

Good afternoon to the members of the New Hampshire School Board and everyone that has taken the time to be here today. My name is Greg Leonard and I am a resident of Keene, New Hampshire. For the past 30 years I have been a public school teacher in the Granite State. I am here today, because I am concerned that the proposed changes to the 306 rules could do irreparable harm to the children in our state. There are a number of proposed changes that have brought me to this position and among them are a concern that research-based evidence hasn't been shared with the citizens to justify the wholesale changes to the rules, there is a disregard for the democratic process and how the changes could impact the accreditation of our public schools.

As a general practice, educators are constantly reflecting on our practices to improve student's learning. When the leaders of a school district determine that changes are necessary to improve learning for an entire grade level there is a necessary process. First, data is analyzed to determine if changes are needed, Second, a team is

formed to compile research-based evidence to explore possible changes to instructional practices to improve student learning. When those changes are implemented, the process begins to determine if student learning has improved. Through the process of changing the 306 rules, the citizens, parents, educators and students have not seen any research-based evidence to justify the changes. Where is the research-based evidence that eliminating class size requirements improves student learning? Where is the research-based evidence that removing educator certification requirements improves student learning? Where is the research-based evidence that outsourcing instructional opportunities improves student learning? Where is the research-based evidence that centralizing curriculum at the state level is better than at the local level.

I am also concerned that the changes to the 306 rules is by-passing the democratic process. New Hampshire has a long tradition of local control for education. Many of the proposed changes will transfer educational decisions from local elected

school boards to the appointed members of the New Hampshire School Board. Where is the opportunity for citizens of our local school district to challenge the changes that 306 rules are proposing? Where is the opportunity for recourse for all the citizens to elect representatives that will carry out their wishes for their children's education?

Finally, every 10 years New Hampshire public high schools must go through an accreditation process through the New England Association of School and Colleges, also known as NEASC. Accreditation ensures that our high schools are providing a standards-based education to all of its students. Without accreditation, students will not be accepted by colleges and universities across the country. The accreditation process ensures that our schools have rigorous curriculum and that students are prepared for post-secondary education, the armed services or the workforce. I am concerned that the proposed changes to the 306 rules will lead to more New Hampshire schools losing accreditation and the only people that lose out are our students.

I am calling on the members of the New Hampshire School Board to show the citizens of New Hampshire that all of these changes are research-based and demonstrate that student's learning will improve. I am calling on this board to recognize how the consequences of the rule changes could lead to the loss of accreditation and fewer opportunities for our students to go onto colleges and universities. I am also calling on the members of the board to justify how the 306 rules changes will circumvent the democratic process to the detriment of our students.