



Westminster Public Schools Written Testimony in Support of HB 1355

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\*Names have been redacted in an effort to protect parent identity for fear of retaliation from the district. We are happy to connect you directly with any parent whose story you would like to learn more about.

[REDACTED]  
Westminster Public Schools Parent

March 9, 2018

Support of HB-1355

Estimada Señora Vice Presidenta y miembros del comité,

Hola mi nombre es [REDACTED] y soy madre de tres niños quienes estudian en el Distrito de Westminster Public Schools. En el año 2008 comienzo mi historia con este distrito. A Partir de este tiempo ingrese como voluntaria en la escuela de mis hijos, estuve muy involucrada cortando papeles, limpiando el salon de clases, cuidando niños en el salón y en los días de paseo. Me gusta mi tiempo con los estudiantes; sin embargo, mientras más me involucraba más observaba la falta de cuidado que tenían el personal escolar con sus estudiantes.

Mi hijo recibio abuso emocional de parte de su maestra en primer grado pero ella fue protegida por la directora de la escuela ,nunca tuve un diálogo con la maestra y nadie me dijo mis derechos como los padres. Constantemente me siento discriminado en mi escuela porque hablo español.

Mi hijo fue una víctima de bullying de parte de su compañero en el año 2012 entonces cuando me fue a la escuela a hablar con el director nada se soluciono. Cuando mi hijo hizo su transición a su secundaria y el abuso seguía con el mismo compañero, solicite ayuda con personal de escuela porque tenía miedo de que mi hijo atentara contra su vida y el personal de su escuela en lugar de ayudarme me amenazo con abogado, me senti discriminada por mi falta de ingles, estatus migratorio y mi ignorancia en el sistema de el distrito.

Por querer luchar por salvar la vida de mi hijo y por su educación el mismo personal de la escuela ahora era quien acosaba a mi hijo, incluso sufrió un acoso sexual dentro de su escuela el cual tampoco recibió apoyo, todo esto y con mucho dolor pero me llevo a profundizar más con el sistema educativo y me lleve una gran decepción. Quiero que me escuchen y en este momento, siento que estoy intencionalmente excluido del proceso de toma de decisiones, y lo que es peor, ni siquiera recibir información sobre mi propio alumno.

A 10 años de mi involucramiento en el distrito he pasado tantas cosas que me han causado dolor, tengo tantas historias que contar, nosotros somos una familia de bajos recursos no tengo ni automovil para llevarlos a una mejor escuela, siento que este distrito ha estropeado la educación de mis hijos, he mirado como entre el personal escolar. Se protegen haci mismos solapandose ho por el mismo miedo de ayudar al padre y traicionar al distrito esto como resultado dejando la seguridad y la buena educación fuera de la vida de los estudiantes, ellos prefieren ganar dinero acosta de las injusticias de los menores. El distrito miente sobre el compromiso de los padres con el estado y no entiendo por qué el estado nunca ha preguntado a los padres sobre sus experiencias dentro del distrito a medida que participan en este cambio.

Participé en el programa PASS, un programa del que entiendo que el distrito está orgulloso y en el cual informa muy bien en su informe al estado, pero la realidad es que los padres están siendo intimidados y sobornados para participar. Le dicen que le pagarán 150 dólares para participar y luego le harán hacer llamadas telefónicas todo el día. Participé y cuando terminé mis llamadas, me dijeron que solo podía tener 75 dólares.

Me he preguntado si alguien con más autoridad y poder que el distrito pudiera poner la mirada en nuestros hijos y ayudarlos, me duele ver como mis hijos van perdiendo día a día su educación.

Nuestros sueños de que ellos estudien la universidad están desapareciendo, estamos en la recta final si esto no cambia habremos perdido la batalla de cumplir muchos de los sueños de los hijos.

He servido arduamente a este distrito y poco he logrado para ayuda a mis niños, se me han hido los años en luchar contra un gigante, [distrito] que no le duelen las vidas de los inocentes.

