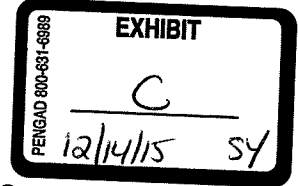


Donald Farrell



I hope the committee will consider creating an alternative to the zero tolerance based policies currently used that pushes children out of the classroom. This tends to increase truancy and leads to delinquency which creates an opportunity for youth to offend that creates a path into the juvenile and criminal justice system.

It seems that the current model of test based accountability creates incentives to expel low performing students to boost overall test scores. Failing public schools seem to unwittingly prioritize incarceration over education by engaging in this practice.

Students then face the same barriers to re-entry that incarcerated individuals face when attempting to reenter society. They are still unprepared, permanently behind and may not graduate high school.

In closing, it is my hope that more funds are reallocated from the criminal justice system to hire more counselors and provide special education services to identify these students early on and make them a future driven student that is patient, treats others with respect and strives to be a good citizen.