a defined and effective link between evaluation and professional development in the PEAC guidelines, adopted by the State Board of Education, as well as in the Professional Development (PD) Committee state statute.

In contrast, at the local level, there are inconsistent practices across school districts that contradict and confuse—rather than further—the goals of the 2012 reform act.

The problem at the local level relates to teacher PD Committees and the development of evaluation plans in school districts. According to statute, these PD Committees should have a direct hand in the new teacher evaluation plans that are key in Connecticut's sweeping reform.

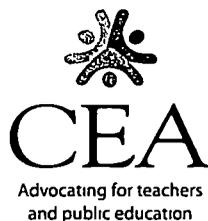
But that is not happening. A hodgepodge system is evolving where evaluation plans, too often, are being developed independent of the PD Committee and, other times, are being created with only a loose connection to the PD Committee's efforts.

This situation is of special concern because it does not adequately promote accountability and shared responsibility. While we appreciate that your proposed bill calls for mutual agreement as administrators, teachers, and the superintendent's designee collaborate and then produce a plan, we ask for an additional remedy: It is the guarantee that teachers serving on PD Committees are selected by, and therefore are representative of, the bargaining agent. This provides for better communication and more effective implementation, thereby helping teachers and this legislature realize the goals of our sweeping reform

In addition, we feel it is incumbent upon us to make a point about the authority of local boards of education relative to final evaluation plans. The current process provides that the local PD Committee develop the local evaluation plan, sending it to the local board of education for approval with the local board forwarding the plan to the State Board of Education. This is a straightforward process—one that does not dilute the authority of school superintendents and local boards of education.

However, the bill, as drafted, provides that if there is no mutual agreement, then the State Department of Education's System for Educator Evaluation and Development (SEED) becomes the local plan. We would not oppose a change to the proposed bill that would enable the local board to retain its authority to develop a local plan when there is no agreement.

Thank you for your time and consideration.



**Connecticut Education
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Sheila Cohen

Connecticut Education Association
*Before the
Education Committee*

**Re: SB 1097 AAC Revisions to the Education Reform Act of
2012**

March 15, 2013

Good afternoon Senator Stillman, Representative Fleischmann, and members of the Education Committee. My name is Sheila Cohen, President of the Connecticut Education Association. CEA represents 43,000 active and retired teachers across the state. Our members are critical voices on educational issues facing Connecticut schools. I am testifying today in support of sections 14 and 16 of SB 1097 AAC Revisions to the Education Reform Act of 2012.

The Education Reform Act of 2012 included provisions addressing elementary school reading instruction. The act sought to enhance the teaching of reading skills for elementary school teachers already in the field and ensure that new teachers earning their initial certification in Comprehensive Special Education passed a teaching of reading exam.

Enhancing Reading Instruction in Elementary Schools

Section 6 of PA 12-116 required most elementary grade teachers to take a practice test in the teaching of reading every year. However, although well-intended, it was not feasible for the particular practice test to be administered efficiently, and the results were not clearly linked to professional development strategies that could improve literacy.

Section 14 of SB 1097 corrects this by requiring the State Department of Education to develop a survey for use by school districts to assess teaching of reading practices. It also links results directly to professional development strategies specific to needs that may be identified in the survey. These changes are focused on enhancing the teaching of reading and will go a long way to achieving that goal.

Requiring Certain Special Education Teachers to Pass the Foundations of Reading Exam

Connecticut law requires certain candidates for elementary teacher certification to take an exam designed to test proficiency in the teaching of reading. Certification for these candidates is contingent on passage of this test, called the Connecticut Foundations of Reading (CFR) exam.

Prior to PA 12-116, applicants for a Comprehensive Special Education (K-12) certification were not required to take or pass the Connecticut Foundations of Reading (CFR) exam as a condition for receiving initial certification. Consequently, some candidates for special education certification may not have received sufficient pre-service training in the teaching of reading.

