

Micah Grant

Board of Trustees, Natomas Unified School District | 1901 Arena Blvd | Sacramento, CA 95834

May 16, 2017

Honorable Lorena Gonzalez Fletcher, Chair
Assembly Appropriations Committee
State Capitol, Room 2114
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 1220 (WEBER) – CERTIFICATED SCHOOL EMPLOYEES: PERMANENT STATUS ▪ SUPPORT ▪

Assemblymember Gonzalez Fletcher,

I am writing in support of Assembly Bill 1220 (as amended April 18), which extends for teachers the minimum probationary period from two to three consecutive years before they are eligible to earn permanent employment status (tenure), and allows teachers to accept an offer to extend their probationary period to five years if offered by the employer.

California has one of the shortest probationary periods in the nation. While opponents may argue that a two-year probationary period is sufficient, when you consider that the deadline for notification of “reelection” is March 15th of the probationary teacher’s second year—and you don’t count the summer months when teachers aren’t teaching—the total time a teacher has to develop and demonstrate his/her classroom effectiveness and be fairly evaluated by administrators is only about fifteen months.

Fifteen months is an inadequate amount of time to adequately mentor and develop highly skilled teachers, something California’s approximately six million students deserve. Teachers I have spoken to agree that two classroom years is not enough time to learn the intricacies of their school and school district, provide standards-based instruction that meet the needs of each student, develop interesting lesson plans, and learn to manage a classroom. Many teachers complain that two years is not enough time to master an incredibly steep learning curve and become confident and effective educators.

AB 1220 would give teachers additional time in which to develop their classroom skills before a decision about tenure needs to be made by a school district. Additionally, the bill would provide support and mentoring along with development opportunities to achieve tenure to those teachers who may require additional time and professional development. For these reasons, I respectfully request your support when the bill is heard before your committee.

Sincerely,

MICAH GRANT
Clerk, Board of Trustees
Natomas Unified School District

cc: Assemblymember Weber