**POR FAVOR, AYUDA URGENTE NECESITAMOS QUE ESTA LEY SEA APROVADA PARA TRABAJAR JUNTOS CON LA ESCUELA Y EL DISTRITO Y HACI SALVAR LA EDUCACIÓN DE NUESTROS HIJOS.**

**MUCHAS GRACIAS**

[REDACTED]  
Westminster Public Schools Parent

March 9, 2018

Support of HB-1355

Madame President and members of the Committee, Hi my name is [REDACTED], I am the mother of 3 children who study in the Westminster Public Schools District. In 2008, my story began with this District. From this time, I volunteered at my children's school, I was very involved in cutting papers, cleaning the classroom, taking care of children in the classroom and on the days of the trip. A job that I consider important, however, the more I got involved, the more I observed the lack of care that the school staff had with their students.

My son received emotional abuse from his first grade teacher but she was protected by the school principal, I never had a dialogue with the teacher and no one told me my rights as a parent. My son was a victim of bullying from his classmates in 2012 so he made me go to school and nothing was solved- I constantly feel discriminated against at my school because I speak Spanish.

My son made his transition to his high school and the abuse and discrimination continued. I have requested help with school staff because I was afraid that my son would attempt suicide and the staff of his school instead of helping me threatened me with a lawyer, I felt discriminated against because of my lack of English, immigration status and my ignorance in the system of the district.

For wanting to fight to save my son's life and for his education, the same school staff was now the one who was harassing my son, he even suffered sexual harassment inside his school which did not receive any support, all this and with a lot of pain but it took me to deepen more with the Educational System and I am very disappointed. I want to be heard and right now, I feel like I am intentionally left out of the decision making process- even worse, I am not even given information about my own student.

Ten years after my involvement in the District I have been through so many things that have caused me pain, I have so many stories to tell, we are a low income family, I do not even have a car to take them to a better school. I feel that this district has ruined my children's education, I have watched as among the school staff they protect themselves. The district lies about parent engagement to the state and I don't understand why the state has never asked parents about their experiences within the district as they participate in this turnaround. There are injustices happening to our students in Westminster Public Schools and no one is paying attention.

I was a participant in the PASS program, a program that I understand the district is proud of and talks nicely about in their report to the state but the reality is that parents are being intimidated and bribed into participating. They tell you that they will pay you 150 dollars to participate and then make you make phone calls all day. I participated and when I completed my calls, I was told that I could only have 75 dollars.

I have asked myself if someone with more authority and power than the District could look at our children and help them, it hurts me to see how my children are losing their education day by day. Our dreams that they study the university are disappearing, we are in the final straight if this does not change we open the battle lost to fulfill many of the dreams of the children. I have served this district very hard and I have not been able to help my children, I have had years to fight against a giant, district that does not tell the innocent lives.

PLEASE HELP URGENTLY WE NEED THIS LAW TO BE APPROVED TO WORK TOGETHER WITH THE SCHOOL AND THE DISTRICT AND TO SAVE THE EDUCATION OF OUR CHILDREN.  
THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

[REDACTED]  
Westminster Public Schools Parent

March 9, 2018

Support of HB-1355

Estimada Señora Vice Presidenta y miembros del comité,

Soy [REDACTED] Padre de 3 niños estudiantes en Westminster Public Schools.

Preocupada de no ver un progreso en el año escolar de uno de mis hijos quien es estudiante de primaria, acudi a su escuela Tennyson knows para saber como me podian ayudar pero la secretaria me dijo que yo le tenia que ayudar en casa, yo le dije que si le ayudaba pero que yo no hablaba ingles y que estaban limitada para ayudarle.

Mi niño tiene un año en esta escuela, no puedo creer que en un año mi hijo no ha podido alcanzae su nivel academico y por la investigacion que hize no ha sido culpa mia ni culpa de mi niño de su bajo rendimiennto academico si no el metodo de enseñanza que utiliza el Distrito Escolar-lo cual no entiendo y nadie me lo explicará.

Mis otros dos hijos de 11 años quienes estan en proceso de entrar en la secundaria, me preocupa porque estoy batallando en encontrar dentro de el Distrito una escuela que este con un buen nivel de educacion, he estado investigando en la web y encuentre que todas las Escuelas se encuentran en un bajo nivel de Educacion y esto me tiene prerocupada, las mejores Escuelas estan en Lafayette, boulder, cherry creek pero mis niveles economicos no me permiten mudarme a esas ciudades, como Padre de familia me preocupa el futuro de mis hijos ya que considero que ellos merecen una educación de calidad. No entiendo por qué el estado no incluye a los padres en las conversaciones sobre las Escuelas Públicas de Westminster y el progreso que están logrando. Si fuésemos incluidos, le diríamos que el progreso no se está moviendo lo suficientemente rápido y nuestros hijos se están quedando atrás. Sin embargo, hemos tratado de decir eso al distrito cuando planteamos inquietudes, nos encontramos con amenazas sobre nuestro estado migratorio y la intimidación legal.