Section 92 of PA 12-116 had the effect of extending the CFR exam to those seeking a Comprehensive Special Education certification. Since teachers under this certification are endorsed to teach in elementary grades, requiring new teachers to pass the CFR in order to receive their initial certification is an idea that we support.

However, PA 12-116 also extended the testing requirement to potentially hundreds of active teachers who, as a consequence of the legislation, faced the loss of certification. Many of these teachers do not teach in elementary schools or are assigned roles that, due to the specialized needs of the child, may be unrelated to academic performance.

Section 16 of SB 1097 clarifies that the requirement for passage of the CFR exam is extended only to candidates for an initial certificate in Comprehensive Special Education. It avoids a problem that risked voiding current and valid teacher certificates.

In making this clarification, we also urge the committee to ensure that the effective date of the requirement provides sufficient time for students enrolled in programs of study leading to comprehensive special education certification to take coursework that will prepare them to pass the CFR exam.

Taken together, SB 1097 and PA 12-116 address the teaching of reading in significant ways. As a result, any teachers certified to teach in elementary schools – whether special education or otherwise – will have opportunities to enhance their teaching of reading skills through targeted professional development. We applaud the work of members of this committee and many others who collaborated to address the achievement gap by enhancing the reading skills of children in the early grades.



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



Connecticut General Assembly – Education Committee
Testimony of Education Commissioner Stefan Pryor
March 15, 2013

Senator Stillman, Representative Fleischmann, Senator Boucher, Representative Ackert, and members of the Education Committee, I appreciate the opportunity to comment on legislative proposals before you today.

I would first like to express concerns regarding Senate Bill No. 1097, which would delay by one year the implementation of the state's teacher and school leader evaluation and support system, among other changes. I advocate instead that this committee follow the consensus roadmap set forth by the Performance Evaluation Advisory Council, whose concept of a bridge year will provide districts with appropriate flexibility and resources as they continue to ramp up toward full implementation. PEAC's solution is the best path forward toward our shared goal of strengthening teaching, leading, and learning in our state.

As you know, the State Board's guidelines regarding educator evaluation were informed by the recommendations reached by consensus of the Performance Evaluation Advisory Council, or PEAC, a stakeholder group comprised of both statewide teachers unions, representatives from state education organizations including CAPSS, CAS, and CABE, RESCs, and SDE staff.

We have received regular and invaluable feedback from the piloting of the evaluation model and from other districts as well. We have heard – loud and clear – concerns from districts across the state regarding the program's ambitious timeline for implementation. That is why, following numerous lead-up discussions, PEAC reconvened on February 4th to address these implementation concerns.

I believe that the consensus we reached on that day represents the best path forward. Districts would begin implementation in 2013-14, but do so with requisite flexibility and choice to ensure a successful rollout leading into full implementation in the 2014-15 school year. Any district availing itself of these flexibilities would engage in a committee process including representatives of district teachers and administrators. PEAC's plan lets each district act collaboratively to adjust its approach within the bridge year based on local context and circumstances. And our budget proposal provides support by absorbing certain significant costs at the state level – including data management, training and technical assistance, surveys, and assistance in creating a system of evaluation-informed professional learning.

SB1097
HB6622

HB6623

PEAC's solution was adopted by consensus of its members, and passed unanimously by the State Board of Education. PEAC's members also unanimously affirmed their support of the rollout timeline and requested that no delay be authorized.

The bill's approach – postponing implementation by a year – would enable and encourage districts simply to put off this important work until 2014, instead of starting at whatever level the district is capable of before full implementation occurs. It would also jeopardize the state's compliance with our federally approved NCLB waiver, which requires statewide rollout of the evaluation and support system in 2013-14.

