**BACKGROUND**

HB 1315 is a continuation of legislators’ efforts to attack schools it deems are in fiscal distress.

The bill would allow Ball State to replace the elected school board of Muncie schools with an appointed board and exempt the university from adhering to a host of laws impacting student learning. Teachers in Muncie would be stripped of their exclusive representative, their right to collectively bargain their salary and wage-related issues and the requirement that they work under the same uniform teacher contract that every other teacher working in a public-school district works under.

Muncie schools are not and have never been on a watchlist for its academics. Muncie schools are experiencing fiscal problems but they are on the road to recovery and a loan from the state (that would be paid back) would solidify their return to solvency.

Under HB 1315 and beginning next school year, an emergency manager would have the authority to break any school districts’ contract mid-year and layoff school employees.

Overall, this bill has the potential of negatively impacting local control, teacher voice and protections for students in many communities. This is not just a Muncie and Gary bill, it has future precedent-setting implications.

**TALKING POINTS**

TEACHER RESPECT

* Teachers in Muncie deserve the rights that all teachers in Indiana enjoy – the ability to have a collective voice for their profession and their students.
* Teachers in Muncie have been leaders in getting their schools back on track, including personal financial sacrifices to ensure their students aren’t impacted.
* The bill calls for up to five percent of teachers to be laid off mid-year without a right to finish out the year – negatively impacting the kids in their classrooms.
* If schools are having a teacher shortage now – who would work in a school district knowing they have no due process or job security?

LOCAL CONTROL

* Lawmakers have already talked about a pipeline of other school districts trending toward distressed status. Whose community is next for this type of radical takeover made possible in this bill?
* A community deserves to have a school board that is accountable to the voters – not appointees who may not even live in the community.
* We already have a law on the books that calls for an emergency manager to be appointed and to lead the work on getting the school district back on its feet. By all indications, that law is working.