



May 15, 2017

WILLIAM V. HUSFELT III

SUPERINTENDENT

1311 Balboa Avenue
Panama City, Florida
32401-2080

(850) 767-4100

Hearing Impaired Access

(800) 955-8770 Voice

(800) 955-8771 TDD

www.bay.k12.fl.us

Board Members:

Jerry Register

District 1

Ginger Littleton

District 2

Joe Wayne Walker

District 3

Ryan Neves

District 4

Steve Moss

District 5

The Honorable Rick Scott
Plaza Level 05, The Capitol
400 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee FL 32399

Dear Governor Scott,

On behalf of children in Bay District Schools and its employees -- both teachers and education staff professionals -- who educate and nurture our students, we write to implore you to veto HB 7069 because it will decimate our school system.

Of the 38 Bay District schools, 24 have a Title I designation. Our Title I schools are able to provide vital wraparound services for our students because the funding is allocated by worksite rather than following individual students. Bay District schools provide our neediest students extended hours, social workers, counselors and additional tutoring **because of Title I's current structure**. It is not clear that charter schools -- which, under SB 7069 would be entitled to a share of Title I funds -- would even be required to accept students from Title I schools.

Worse still, given the SB 7069's changes to school accountability timelines, our schools will have less time to make progress with fewer resources. Because of these changes, Bay District Schools are facing the possibility that children in dire need of services that help them realize their potential as productive citizens will be left with schools that cannot afford to serve them. Additionally there is no guarantee they will have access to schools that are ostensibly meant to offer "hope."

We can assure you that "hope" is not what we will feel should this bill become law, nor will it be what our students, our parents and community will be feeling when our public schools, the foundation of a civilized society, will crumble under the weight of unfunded mandates and overwhelming student needs they cannot meet. For example, just the schools located within the city limits of Panama City will lose more than \$300,000 in funding for services provided directly to students. These schools will be forced to go into the new school year without the social workers, resource teachers, behavior interventionists and other staff members who are trained to work with students who face the daily challenges of poverty, broken homes and food instability.

The Association of Bay County Educators and the Superintendent of Bay District Schools agree that although some employees might like some provisions in SB 7069 -- such as the continued funding for the Florida Best and Brightest Program -- these perks come at too dear a cost for our students.



WILLIAM V. HUSFELT III

SUPERINTENDENT

1311 Balboa Avenue
Panama City, Florida
32401-2080

(850) 767-4100

Hearing Impaired Access

(800) 955-8770 Voice

(800) 955-8771 TDD

www.bay.k12.fl.us

Board Members:

Jerry Register

District 1

Ginger Littleton

District 2

Joe Wayne Walker

District 3

Ryan Neves

District 4

Steve Moss

District 5

You hold our students' and employees' futures in your hands as you consider your action on this damaging bill and its language that simply discriminates against public schools and the children they serve. Because both the district and the union believe our students come first, we join together to ask you to veto this bill in order that we will continue to serve our community's children in the ways they need and deserve.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "W. Husfelt", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

William Husfelt
Superintendent, Bay District Schools

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Alexis Underwood", written in a cursive style.

Alexis Underwood
President, Association of Bay County Educators