Le pido a este comité que nos ayude al fortalecer la rendición de cuentas para los distritos e incluir a los padres en la conversación. Le diremos qué está pasando realmente en nuestras escuelas y para algunos niños, especialmente los niños latinos, están siendo discriminados y tienen miedo de ir a la escuela.

En este ultimo tiempo he tratado de participar en programas como Pass y aun que son buenas estrategias, no son efectivas por que cuando uno quiere aplicar lo enseñado el mismo Sistema y el personal tienen barreras que te impiden soluciones- ¿Puede el estado ayudarnos cuando el distrito nos falla? Lo que me da a saber que este programa Pass solo lo traen a el distrito como una forma de callar las voces de la necesidad, nada servira si no se permite ponerlo en practica, por eso digo ya basta de las excusas que el Distrito pone para no darles una Buena educacion a mis hijos, quiero resultados mejores en mi Distrito, no quiero que mis hijos se

estancuen en un nivel inferior de educacion y como resultado no logren ir a la Univerisdad y no logren realizar sus sueños en su futuro.

Por favor ayuden a nuestros estudiantes ellos son el futuro de nuestro pais.

Por favor apoye HB1355 para hacer que los distritos sean más responsables. Nuestros hijos no pueden esperar.

[REDACTED]  
Westminster Public Schools Parent

March 9, 2018

Support of HB-1355

Dear Madam Vice President and committee members,

I'm [REDACTED]. I am the parent of 3 children students at Westminster Public Schools. I am concerned about not seeing a progress in the school year of one of my children who is an elementary school student, I told the school that I feared he was behind but the secretary told me that I had to help him at home, I told him I did help him but I did not speak English and they were not responsive when I asked for help.

My child is in 1st grade and he is not performing on grade level. I know it is not my fault or my child's fault for his low academic performance, but the method of teaching used by the School District-which I do not understand and no one will explain it to me.

My other two are 11 years old and are in the process of finding a high school, I am concerned because I am struggling to find within the District a school with a good level of education, I have been researching the web and found that all the Schools are in a low level of performance and this has me worried, the best schools are in Lafayette, boulder, cherry creek but my economic ability does not allow me to move to those cities. As a mother, I worry about the future of my children and that I think they deserve a quality education. I do not understand why the state is not including parents in conversations about Westminster Public Schools and the progress that they are making. If we were included, we would tell you that the progress is not moving fast enough and our children are getting left behind. We have tried to say that to the district, however, when we raise concerns, we are met with threats about our immigration status and legal intimidation.

I ask this committee to please help us by strengthening accountability for districts and including parents in the conversation. We will tell you what is really going on in our schools and for some kids, especially latino children, they are being discriminated against and are terrified to go to school.

I have tried to participate in programs such as the PASS program and even though they are good strategies, they are not effective because when you want to learn about what is happening, it has to be from a neutral party, not the district who does not want us to know what is going on. The staff have created barriers that prevent parents from finding solutions or being a part of them- can the state help us when the district fails us? The PASS program only bring it to the district as a way to silence the voices of parents who want to be a part of the solution making process.



I want better results in my district, I do not want my children to get stuck in a lower level of education and as a result they do not get to go to college and do not achieve their dreams in their future.

Please help our students they are the future of our country. Please support HB1355 to hold districts more accountable. Our children cannot wait.

[REDACTED]  
Westminster Public Schools Parent

March 9, 2018

Support of HB-1355

Estimada Señora Vice Presidente y miembros del comité,

Hola soy padre de familia con estudiantes en el grado 2 y Kinder en Westminster Public Schools. Yo comencé a involucrar en la escuela antes de que mi primer hijo entrara a Kinder. Yo tenía interés de aprender como funciona el Sistema y asegurarse de que mi hijo tendría una educación de calidad y estuviera seguro en clase. Me preocupa sobre la calidad de la educación de mi estudiante y las respuestas del distrito a los padres.

