

HB 2327

Testimony: 3/9/07

Julie Wright

Good morning madam chair and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to speak in favor of HB 2327. My name is Julie Wright and I'm speaking in behalf of the WSPTA. Improving math and science is our 2nd highest priority and I've provided you with a green sheet that states our message on this issue.

We know the dismal statistics that show our math and science programs are failing our students.

- Almost 50 % of 10th graders couldn't pass the math WASL and remediation hasn't proved to be effective.
- For disadvantaged students the passage rate was much worse, widening the achievement and thus the economic gap.
- 30 – 50% of college freshmen need remedial math, requiring us to pay twice for math instruction.
- WASL scores for science are even worse.

This is very costly for the state and is closing the doors of future career opportunities for our students. Our state economy is jeopardized when employers can't find enough employees with the math and science skills needed in our technology-dependent society.

Our math and science programs need an overhaul. HB 2327 provides solid solutions for high school courses and the graduation requirements, but it must go hand-in-hand with HB 1906 to ensure students in the lower grades are receiving world-class instruction that teaches the fundamental skills needed to succeed in these higher-level courses. Together these bills provide a comprehensive systems fix that will reduce remediation and provide cost-effective, meaningful assessments, so our math and science programs can provide students with the skills necessary to succeed in college and work place.

This will open the doors of opportunity for our students to be international innovators in the sciences, medicines and technology. It will strengthen our economy and provide a bright future for our children. Thank you for you efforts to make this a reality for every child.