

Dear Chair Doherty and Members of the Committee,

I get up at 5 a.m every morning, start my coffee. Read and pray for the day. I wake up my boys and we get ready for school and work.

I arrive at school trying to be strong and not emotional. I am wondering what the new day will bring. Trying to make everyone happy, then having to worry about being hurt by a student or attacked is stressful. It has taken a toll on my family. The worst is having nightmares about being attacked. Others come to me and say they are afraid of my student. I try to protect teachers, kids, and even pets. If something happened I feel guilty. I do care about my student, but I also need a break sometimes. At this point, no one will take my place/substitute when I need to be gone. The following is what I face on a daily/monthly basis:

As a Medical Provider

- Change Underclothing
- Administer Medication
- Secure a sanitary environment (child spreads body fluids)
- Clean Vomit
- Clean Excrement

As a Mediator/Guard for Others

- Parents put me between them and school
- Protect other students (disabled or smaller), teachers, and staff from being attacked by a student
- Protect animals from attacks
- Pulled student off of other staff being attacked

Receiver

- Shoving
- Biting
- Chased
- Attacked with shoe
- Scratched on face and arms

As I said before, no one will substitute for me when they know my position and the daily requirements. So, I have to leave the student in the hands of my co-workers and worried the whole time I am gone for their safety. Please, we need you to support the move to act on HB 3318-1 as soon as possible. We love these children. They have a right to an education or social setting. I invite you to come and visit any time, any day and share our experience with these very special children. Thank you.

Barbara Borello  
Para-Professional