

Minnesota House of Representatives  
Education Policy Committee  
Chair – Rep. Richardson  
March 1, 2021

*My son who has nonverbal autism was suspended by teacher Kelly Morris and principal Jaysen Anderson on Thursday, May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 5:18pm in 2018. The teacher neglected to give him his communication device, disrupted his routine then called the principal and security on my kid.*

*I will never forget that day.*



*I never took him back. My son now goes to a charter school which has been simply wonderful. They understand he has a disability and does not comprehend suspension nor cause/affect.*

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Re: HF 1376

Madam Chair and Members, many thanks for the opportunity to testify today. I too oppose this horrifying bill along with the many other testifiers. My reason is simply from the parent's perspective. The teacher who suspended my child was licensed and followed all the "so called" licensure pathway. Yet, she was not trained in teaching high school students, nor did she understand my son's needs or our culture.

My son's current charter schoolteacher did not follow this so-called licensure pathway and I would take Asha over Kelly any day in any school. You see – Madam Chair and members, Asha is kind, caring and compassionate teacher who reflects my son, understands our culture and most of all sees my son's potential.

I am heartbroken about this bill. I am mortified that it was written by a black man who should at the very minimum understand how hard it is for black and brown students to learn. To be an effective and amazing teacher does not require one size fits all pathway.

Let me put in another way that you all can perhaps understand. All the legislatures in this committee are all house of representative, right? But your journey and pathway to this place in this moment has been different from one another. Some of you are attorneys, some are teachers, some are mental health professionals, and others got here from different areas. Imagine, if you were all required to take the same pathway to become a legislature. Majority of you would not be here.

Life is not one size fits all. We must enhance not restrict the pathway to finding knowledgeable and competent teachers who reflect our children. This bill will hurt our kids and ultimately our state.

Please reconsider and vote no on this bill.

As always, I thank you for your time.

Idil – Somali Autism Mom