

To: Assembly Education Committee
March 30, 2021

Re: Opposition Letter to AB255

Good afternoon Chair Bilbray-Axelrod and members of the Assembly Education Committee,

My name is Andrew Caudill. I am the Vice President of the Washoe County School District Board of Trustees and I represent District C, which covers all of northern Washoe County. I was elected in 2018 by my constituents. Our board in 2019-20 and now in 2021 is very diverse with members from different backgrounds with different life experiences. Elected boards bring out the best of our society. The people deserve the right to elect who represents them and their interests, and the interests of our 62,000 kids and 8,000 staff members.

As a citizen, I felt trustees representing my district did not truly represent the unique challenges that face the outlying areas of northern Washoe County. That is when I decided to run for office, which was quite the experience for my first time. I truly enjoy what I do, and I care deeply about my constituents. Washoe County residents have equal representation that is demographically balanced. If our board is changed to a hybrid, the unique relationships will disappear, and I fear for the outlying areas such as the people I represent. It is easy for their interests to be ignored in favor of the two major cities in our county. Appointed members will cause a geographic imbalance and appointed members are not beholden to the people of the county. Conflicts of interest will exist, and political games will impact the effectiveness of our board.

I understand the people can elect characters that can cause disruption, but that happens in all forms of government. Elected school boards represent the foundation of what democracy is all about. Appointed members will disrupt our democratic process and it creates inequities in our county and state.

Thank you for your time and service,
Andrew B. Caudill
WCSD Board of Trustees, Vice President