Creía que la escuela sería un lugar de aprendizaje no solo para el niño sino también para mí, para llevarme a casa métodos efectivos que pudieran aportar a la educación de mi hijo. Comencé a asistir a las juntas del PTA y a reunirme en el café con el director, en esas reuniones hablábamos de eventos que se realizaron como in field trip, eventos de recaudación de fondos, noche de películas, todo estaba bien con eso pero esas eran cosas que eran secundarias en la educación.

Lamentablemente en 2 años no he tenido la oportunidad de hablar de temas de mayor interés, por ejemplo como funcionan los exámenes del Estado, estas cosas las he escuchado por que hemos tenido que pagar a una organización de fuera para que nos venga a enseñar un poco pero realmente de el Distrito no ha salido nada de ayuda para educarme. Los padres necesitan ayuda para entender la información y el distrito nos la está ocultando. Queremos involucramos y no sentir que podemos serlo.

En este distrito, dan a los padres clases de Zumba y clases de ejercicios, pero queremos saber cómo les va a nuestros hijos en la escuela y ¡no nos lo dicen! Para mí, eso es una perdida de dinero y tiempo, ya que se gastan los fondos en cosas que no tienen que ver con la educación de mi hijo.

En el 2016 mi hijo pasó por in conflicto el en el kinder el no sabia cortar y cortaba un papel junto con otro niño y en accidente alcanzo a lastimar con las Tijeras la mano de el otro niño, enseguida recibí una carta de parte de la escuela diciendo que mi hijo de 5 años era un peligro para la escuela y que lo iban a suspender, esto me causo impresion por que no analizaron el suceso solo se basaron en la consecuencias, me toco buscar ayuda por fuera de la escuela y me aconsejaron enfrentar este problema ya que mi hijo estaria marcado como un delincuente. Creo que la razón por la que nadie me ayudó fue porque hablo español.

Gracias a la tutoría de alguien que no es miembro del personal de la escuela, pude abogar por mi hijo, pero en la escuela nunca me llamaron para sentarme y hablar sobre el tema. Solo llegó la carta y nada más -ningún nadie me habló de la suspensión de mi hijo de 5 años-

simplemente me enviaron una carta y no estaba seguro de si debería volver a la escuela. Siento que no tengo opciones y no sé qué hacer. Necesitamos ayuda en nuestro distrito escolar; necesitamos que el estado tenga más poder para ayudar a los padres y familias como el mío porque el distrito no quiere admitir que hay un problema.

Me gustaría ser parte de las decisiones de la escuela, como asegurarse que el director es competente. Pues el año pasado, cambiaron de director y nunca se nos comunicó. Quería que dejen de gastar el dinero para la educación de los estudiantes en clases de ejercicios para padres. Quería clases para aprender el Sistema educativo, clases que me enseñen cómo puedo apoyar la educación de mis hijos y se que de todo eso es posible. Lamentablemente al Distrito no le interesa a trabajar en unidad con los padres de familia, y se que esto es una barrera que afecta la educación de mis estudiantes.

El Distrito nos quiere estar fuera de estas cosas, siento que somos ciegos, ignorantes y que no tenemos voz en nuestro sistema. Ayúdenos a pasar esta medida de responsabilidad con una inclusión para la opinión de los padres sobre el desempeño del distrito.

La Educación de mi hijo es muy valiosa y no la quiero negociar.

Pido por favor que nos escuchen y ayuden a nuestros hijos a salir adelante en su educación, pido que el Distrito los mire como personas no como un negocio para su beneficio.

Hay muchas vidas perdidas por la falta de involucramiento de los padres, muchos niños se han suicidado por que el Distrito solo cuida sus intereses y no el de sus estudiantes y creo como Padre que si nos dejan involucrarnos mas, podriamos trabajar juntos para que los niños estén a salvo y también se gradúan de la Universidad y realizar sus Sueños.

Gracias por leer mi Carta,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Westminster Public Schools Parent

March 9, 2018

Support of HB-1355

(Translated)

Madame President and members of the committee,

Hi, I'm a parent with students in grade 2 and Kindergarten in Westminster Public schools. I began to get involved in school before my first child entered kindergarten, I had the interest to learn how the system works and to make sure that my child would have a quality education and be safe in class. I am concerned about the quality of my student's education and the district's responses to parents.

I thought then that the school would be in place of learning not only for the child but also for me, to be able to take home effective methods that could contribute to the education of my son.

