

I am writing to oppose SB0786 the Curriculum Transparency and Publication Act and seek an UNFAVORABLE report by committee.

For the last six years I have trained new teachers for the state of Maryland at Salisbury University and worked extensively with mentor teachers and administrators in our local partner schools. Prior to working in higher education, I was a high school English teacher, and earned my Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction. I write to you as a teacher educator who is committed to public education in Maryland and the teaching profession.

SB0786 asks teachers and schools to engage in curriculum in ways that are in direct conflict with research-based best practices. The first and most important practice when designing curriculum is to tailor lessons to the needs, interests, and background of your students. Teachers, therefore, cannot design effective lessons until they meet and get to know their students. This is why the first days and weeks of school are often used for pre-assessments and activities that build community and connections in the classroom. Asking teachers to post their curriculum and lessons months in advance is not best teaching practice.

Next, even after a teacher gets to know her students' backgrounds, interests, learning styles, and needs, lessons do not progress in a perfectly linear fashion. Sometimes students need more time to focus on a concept, text, or standard. Other times, students are able to move quickly through material and are ready for the next challenge. If a teacher posts two months of lesson plans and is expected to follow it lock-and-step, it would make for ineffective instruction that is not responsive to the learning needs of the students. Some of the most important qualities teachers can have are flexibility and adaptability. Good teachers are constantly assessing student learning and making adjustments to instruction based on students' needs.

As a teacher educator, I require my students to design a 4-8 week curricular unit in the fall that they will teach in their full-time spring internship. In secondary English, these units are generally structured around a whole-class text, like *To Kill A Mockingbird*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *The Lightening Thief*, or *Of Mice and Men*. My students plan these units based on Maryland State Standards for Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening, essential questions, and measurable student learning objectives. We spend weeks aligning assessments to learning goals, planning engaging and interactive activities, and developing lessons to teach academic writing and language skills, productive class discussions, collaborative group work, and effective reading strategies. And yet, each spring when my students actually teach these units, they make many changes, small and large, to their curriculum: testing days change, world events happen, students' needs shift the pace or focus of the lessons, and formative

assessments reveal new areas of focus. That's what real teaching is – you plan ahead and prepare for all your plans to change.

Please do not burden teachers with a task (uploading lesson plans and materials) that takes their focus off of the students in their classrooms. Teachers and schools already share their lessons and curricula with parents and families in a myriad of ways, and provide alternate texts and lessons for any family that requests it. With Google Classroom and Schoology programs, parents have access to every assignment and document that teachers use in their classroom. Creating a policy like SB0786 will lead schools and teachers to turn to scripted curricula just to satisfy the requirement to post lessons, instead of doing what good teachers are trained to do: design original and creative plans that are tailored to their students' lives and learning.

I want my students, the future teachers of Maryland, to find joy and pride in the work of being a teacher. Therefore, I request an UNFAVORABLE report on SB786 from committee. A bill that treats teachers as less than professionals will only result in doing more harm to the profession.