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**TEACHER/PRINCIPAL TURNOVER AND B24-355 STATEWIDE
DATA WAREHOUSE
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**

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Virtual platform

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Good afternoon, Chairman Mendelson and members of the Committee of the Whole. My name is Chelsea Coffin and I am the Director of the Education Policy Initiative at the D.C. Policy Center, an independent think tank focused on advancing policies for a growing and vibrant economy in D.C. I am testifying in partial support of expanding the Statewide Educational Data Warehouse to include additional information on teachers, with suggestions of data to add and remove from the requirements.

In school year 2021-22, the retention rate in D.C.'s public schools was 74 percent,ⁱ with an additional 14 percent of teachers staying in D.C.'s public schools in new positions. Teacher retention in D.C. is up from 70 percent in school year 2018-19.ⁱⁱ It is hard to compare D.C.'s retention rates to the national context, since the most recent national figure of 84 percent that is cited in Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE)'s 2022 Educator Workforce Report and the State Board of Education (SBOE)'s 2020 Teacher Attrition Survey, for example, is from school year 2012-13.ⁱⁱⁱ

B24-355 requires collection and publishing of certain data on educators in D.C.'s public schools. Much of the required information is already published, with some regularity. OSSE has published two comprehensive annual reports on the teacher and educator workforce in school years 2018-19 and 2021-22 (with a break during the pandemic school years of 2019-20 and 2020-21). These reports include much of the data that would be required by B24-355 including gender, race/ethnicity, who leaves classroom positions for another role, vacancies by subject, as well as teacher demographics, retention, and vacancy data at the school and LEA level. Other information requested by B24-355 is worthwhile and could be straightforward to add, like teacher state of residence or age.

However, some of the requirements of B24-355 would also introduce new burdens on schools, and may be better suited to periodic surveys (data collection every five years, for example) or an internal dataset. Schools would now have to survey exiting teachers around reasons for leaving the profession, who left the profession as well as education, who left to teach in other states, and who left for private schools. B24-355 also requires publishing new data on teachers listed by unique identifier, which seems better suited to internal use via a data warehouse than publishing in a report

for privacy reasons. These data should be removed from the requirements for public reporting.

Teacher attendance, or ideally instructional time, is one data point that is missing from the requirements and should be added. A systemwide look at teacher attendance or instructional time in addition to vacancies could shed light on student learning experiences. This is particularly relevant after labor market shortages accompanied the pandemic, leaving 6 percent of teaching positions vacant in October of 2021^{iv} and substitutes harder to come by: there were about half as many District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) substitutes in the first quarter of Fiscal Year 2022 (October to December of 2021) compared to the first quarter of Fiscal Year 2020.^v Teachers have important leave policies that mean they will be absent from time to time. Looking at teacher attendance or instructional time would give a more holistic picture of how many students do not have access to instruction (especially for long-term subs) on a particular day in the same way that schools report student attendance.

I support creating a more comprehensive teacher data warehouse that can provide insights into educators as schools' most important resources. However, this bill should be careful to not overly burden schools with collecting data that can be challenging to gather and data that may not be actionable. Instructional time or teacher attendance would be a good data point to consider adding. Thank you for the opportunity to testify and I look forward to answering any questions that you may have.

ⁱ Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE). 2022. *District of Columbia Educator Workforce Report*. OSSE. Retrieved from https://osse.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/osse/page_content/attachments/2022%20DC%20Educator%20Workforce%20Report_FINAL.pdf

ⁱⁱ Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE). 2019. *District of Columbia Teacher Workforce Report*. OSSE. Retrieved from https://osse.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/osse/page_content/attachments/DC%20Educator%20Workforce%20Report%2010.2019.pdf

ⁱⁱⁱ National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). 2016. *The Condition of Education: Chapter 3/Elementary and Secondary Education, School Staff Section (Teacher Turnover: Stayers, Movers, and Leavers)*. NCES. Retrieved from https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/pdf/coe_slc.pdf

^{iv} Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE). 2022. *District of Columbia Educator Workforce Report*. OSSE. Retrieved from

https://osse.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/osse/page_content/attachments/2022%20DC%20Educator%20Workforce%20Report_FINAL.pdf

^ Treuhardt, J. 2022. "Chart of the week: Ongoing substitute teacher shortages affect schools' ability to function." D.C. Policy Center. Retrieved from <https://www.dcpolicycenter.org/publications/substitute-teacher-shortages/>