



VERMONT PRINCIPALS' ASSOCIATION
MEMO
From the Desk of Jay Nichols

To: House Committee General, Housing and Military Affairs
Written Testimony: H. 81 State Wide Health Insurance Bargaining

I respectfully ask that this testimony be placed in the record as testimony provided to the House Committee on General, Housing and Military Affairs regarding Statewide Health Care Bargaining Bill H.81.

Vermont school based administrators (principals and assistant principals) effectively serve as middle management. Although they are the chief educational leaders of their individual schools, they perform these duties under the purview of executive management (Superintendent). Prior to being compelled into the statewide bargaining construct, principals negotiated their own contracts including health care benefits. In many cases, principals often received less in financial remuneration while receiving very good health care benefits. The change in the law has for the most part resulted in school administrators paying more for health insurance without receiving parallel considerations in compensation. This is a little hard to swallow for school leaders who work many more days and hours than most school employees and have much more responsibility. Additionally, these school leaders have very little job protections compared to members protected by VT-NEA.

Although we appreciate any efforts by VT-NEA to represent school administrators in negotiations with state school board officials representing management, we strongly believe the least the legislature can do is make sure that school leaders have some representation on the negotiations council that is supposed to represent our interests.

We respectfully therefore request that the Committee require, as proposed in bill H.63 that "at least one of the members shall be a licensed administrator," on the Commission. Further, although not mentioned in either draft of the bill, we would like the licensed administrator to be a school leader who is currently serving in that role and would respectfully submit that we, the Vermont Principals' Association, select that commission member.

Thank you for your consideration.

Jay