



January 14, 2014

Dear Legislators:

I am writing to voice our district's concerns about AB 616. The bill is so wide-ranging that it would prohibit our schools from providing basic services to ensure students' physical and emotional well-being. It would place an extreme restriction on how we serve children in important ways.

Many crucial services would be called into question under this bill. For example:

- Mental health screening: Staff use tools to assess students' mental health and when appropriate, provide additional services.
- Suicide risk protocol: When there is a danger of self-harm to a student, staff use this protocol to determine what immediate steps may need to be taken.
- Vision and hearing screening: The bill even calls into question services as basic as vision and hearing screenings to ensure that students can learn in a classroom.

These are only a few examples of the kind of services this bill could restrict. I hope you will agree that we should not stand in the way of providing these key services to children. If you have any questions, please contact Rachel Strauch-Nelson on my staff at 663-1903 or rmstrauchnel@madison.k12.wi.us.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Cheatham, Ed.D.
Superintendent
Madison Metropolitan School District