

I am writing to voice my strong opposition to some of the proposed language in the Education Policy Omnibus Bill, specifically,

“A letter of intent to continue to provide instruction must include a report to the superintendent with proof that the testing plan for the previous year was fulfilled as agreed upon, a copy of the official test scores, and information required in paragraph (a) for each student for the upcoming school year.”

Homeschoolers are currently required to submit a “letter of intent” to the school district in which they live, although the school district has no need for this information. Likewise, homeschoolers are also required to indicate the type of standardized testing planned for the year, although the school district has no need for this information. There is no need for the school district to monitor students that are not enrolled in their school, as these students are outside of their student body, and this would simply be a waste of time and mismanagement of resources. But since it is a small thing to send the letter each fall, we’ve all done this for years. I imagine all the letters are simply filed away, and possibly never looked at again. I have never felt that our privacy was at risk in sending this letter.

However, the proposed wording that would require homeschoolers to submit test scores each year is alarming. A student’s test scores should be between the student’s family and the student’s educators. Standardized tests can be a valid tool in evaluating a student’s strengths and abilities, as well as evaluating what areas their educators could improve upon. For this information to be shared with other schools (in which the student is not enrolled) is, at the least, an unnecessary burden of paperwork on already overly-stretched staff and budgets, and at worst, a severe and blatant issue of privacy.

This proposed requirement is comparable to an individual being required to submit paystubs to a company who is not their employer, does not pay their salary, does not contribute to their health insurance or 401k, and has no connection to the individual whatsoever. Our homeschool is 100% self-funded. We have not received any government funds for teacher training, curriculum, or programs. There is no reason for anyone to check up on how tax dollars are being spent in our homeschool, because taxpayer dollars are not contributed to our homeschool.

In addition, this reporting requirement is contrary to the 2011 Homeschool Mandate Reduction bill. No school has an over abundance of time or resources to waste on ridiculous reporting requirements, especially when it puts students’ private data at risk.

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