

Supporting Testimonial for:

Teacher and Student Voting Rights on K-12 Education Council: SB2077/HB7907 would provide the student member and the Teacher of the Year with voting power on the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education (K-12 council).

From:

Renee Martinez, Youth and Parent Organizer, Progreso Latino, and former teacher for 27 years in various USA districts including Rhode Island.

Dear Committee,

As a former teacher, and a current high school leadership coach, I see the importance of supporting this bill. For absolutely NO cost to the Rhode Island tax payer, you could allow teachers and students to voice their positions on educational policies. Who better to have a valuable opinion than the people in the trenches? Isn't it about time boards and administrations listen to teachers and students? We train our students to be independent thinkers, problem solvers and empathetic citizens and now we tell them: you have a seat at the table BUT you can't vote??? We ask our teachers to follow all the policies and protocols, BUT they can't vote??? What kind of hypocrisy is this? If you want education to improve - not only listen, but allow the teacher and student on the council to vote!! What incentive is there for them to even BE at the table if they are not voting? The teacher and student have been vetted; to assume that they can't handle voting is *absurd and insulting*. This bill should be passed with flying colors and easily; it is a no-brainer. Allow qualified teachers and chosen students to vote on this council, today and tomorrow and every day!

Thank you in advance for reading this testimonial and taking time to improve education here in Rhode Island. Thank you!!!

Sincerely,

Renee Martinez

Resident of East Providence, RI