There are two other provisions of SB 1097 regarding which I wish to comment. First, the bill would change the role of district professional development committees to include evaluation. Specifically, the professional development committee would be involved in the selection of the evaluation model to be used by the district. The proposed bill requires that the professional development committee and the local or regional board of education for a district mutually agree on the selection of an evaluation model and specifies that the state model would be used by the district whenever mutual agreement between the local board of education and this committee is not reached. We believe there is value in the collaboration contemplated by this provision, but an unintended consequence is that the state model would be selected as the default even in cases where neither party wishes to proceed with it. For this reason, the local board of education should retain the final decisionmaking role. In addition, though the bill proposes that professional development committee for this activity, we suggest that local stakeholders select a committee for this purpose, so long as the committee includes representatives of district leadership and representatives of the bargaining unit.

Second, with regard to the reading assessment changes for teachers, the department has been meeting with the Black and Puerto Rican Caucus and other key stakeholders and has reached agreement on many issues. We support the language requiring kindergarten through grade 3 teachers to complete a survey of reading instruction to inform and enable professional development. In order to design and implement data-informed professional development that addresses a teacher's areas needing improvement, it is critical that the results of such survey be available to those educators providing support or guidance in the form of coaching, mentoring or supervision. The legislative language should be analyzed carefully and, as necessary, revised to ensure that this objective is achieved. And the question regarding who will assume the annual administration costs for the survey (districts, state, or teacher) is currently unanswered.

We support the bill's clarification that the test shall be administered at the pre-service level, prior to certification, for special educators and remedial reading teachers/consultants.

Another open question is which testing instrument should be used. The Foundations of Reading test focuses upon the elementary years. The bill requires K-12 special education applicants to take the test as well. We would request flexibility in determining which test, including potentially Foundations of Reading, is best suited for K-12 special education teachers.

I would also like to comment on SB 1096, An Act Concerning Governance of the State Education Resource Center. I believe it is crucial that we clarify SERC's legal status, and I support the bill's solution to this longstanding issue.

SERC has been in operation since 1969. Despite operating for over four decades, SERC has never had formal legal status.

Recently, the Education Department has sought to clarify this situation and to provide greater independence and accountability for SERC. In 2011, Raised Bill 1039 attempted to establish SERC as a not-for-profit entity.

This January, I submitted new legislation regarding SERC to the State Board of Education, which voted unanimously to approve it for consideration by this committee. The proposal specified that, among other changes, SERC should be governed by a board of directors; undergo periodic audits; report annually to the State Board of Education; and adopt and maintain transparent procedures concerning procurement, personnel, and budgeting.

My goal with this proposal was to grant SERC the independence and accountability measures it needs to operate with the confidence of this legislature and the education community.

Since then, we have continued to refine our proposal to achieve this goal. My March 4th letter to this committee, following the Auditors of Public Accounts' Interim Audit Report, suggested revisions to CSDE's original bill. The bill you are considering today shares numerous commonalities with our suggestions, including organizing SERC as a quasi-public agency with governance by an independent board; adopting competitive bidding procedures applicable to state agencies; requiring annual compliance audits by the Auditors of Public Accounts; and presentation of annual reports to the General Assembly.

I support this bill, and look forward to working with you to advance it.

I offer two additional points. First, the original SDE proposal specified that SERC should be subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act. There is no such explicit provision in SB 1096. Given the importance of public access to information, I believe the bill should include the FOIA provision contained in the original SDE proposal. And second, I look forward to continued discussions regarding section 2(b) – we are concerned that insufficient clarity may



Testimony: Jennifer Alexander, Acting CEO for ConnCAN

Education Committee - Friday, March 15, 2013

My name is Jennifer Alexander and I am the Acting CEO for the Connecticut Coalition for Achievement Now (ConnCAN), a statewide advocacy organization focused on ensuring that every child in Connecticut has access to a high-quality public education.

I want to thank Senator Stillman, Representative Fleischmann, and members of the committee for the opportunity to provide testimony on four separate pieces of legislation: Senate Bill 1097, An Act Concerning Revisions to the Education Reform Act of 2012; House Bill 6622, An Act Concerning District Partnerships; Senate Bill 1098, An Act Concerning the Education Cost-Sharing Formula; and House Bill 6624, An Act Concerning Minor Revisions to the Education Statutes.

