

Monday, March 30, 2015

Dear Senate Workforce Committee;

I am writing you regarding Senate Bill 470 that would make eligible hourly school employees to receive unemployment when the workplace is temporarily closed for school breaks. My time is split between being an instructional assistant and being a secretary for 2 hours with a total of 7 hours per day. I put in extra hours to make sure work gets done. I transferred from a Washington State Schools district so I could live closer to my mother. But with the budget cuts Oregon is facing and now this I might consider returning to Washington. Also, sped time is not paid more per hour as it is in Washington and I receive more training. As it stands I have to pick up part-time employment during the school year to pay my bills. Does that mean that I am an unqualified individual that cannot work anywhere else? Absolutely NOT! Currently I am working part-time towards my masters in special education, which will be my 2<sup>nd</sup> next to my MBA. So yes I am way over qualified to support teachers in the middle school classroom.

I work for the school district for two reasons. 1) I feel that I am giving back to my community and that if I can assist one student each year to graduate that would be great – as many as possible that would be awesome! 2) I need to be able to have time during the summer to support my mother who had a stroke. With summers off I work 10-12 hours a day to take care of things so she can live independently.

With my skill set I can get a job anywhere that pays 3 to 4 times more than the wage I currently earn – BUT I am passionate about the work I do in the classroom. Right now my current wage is not a living wage. I am under the poverty line.

The more students we are able to graduate means a boost to our economy which in turn means more funding for schools. I am only a small part of the puzzle, but education means more than funding text books. Please consider what type of individual you would like working with your student and vote YES for Senate Bill 470.

Sincerely,

Terese Stacy