



Kimberly Williams
STATE REPRESENTATIVE
19th District

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
STATE OF DELAWARE
411 LEGISLATIVE AVENUE
DOVER, DELAWARE 19901

COMMITTEES
Appropriations, Chair
Joint Finance, Co-Chair
Education, Chair
Labor, Vice Chair
Revenue & Finance

House Education Committee Meeting Minutes
6.12.24

House Committee Recording

Chair Williams called the meeting to order at 3:10 p.m.

Members present:

Rep. Williams, Chair
Rep. Moore, Vice-Chair
Rep. Chukwuocha
Rep. Morrison
Rep. Osienski
Rep. Neal
Rep. Phillips
Rep. Romer
Rep. Selby
Rep. Collins
Rep. Hensley
Rep. Hilovsky
Rep. Jones Giltner
Rep. Smith

Chair Williams introduced **SB 279, AN ACT TO AMEND TITLE 14 AND TITLE 29 OF THE DELAWARE CODE RELATING TO SCHOOL SAFETY**. *Time Stamp: 3:12*

Chair Williams, House prime sponsor of the bill, stated that the bill enables schools to use the Delaware Emergency Management Agency (DEMA) approval process prior to submitting a certificate of necessity. Currently, schools submit a certificate of necessity prior to approval; the approved changes can be significantly more than estimate. This review in advance allows schools to allow for actual costs of improvements DEMA would require. This bill requires minimal changes to existing construction. The intent is so that glass doors and windows have anti-ballistic properties, but schools found that they would have to spend significant funds to make this possible, and it did not improve safety.

Rep. Collins asked if this bill constitutes a rollback of prior legislation.

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Chair Williams stated that she collaborated with Sen. Walsh on this bill because of a school in their district, where current requirements made the school less safe. This bill will allow schools to be safer and spend less money.

AJ Schall, the Director of Delaware Emergency Management Agency, stated that HB 49, passed several years ago, included school safety initiatives, such as being able to lock classrooms from inside, and secure vestibules. This applied to new construction or a school making a major capital improvement. They discovered that with safety upgrades for some older schools, door frames were not fortified. This only applies to renovations and new construction would still be held to those standards.

Chair Williams opened the floor for public comment.

Members of the public who voiced support of the bill included Robert Overmiller (constituent) and Tracey Johnston (constituent).

A motion was made by Rep. Collins and seconded by Rep. Chukwuocha to release SB 279 from committee; motion carried. Yes = 14 (Chukwuocha, Collins, Jones Giltner, Hensley, Hilovsky, Moore, Morrison, Neal, Osienski, Phillips, Romer, Selby, Smith, Williams); No = 0; Not Voting = ; Absent = 2 (Lynn, Shupe). The bill was released from committee with a F=0, M=15, U=0 vote.

Chair Williams introduced **SS 1 for SB 304, AN ACT TO AMEND TITLE 14 OF THE DELAWARE CODE RELATING TO REGULATORY PROVISIONS FOR NONACADEMIC TRAINING AND RELATED RESOURCES.** *Time Stamp: 3:19*

Chair Williams, House prime sponsor of the bill, stated that last year, the General Assembly passed SCR 13, which directed the Delaware Department of Education (DDOE) to undertake a review of all state and federally-required training for teachers and other education professionals and produce a report on minimizing the burden of these trainings and maximizing the effectiveness. The Secretary of Education created a working group of legislators including herself and Sen. Sturgeon, representatives of the Delaware State Education Association (DSEA), Delaware Association of School Administrators (DASA), and Delaware Chief School Officers Association. DSEA surveyed educators for their input on the trainings and thousands responded, highlighting a need for timely and engaging trainings. This bill comes from the outcomes of SCR 13 and seeks to streamline trainings. SS 1 for SB 304 would reduce the hours of school bullying and criminal youth gang protection trainings, suicide prevention trainings, teen dating violence and sexual assault trainings. New hires would still be required to complete all trainings in the first year of hire. The DOE must also review its mandatory training programs at least every three years and make updates for best practices. SS 1 requires the entities to work in collaboration with the DOE to review and potentially update trainings; this substitute clarifies that collaboration and makes a technical change.

Rep. Selby asked what prompted the lessening of training for such crucial areas.

Chair Williams stated that they worked with numerous stakeholders and the changes are designed to reflect best practices.

Dr. Mark Holodick, the Delaware Secretary of Education, stated that the DDOE was receiving feedback that the topics and timing of trainings were redundant and could be cut down in scale. The stakeholders worked on the content and relevancy of all the trainings, as well as how it should be developed.

Rep. Selby stated that when she was a teacher, bullying and other issues were major concerns, and reiterated the importance of trainings.

Chair Williams opened the floor for public comment.

Members of the public who voiced support of the bill included Dr. Tammy Croce (Delaware Association of School Administrators), Robert Overmiller (constituent), and Taylor Hawk (Delaware State Education Association).