S.B. 1097: An Act Concerning Revisions to the Education Reform Act of 2012

Last year, Governor Dannel P. Malloy signed a landmark education reform law (Public Act 12-116) A key pillar of the education reform law was raising standards for educators by implementing a teacher and principal evaluation program.

Providing regular feedback and support, based in part on student outcomes, is a core responsibility of our schools and districts. The state's educator evaluation program (SEED) is a fundamental step needed to provide feedback and support to further empower high-performing teachers and principals, make certain that low-performing teachers get the help they need, and allow for swift dismissal of those who consistently fail to improve. Last year's law required the SEED program to launch in 8-10 sites across Connecticut as part of last year's education reform law.

The pilot is now underway in 10 sites across Connecticut, and the educator evaluation model was recently given the go-ahead for statewide implementation by the State Board of Education to be phased in gradually over the next school year. This phase-in will allow schools and districts to prepare for full implementation set for 2014-15. The State Board-approved implementation plan was developed by consensus of the state's Performance Evaluation Advisory Council (PEAC). The PEAC represents major stakeholders responsible for implementation of the evaluation program—from teachers unions to principals to school boards to superintendents.

Timely implementation of this statewide educator evaluator program is an essential step toward ensuring that children across Connecticut have access to the best teachers and principals.

S.B. 1097 must be rejected because it aims to unnecessarily delay implementation of the statewide educator evaluation system

S.B. 1097 also removes implementation authority from boards of education and gives it to a "professional development and evaluation committee." Ultimately, school boards are held accountable

for and are responsible for implementation of this program and corresponding results. In order to do this effectively, they must retain final decision making authority.

S.B. 1097 would also delay the implementation timeline of the new system by one year, and require all school districts to fully implement the model in the 2014-15 school year. This overrides the Performance Evaluation Advisory Council (PEAC) and the State Board of Education's (SBE) decision to phase-in the model gradually starting next year.

I have observed every public PEAC meeting for the last two years. All members of the PEAC approved the SEED model and its implementation plan. What's more, all 26 members of the Education Committee voted in favor of last year's landmark education reform law, which included the creation of the educator evaluator program. And public opinion is clearly in support of enhancing teacher quality this year. In fact, a recent Global Strategy Group poll of more than 600 Connecticut voters found that nearly three-fourths of voters (73 percent) believe that "evaluating teachers based on class performance" should be a priority for the governor and state legislators this year.

We owe it to our kids to stop delaying action. We owe it to our students to move forward with the new educator evaluation program. We cannot dial back our efforts to ensure great teachers, principals, and public schools for every child -- in a timely manner.

I strongly urge members of the Education Committee to reject S.B. 1097 and to follow through on the promises made to our kids in last year's landmark education reform law, including the new teacher and principal evaluator program.

H.B. 6622: An Act Concerning District Partnerships

In order to support the growth of high quality public school options in Connecticut, we need to promote collaborative efforts between high quality public schools of choice and their host districts. Instead of creating parallel systems within public education, the state must find ways to encourage districts to incorporate high quality options for their students into the current system.

H.B. 6622 can help accomplish this by extending and making permanent a district/charter collaboration option. If passed and signed into law, the bill would extend an existing pilot program that allows public charters to enter into agreements with their host districts to collaborate around data and funding. Under these agreements, districts can include charter school student performance data in their overall performance data (the State Department of Education's calculation of the District Performance Index). In return, the charter school can receive assistance from the district, like per student operating, facilities funding, the use of district-provided facilities, or assistance with renovation and facilities improvement efforts.¹ These arrangements help ensure that charter students are funding more equitably compared to district public schools students. Furthermore, H.B. 662 would also extend the program beyond the current pilot districts (Bridgeport, Hartford, and New Haven) to include all of the Alliance Districts. Without this bill, the pilot program will sunset this year.

¹ Achievement First Hartford Academy 2010-2011 Annual Report to the Connecticut State Department of Education (p 28)
http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/equity/charter/reports/af_hartford_ar.pdf