

5/17/2022 9:00 pm

Sen. Roger Chamberlain and Legislative Leaders,

The E-12 conference committee has heard from students, parents, and educators about the need to place students at the center of our deliberations as we negotiate a final agreement. The second House offer continues to emphasize the investments that are needed to support the whole student, including investments in early childhood, supports for student mental health, literacy and academic achievement, and continuing efforts to increase the diversity of our teaching workforce.

We appreciate the Senate's recognition of the importance of the Special Education cross-subsidy and continue to believe similar investments need to be made to reduce the cross-subsidy in English Learner funding.

The House makes necessary investments in early learning by making permanent the otherwise temporary voluntary pre-kindergarten spots for four thousand children and expanding our investments in early learning scholarships. The legislature cannot overlook investments in this area which lays the foundation for learning throughout a child's life.

Recognizing the critical need our schools have to be able to address student mental health, the House continues to champion a dedicated aid stream to hire more student support personnel which will help meet the critical needs of delivering wellbeing and mental health services to students, as well as funding for level 4 programs which serve students with the greatest needs. The House offer invests a total of \$126 million in mental health supports for students and early learners. An offer that does not contain investments in mental health supports for students is not a viable offer.

Other key parts of the House offer include provisions that work towards keeping more children in the classroom by providing training in non-exclusionary discipline practices and prohibiting the dismissal of K-3 students, provisions that invest in recruiting and retaining teachers of color, and policies that will help reduce bullying, all of which will also to help create more inclusive and welcoming school environments.

This offer continues to focus on implementing a multi-pronged literacy training approach that provides systemic supports to ensure that what teachers are learning is being implemented with high fidelity in classrooms resulting in student success. The House offer contains a literacy package that support the effective implementation and measurement of instructional practices aligned to state standards; utilizes data literacy to inform instruction, supports educator development, evaluates resource deployment and policy, and employs intentional family and community engagement strategies. These structural supports are a necessary part of any comprehensive investment in literacy to be effective.

Combined, these investments will provide the foundation children across the state need to pursue academic success and stability in well-being.

Chair Davnie