



CENTER FOR THE FUTURE OF ARIZONA

Statement to the Education K-12 Committee
Arizona House of Representatives
In the support of H.B. 2787, Teacher and Classroom Data (Teacher ID)

by
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Mr. Chairman and members of the House Education (K-12) Committee,

Thank you for allowing me to appear before you today in support of H.B. 2787, the Teacher and Classroom Data bill introduced by Rep. Crandall to establish a teacher identification data system for Arizona. This bill will add a critical element to our state education data system and will enhance education policy decision-making and ultimately improve student outcomes.

My name is Sybil Francis. I am Executive Director of the Center for the Future of Arizona, a 501c(3) organization focused on key issues facing our state and our future, including our K-12 Education system. I also chair the Governor's P-20 Council Committee on Data and Graduation Rate which has supported the establishment of a teacher identification data tracking system for Arizona.

Before addressing the merits of the legislation before you I would like to put the proposal into context. There is a need for a state education data system that will enable policy-makers, school officials, and the public to create and support education policies that address the evolving needs of our education system. We need robust data on which to formulate education policies as well as to assess how our policies are working.

National momentum is gathering in support of building high-quality state data systems which will provide better information about student, school and district performance. A nationally based organization called *The Data Quality Campaign* provides guidance to states on how to build or enhance sound education data systems. In particular, it urges

the creation of a longitudinal data system – a system in which data is gathered over time and which can show changes from year to year. This type of system can illuminate crucial attributes of our educational system such as changing high school graduation rates, how the English Language Learner population is evolving, shifting demographics of the student population, and changing success/failure rates for AIMS. These are just a few examples of the kinds of things we can learn from a well-designed longitudinal data system.

The *Data Quality Campaign* recommends that states create the capability to collect data in ten distinct areas which it calls the “10 essential elements” of a sound data system. The complete list is attached and includes such elements as a student identification number, student-level enrollment, demographic and program participation information, and other elements (material provided to the committee).

The P-20 Council endorsed the creation of an Arizona education data system consistent with that recommended by the *Data Quality Campaign*. The P-20 Data and Graduation Rate Committee, which as I mentioned I chair, focuses on the process and the steps required for implementing such a data system for Arizona. Arizona is well on its way toward this goal and already has in place a number of the data elements recommended by the *Data Quality Campaign*.

The next logical step in the creation of a data system for Arizona is the establishment of a teacher identification number. This will give us the ability to link teacher data to other state education data and enable us to better understand important features of our education system. As noted in the attached *Data Quality Campaign* white paper on the “Benefits of and Lessons Learned from Linking Teacher and Student Data,” (copy provided to the committee) many people immediately think of teacher accountability when they think about linking teacher data to other data, particularly to student data. However, the benefits of linking these data systems extend far beyond accountability. There are many unknowns with regard to teachers that would help illuminate very important questions, including the following. These are based in large part, but not exclusively, on items from the above-mentioned paper.

Pipeline – Who and how many students are in teacher preparations programs?

Production – How many teachers are being produced and in what certification areas?

Employment – Where are teachers employed (especially in terms of supply and demand)?

Retention – What percentage of teachers remain in teaching after three, five or 10 years?

Working Conditions – What working conditions help retain teachers?

Professional Development – Which teachers would benefit from professional development, in what areas, and how effective are these opportunities?

Distribution – Are highly qualified teachers available in hard-to-staff schools?

Effectiveness – Which teacher education or training programs help raise student achievement?

Mr. Chairman, and members of the Committee, these questions are compelling and their importance speak for themselves.

I urge the adoption of a teacher identification number and your support of this legislation.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee.