I started attending PTA meetings and meeting in the cafe with the director, in those meetings we talked about events that would be held as in faithful trip, fundraising events, movie night, everything was fine with that but those were things that were secondary in education. Unfortunately in 2 years I have not had the opportunity to talk about topics of greater interest for example how the exams that the State gives and how our district is performing, these things I have heard because we had to pay an outside organization for us come to teach a little but really from the District has not come any help to educate me. Parents need help understanding information and the district is hiding it from us. We want to be involved and do not feel like we can be.

In this District, they give parents Zumba classes and exercise classes but we want to know how our kids are doing in school and they will not tell us! For me that is a waste of money and time, since funds are spent on things that are not helping with our student's learning or my son's education.

In 2016 my son went through a conflict in kindergarten, he did not know how to cut and cut a paper together with another child and in an accident he managed to hurt the other child's hand with the scissors. He immediately received a letter from the school saying that my 5-year-old son was a danger to the school and that they were going to suspend him, this caused me a shock because they did not analyze the event, they only relied on the consequences, I had to seek help from outside the school and they advised me to face this problem since my son would be marked as a criminal before he left kindergarten. I think the reason no one helped me was because I speak Spanish.

Thanks to the tutoring of someone who is not a school staff member, I was able to advocate for my son, but at school I was never called to sit down and talk about the topic. Only the letter arrived and that's it-no one even spoke to me about suspending my 5 year old son- they just sent me a letter and I was not even sure if I should go back to school. I feel like I have no options and don't know what to do. We need help in our school district- we need the state to have more power to help parents and families like mine because the district does not want to admit that there is a problem.

I would like to be part of the decisions of the school, to choose which director is competent because last year they changed the director and never communicated to us. I want them to stop spending the money for the education of the students in classes of exercises for I want classes to learn the educational system, classes that teach me how to support the education of my children and I know that all of that is possible but regrettably the District is not interested in working in unity with the parents, and I know that this It is a barrier that affects the education of my students.

The District wants us out of these things, I feel like we are blind, ignorant and that we do not

have a voice in our system. Please help us by passing this accountability bill with an inclusion for parent input about district performance.

My son's education is very valuable and I do not want to negotiate it.

I ask that you please listen to us and help our children to get ahead in their education, I ask that the District look at them as people, not as a business for their benefit.

There are many lives lost due to the lack of parental involvement, many children have committed suicide because the District only cares for their interests and not their students and I believe as a parent that if they let us get involved we could work together so that the children are safe and also graduate from the University and make their dreams come true.

Thank you for reading my letter,



[REDACTED]  
Westminster Public Schools

April 9, 2018

Support of HB1355

Madame President and members of the committee,

My name is [REDACTED] my child attended Tennyson Knolls Elementary. In that short time my experience with her education was unfortunately not a pleasant one. The communication from the school and teachers to the parents was very lacking. No one ever seemed to know what was going on or what and when events were being held. At all the PTA meetings I attended there was no participation from faculty and very little to none Hispanic parents were encouraged to attend.

This being due to another huge problem, the language barrier. None of the faculty could help the Spanish speaking parents, which hindered their ability to communicate with them about their concerns and be able to participate in decisions that would affect their children in the upcoming school year.

When my child began Kindergarten in '09 the principal was very fluent in Spanish which gave me hope that we would have a better relationship with the school, unfortunately that wasn't the case. I particularly felt very frustrated that despite voicing concerns no solutions were ever implemented to any sort of problem we posed, let alone did we feel like anything we said was being taken into consideration. It was as if people were there to collect a check and nothing else.

I'll admit there was times when we received notifications of activities and announcements in both English and Spanish, but the translation would be so awful it was ridiculous and very difficult to understand. This made me feel like I was always in the dark when it came to knowing what tools were offered for my child and myself as to how to better her education or be more involved in the school. There is so much help and resources that the school district is not tapping into, hopefully unintentionally, leaving the Spanish speaking community out. Many parents would love to be more involved but are not able to because of the language gap and the lack of effort to fill it. Education is a beautiful thing that we are lucky to have at our disposal. The more we can help those who teach our children the better our community becomes. Not only because of the knowledge being implemented but also with the camaraderie that comes from being involved with a school that a big chunk of people are being left out of. I hope this letter will serve to help you take into consideration us Spanish speaking parents who lack the knowledge of what our district offers and of ways we can be useful to make it better not just for ourselves but also more importantly our children.