

Remarks of Virginia Crisanti
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Before the State Dept. of Education and State Board of Education concerning
changes to Teacher Certification

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Good afternoon. My name is Gini Crisanti and I'm a K-8 visual art teacher in Bridgeport. It has come to my attention that the future holds many changes for teachers.

Educators go through 5 years of training, prior to taking all the battery of tests we must pay for, to become provisional educators. We have been subjected to portfolios and many other kinds of proof to show we know how to teach. We must obtain our Masters degree to maintain our jobs; an additional expense.

We have so many different levels of development in one classroom we must provide multiple plans of every lesson we teach. We have children with behavioral issues, emotional issues, non-English speaking, English as a Second Language, non-readers at all levels and very gifted and talented children all mixed together in the same classroom. And then we mainstreamed children who really need significant assistance. And all of these students must be taught to pass the same test and obtain a successful outcome. It is a valid goal.

More degrees will not solve the problems our children face from 3:00-8:30. It will not repair the emotional damage, the fact that the student does not understand the language, the fact that they do not have a home or food, it will not solve fetal alcohol

syndrome, or the drinking and drugs they experienced while in the womb, it will not erase the effects of Autism.

We do not need to make it more difficult for people to begin a career in education.

We already face a teacher shortage. We have many days each month when teachers are out for either professional development or illness, when we can not find a qualified substitute who can handle this kind of diversity we face every day. When this happens students are split up into other classes to be babysat for the day.

Advanced degrees will not solve this.

We are already under paid and blamed for every ill we have no power to control. I left a very successful position as a Director of Administration in the Business World making way more than I was making as an educator. It has taken me nine years to get back to where I was eighteen years ago. And I have lost my Social Security on top of it.

It is not about the money; it is about the children. We believe in them and we need you to believe in us. But we need you to be realistic. There is no way every child in this school system can graduate college ready and prepared to succeed in life. I teach them every day. I know.

Blaming the teachers is not the solution. How about talking to the teachers to find out what is needed in the classroom instead of wasting more money and time. We need your support not your mandates that are impossible to reach.