

H 5602

To whomever is willing to listen,

I am writing on behalf of approximately 15 lifelong physical education/health teacher working for the Providence school Department. Our collective story begins last year in March of 2024, that was when all of us received a displacement letter from the school department. The letter stated we were no longer qualified to work in our position because we do not hold an adaptive certification. This decision seemed to be arbitrary and capricious. All of us were blindsided by this letter and our lives and careers were turned upside down. For our entire working careers it seemed that most school had someone working for the department who held an adaptive certificate. In addition, teachers traveled and worked specifically with students with adaptive needs by traveling building to building where there was a daily need. This has been the past practice for our entire careers. Then last March the sky fell on our heads and we began scrabbling to extend our careers and hold on to our jobs. We had to get approvals thru RIDE and do credential review pathways through local colleges. We are still confused and stressed wondering why suddenly such a decision was made and why. Keep in mind we are teachers that have worked between 25 to 35 for the school department. We are asking that a bill could be passed that all new hires may be required to hold adaptive certifications but prior to 2024 hires may finish their long careers with dignity and respect without having adaptive certification.

Respectfully,

Rick Sunderland (31yrs teaching)