Kendall Massett (Delaware Charter Schools Network) voiced support for the bill and asked that the DDOE include the charter community in these conversations although it is not listed in the bill as a group to be collaborated with once every three years.

A motion was made by Rep. Smith and seconded by Rep. Neal to release SS 1 for SB 304 from committee; motion carried. Yes = 14 (Chukwuocha, Collins, Jones Giltner, Hensley, Hilovsky, Moore, Morrison, Neal, Osienski, Phillips, Romer, Selby, Smith, Williams); No = 0; Not Voting = 0; Absent = 2 (Lynn, Shupe). The bill was released from committee with a F=0, M=13, U=0 vote.

Chair Williams introduced **SB 292, AN ACT TO AMEND TITLE 14 OF THE DELAWARE CODE RELATING TO DISCLOSURE OF PUPILS' SCHOOL RECORDS.** *Time Stamp: 3:31*

Chair Williams, House prime sponsor of the bill, explained that the bill better aligns the Delaware State Education Data Privacy Law with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). It clarifies that the DDOE has a right to access student education records for federal reporting and evaluation of state-funded education programs. The bill clarifies DDOE's role in working on behalf of local education agencies under FERPA guidelines, and clarifies circumstances under which DDOE can disclose any personal information. It also protects local education agencies when exchanging education records with DDOE.

Chair Williams opened the floor for public comment.

Members of the public who voiced support of the bill included Robert Overmiller (constituent).

A motion was made by Rep. Moore and seconded by Rep. Neal to release SB 292 from committee; motion carried. Yes = 14 (Chukwuocha, Collins, Jones Giltner, Hensley, Hilovsky, Moore, Morrison, Neal, Osienski, Phillips, Romer, Selby, Smith, Williams); No = 0; Not Voting = 0; Absent = 3 (Lynn, Shupe, Smith). The bill was released from committee with a F=0, M=13, U=0 vote.

Chair Williams introduced **SB 297, AN ACT TO AMEND TITLE 14 OF THE DELAWARE CODE RELATING TO DIVERSITY AND INCLUSIVITY IN EDUCATION.** *Time Stamp: 3:35*

Rep. Phillips, House prime sponsor of the bill, stated that the bill's intent is for Delaware Code to promote inclusivity in their education standards. This bill comes from the advocacy of the Make Us Visible group which has been working on similar legislation throughout the country. In 2022 in Colorado, there was a proposal to delete Asian Americans from their social studies standards. This raised significant concerns from the Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) community at a time when other forms of racism were on the rise. Rep. Phillips has been working with Make Us Visible with the legislature and the DDOE. This bill provides a framework to address inclusivity and diversity in the state and creates a regulatory process where specific groups are listed in regulations. This non-exhaustive list can be added to as time goes on. Teachers have the ability to create their own curriculum to include these standards. These standards will allow all groups to see that Delaware law values them. DDOE has recommendations for regulatory language that would need to go through the regulatory process to be finalized. As a multi-racial person, she feels that these standards will make a large difference in helping children feel included and accepted in their schools.

Chair Williams opened the floor for public comment.

Members of the public who voiced support of the bill included Dr. Tammy Croce (Delaware Association of School Administrators), Alexander Chen (constituent), Devon Jiang (Make Us Visible Delaware), Kendall Massett (Delaware Charter Schools Network), Taylor Hawk (Delaware State Education Association), Joseph Lewis (Metropolitan Wilmington Urban League), Britney Mumford (DelawareCAN), Eileen Wang (Shue-Medill Middle School), Taylor Hawk (Delaware State Education Association), and Tracie Johnston (constituent).

Members of the public who spoke in opposition to the bill included Robert Overmiller (constituent).

A motion was made by Rep. Moore and seconded by Rep. Romer to release SB 297 from committee; motion carried. Yes = 12 (Collins, Jones-Giltner, Lynn, Moore, Morrison, Neal, Osienski, Phillips, Romer, Selby, Smith, Williams); No = 0; Not Voting = 0; Absent = 4 (Hensley, Lynn, Shupe, Smith). The bill was released from committee with a F=3, M=8, U=0 vote.

Chair Williams adjourned the meeting at 3:51 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

Hannah Rigoglioso

Attendance List

- Alexander Chen, constituent
- Dr. Tammy Croce, Delaware Association of School Administrators
- Taylor Hawk, Delaware State Education Association
- Devon Jiang, Make Us Visible Delaware
- Tracie Johnston, constituent
- Joseph Lewis, Metropolitan Wilmington Urban League
- Kendall Massett, Delaware Charter Schools Network
- Britney Mumford, DelawareCAN
- Robert Overmiller, constituent
- AJ Schall, the Director of Delaware Emergency Management Agency
- Eileen Wang, Shue-Medill Middle School