



MEMO

To: Members of the House Committee on Labor

From: MI Association of School Boards
 MI Association of Superintendents & Administrators
 MI Alliance for Student Opportunity
 MI Association of Secondary School Principals
 MI Association of Intermediate School Administrators
 MI Association of Administrators of Special Education
 MI Association of Elementary & Middle School Principals

Education Advocates of West MI
 Calhoun ISD
 Oakland Schools
 Genesee ISD
 School Equity Caucus
 Wayne RESA

Date: May 18, 2023

RE: **Opposition to House Bills 4354-4357**

We write today to express strong concerns with House Bills 4354-4357, which are currently before your committee. We represent school administrators and board members who are responsible for the education of students in their districts and are accountable to parents who expect the best for their children. These bills would repeal certain prohibited subjects of bargaining in the Public Employment Relations Act.

The Act prohibits school districts and associations from collectively bargaining on certain subjects that allow school administrators the opportunity to place teachers where they will best serve students and to maintain high expectations for teachers. Therefore, we strongly oppose the repeal of the following prohibited subjects:

- Teacher placement decisions
- Layoff/recall decisions
- Discipline/discharge of an employee

Prior to these prohibited subjects being put in place, districts predominantly had seniority-based contract provisions for placement and layoff and recall decisions. Like you, we value our most experienced educators, however we need the ability and authority to place teachers where our students and teachers have the best chance to succeed.

Seniority-based placement decisions will often leave the newest educators pink slipped or let go due to lack of proper certification to fill the remaining open teaching positions. This will push our next generation of educators out of the profession and exacerbate the teacher shortage.

Seniority-based decisions also adversely affect our most vulnerable learners, those that need the most assistance and the best teachers. Under seniority-based staffing methods, special education students, English language learners, and at-risk students (both academically and disciplinary) are oftentimes in the classrooms that are assigned to our newest, least experienced teachers who are not yet equipped to be successful in those situations.

In cases where student safety is at risk or an egregious action has occurred, district administration needs the ability to act quickly to remove school staff or teachers from the classroom. This discretion needs to be left to building and district administrators to make tough decisions in a timely manner.

Thank you for your consideration of our concerns. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to any of the organizations listed.

