

Greetings Madam Chair, Vice Chair and Committee Members;

I am submitting testimony as a former Board of Education member with recent experience implementing the Blueprint requirements but I do not speak on behalf of any agency or organization and am only relaying my personal experiences and observations.

It is a long practiced tradition in any level of our government to observe checks and balances. As a Board member, any decision of the school system may be appealed in a 4-205 appeal to the Board. Any decision of the Board could be appealed to the State Board and I fully agree with this structure. Having a second set of eyes to ensure that passions and personalities do not impede processes is an extremely important part of good governance.

During my term, very few cases were overturned, but the few times they were, having an outside perspective and ensuring that procedures were followed was a critical part of moving the school system forward in a productive way. Additionally, in some cases, while the administration correctly followed policies, concerns were brought to attention and it created an impetus for new policy to direct unforeseen situations. This ability to understand and oversee the system is invaluable.

I fully support HB1421 as I believe that having an appeal process for any agency is good foresight. State Board members are confirmed by the General Assembly and have a practical understanding of policy and state law. As we are in the beginning years of this transformative Blueprint, ensuring that potential LEA issues are adjudicated with the same oversight as even the smallest of local issues provides a continuity of approach.

It is an unfortunate reality that I have already seen instances where the AIB has not provided explicit guidance, systems in good faith try to follow the Blueprint with fidelity and are then told to start over. The career ladder is one example of this scenario.

Blueprint is a sweeping and transformative educational mechanism that has, as of yet, to be fully implemented. As systems move from State law to actual implementation, I sincerely request that there is continual oversight to ensure that LEAs are able to implement this legislation with the absolute best results.

Sincerely,

Corine Frank