

Thank you Madam Chair and committee members for hearing my testimony today.

My name is Lorelei Jackson and I am the Student Services Coordinator of a charter middle school in Denver Public Schools. As a special educator and math teacher, I serve exceptional learners including those with disabilities and multi-language learners.

I am here in support of HB 1231

Like many other states across America, Colorado has seen a decline in math attainment across grade levels. The academic needs of students have increased significantly since the COVID pandemic and our STEM and math teachers are uniquely aware of these ever increasing problems.

This year, teachers in my school have been asked to develop multiple lessons targeting the severe academic gaps in all areas, but specifically in math. Writing differentiated lessons for the same class of students is incredibly difficult and time consuming. It requires grade level teachers to teach their normal content, while also supplementing material from 2, 3, or even 4 grade levels below so that students are able to progress. This has not only taxed the teachers, but has been seen to be less successful in practice than originally planned.

One of the teachers in my school with multiple years of experience teaching mathematics, reached out to me for support for a student struggling in math. She was at a loss on how to support this 8th grade student. The student has struggled with math for a number of years and has since given up on trying and refuses to practice new skills, preferring to talk with her peers. When I connected with the student about why she had made the choice not to practice, she shared with me that she was “bad at math” and added all the “support” that had been provided to her prior to this year was not working. She explained the intervention attempts that included reteaching content at a slower pace, and the addition of random math skills that did not explicitly relate to her current content.

Although the teacher attempted to support the struggling student, there was limited access to resources and no training on evidence-based skills and intervention strategies to truly support the struggling mathematician. HB23-1231 requires CDE to prioritize programming focused on evidence-based mathematics skills and intervention strategies and the bill requires educator preparation programs to train students in these practices in mathematics, including interventions to help students who are below grade level or struggling in mathematics, children with disabilities, and students who are English language learners.

By voting in support of this bill, you will be providing support for the professionals who repeatedly demonstrate their invaluable versatility in their schools and communities. The bill would provide high quality math curricula and interventions that the teachers want so they can have a major impact on their students every day. It provides training, where there currently is none, including train the parent plans that provides training frameworks to assist guardians in understanding mathematics concepts to support their students, and accountability for our schools to identify students below grade level ensuring our most vulnerable populations do not slip under the radar in terms of their academic attainment in mathematics.

Thank you for your time. I am happy to answer any questions you might have.



March 15, 2023

Re: HB23-1231

Dear Education Committee:

The Early Childhood Council Leadership Alliance, the membership organization serving and representing Colorado's 35 Early Childhood Councils, would like to express our support for HB23-1231, Math in Pre-Kindergarten Through Twelfth Grade.

Like early literacy, developmentally appropriate number awareness and math skills in early childhood can lay a strong foundation for continued growth in math skills as children enter elementary school and beyond. We greatly appreciate that this bill works to support developmentally appropriate math and number sense for young children and include and align early childhood with Kindergarten through Twelfth grade math learning.

We appreciate the work of the Committee as they consider HB22-1231. If there are any questions we can help answer, please do not hesitate to reach out to maegan@ecclacolorado.org

Thank You

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Maegan Lokteff".

Maegan Lokteff, PhD
Executive Director