

I excitedly came to RIDE in 2020 after being a special education teacher and administrator (central office and school-based) in a variety of large urban cities. At RIDE I am the coordinator/ lead for IDEA (special education) monitoring for all districts, State operated schools and nonpublic special education schools. I joined my respective union (Local 2012) and they have been a supportive and positive presence throughout the course of my employment.

Local 2012 has shown a long and proven/consistent track record of collective bargaining that needs to be preserved. RIDE Management's recent actions asserting that we are not union members, but individuals employed solely at the Commissioner's discretion has threatened that long established right. We need Assembly action to ensure our rights today and in the future. Please know that this bill (5227) does *not* give us anything we that we do not already have. It simply prevents RIDE management from taking what we have preserved and protected over the past 50 years. Thank you.

Best,

Susan J. Wood, PhD

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Office of Student, Community & Academic Supports