

NO. 28

JOURNAL
OF THE
SENATE
OF THE
STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA



REGULAR SESSION BEGINNING TUESDAY, JANUARY 12, 2016

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2016

Friday, February 26, 2016
(Local Session)

~~Indicates Matter Stricken~~

Indicates New Matter

The Senate assembled at 11:00 A.M., the hour to which it stood adjourned, and was called to order by the ACTING PRESIDENT, Senator McELVEEN.

ADDENDUM TO THE JOURNAL

The following remarks by Senator SETZLER were ordered printed in the Journal of February 25, 2016:

Remarks by Senator SETZLER

Mr. PRESIDENT, ladies and gentlemen of the Senate, we all strive to improve public education, and in these efforts, we have reviewed and adjusted the amount of testing that is done at the state level in the public education system in South Carolina. Additionally, we now have a superintendent who is supportive of public education and what our 45,000 public education teachers are doing.

On this subject, I would like to share an email that I received from a teacher about testing, and I would ask that we all remember that the teachers are the ones on the front line teaching and taking care of our children every day. I would like to read the attachment from that email that I received:

“My heart broke today as I watched a child, my 3rd grade student, who had been taking this benchmark for an hour and was only on question 8, lay his head on his table in defeat. He then wrote the words ‘bad job’ on his scrap paper. At this point, I walked over, placed my hand on his back, knelt down beside his desk and asked him what was wrong. He said, ‘I’m just really frustrated. It’s so hard.’ I responded... ‘Buddy, I know you are frustrated but I know what a strong reader you’ve become over the past 2 years and no matter what score you get, as long as it was your best, I’m going to be so proud of you.’ With tears rolling down his face, I just hugged him and told him how wonderful he truly is.

It took him an hour and a half to finish the rest of this 35 question test. 2.5 hours that could have been spent working with him to improve his reading more, helping him to have more confidence in himself, and building a stronger relationship with him through lessons and activities that this test will never measure. But today, I lost 2.5 hours with this sweet boy who has the most contagious smile and laugh and the biggest

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heart. A student who works harder than any other student I've ever had -- who walks into the classroom first every morning laughing, "Hi, Ms. Gravelle!" And who occasionally jokingly steals my candy and hides it around the room. This boy was reading 43 words per minute at the beginning of year with only 88% accuracy and is now reading 60 words per minute with 95% accuracy -- the boy who was reading at level H at the beginning of 2nd grade and who recently read a N -- the boy who could write 1 sentence in 30 minutes at the being of 2nd grade and now, at the middle of 3rd, can write a paragraph or more.

Yet today, this sweet child was defeated by yet another paper-pencil-bubble sheet test. A test that measures a child's ability to sit and concentrate on texts for an hour or more without moving, talking, reading, or drinking something. This child fights everyday the ability to stay focused.

However, I refuse to let him believe that this test will define him. Because he has the most amazing future ahead of him. His kindness, his work ethic, and his normal 'can-do' attitude tells me more about his future than that test does.

To your tests --- I want to say, 'Bye, Felicia!' But unfortunately, I cannot. So I will continue to give you, reluctantly, year after year -- but I refuse to stoop to your level because my students are MUCH more than a number on a piece of paper."

Bless our teachers in South Carolina.

ADJOURNMENT

At 11:05 A.M., on motion of Senator SHEALY, the Senate adjourned to meet next Tuesday, March 1, 2016, at 10:00 A.M.

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