

Testimony in opposition to SB 2368

Good morning Chairman Creighton and members, my name is Darol Hail and I'm the superintendent in Waverly ISD. I'm here to respectfully testify in opposition to SB 2368 on behalf of my district, the Texas Association of School Administrators, and the Texas Association of Community Schools. We appreciate Senator Campbell's interest in student instruction however the bill's provisions would prevent school districts from thinking creatively about scheduling as Commissioner Morath and the State has encouraged for many state initiatives e.g., districts of innovation, teacher reading academies, accelerated instruction, and the recruitment and retention of teachers. I hope that the following points will relay our rationale for opposing this bill.

Community Input and The Benefits

1. There are 930 districts that participate in the flexibilities offered as a District of Innovation with input from their school communities. The provisions of this bill would prohibit the majority of DOI from making decisions regarding time e.g., school calendars, operational time frames, teacher contracts, and recruitment and retention efforts.
2. DOI decisions are made after input and careful review by community members. My district spent eight months studying a move to a four-day week that involved meeting with parents and discussing how this change could affect instruction. The findings of our inclusive study showed that 78% of the Waverly ISD community opted for this change including 84% of students and 91% of staff.
3. New Waverly ISD sits 15 minutes from major city....many districts starting salaries are higher than 25-year experienced teachers can make (and we address salary every year)—in the past we went without computer science, math or sped....or had one candidate who won as a result of being the one candidate. This year we already have 10-15 applications including positions we haven't posted. Teachers are not getting a free day—the amount of time grading, planning, and adjusting still exists.... but now teachers

have the time to do it.... if they want the ability to plan each night late at night they can....and gain their own family time back on Fridays. OR they can do their work at a time that best suits them!

Thank you again for this opportunity. I am happy to provide the research for four-day weeks and other information we utilized for our decisions upon request. I appreciate everyone's commitment to our children and please do not hesitate to contact me if I can be of any assistance in future decisions.