



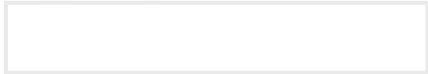
RUTH BRIGGS KING
STATE REPRESENTATIVE
37th District

**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
STATE OF DELAWARE
411 LEGISLATIVE AVENUE
DOVER, DELAWARE 19901**

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September 21, 2021

Ms. Wendy A. Mears



Dear Wendy,

I am writing to provide you with an update on the concerns you brought before me and several of my colleagues in the Legislature. As a result of our conversation, I initiated several inquiries on the processes and procedures to see how to best address the issues you presented to us.

It is important to understand that we legislators confer with one another on issues and our staff are frequently doing the same. Consequently, we work best when we work collectively on certain issues. To this end, I have conferred with my colleagues on the best path forward to address issues and propose changes. This should result in bi-partisan support of our efforts in the House and the Senate. Representative Tim Dukes and Senator Bryant Richardson, and others were also engaged on this issue. Your passionate testimony and your history of childhood abuse leave you with unresolved issues you seek to address and remedy with legislation.

My colleagues and I have discussed potential changes to the Delaware Code to Civil Law to provide clarity and remedy. I believe you have spoken with Lauren Vella in the Attorney General's office, and we are working with her to draft legislation based on our discussions. This should help you and many others who may also suffer. If possible, when introduced I would like to name the legislation, Wendy's Law, to signify your initiative that resulted in the change.

And now, the second matter regarding an incident at the Sussex Academy of the Arts and Sciences. As you may realize, it is difficult to have access to all information you may seek in an incident. As Legislators, we cannot interfere with investigations, nor do we have access to any more information on incidents than you. I made inquiries to determine if the proper protocol and procedures occurred with your daughter's incident. The Academy does not have a School Resource Officer; therefore, the police department with proper authority, Georgetown Police Department, was notified and an investigation occurred. The protocol for the investigation includes the engagement of a Child Advocate. Based upon all the information, the Attorney General's office made their determination. You should have received this finding.

My investigation did bring forth concerns with substitute teachers including the review and oversight of these temporary workers. The substitute must complete a fingerprint and background check; however, there is no process to review or alert areas of concerns among contracting districts. If the substitute is not nor ever has been a credentialed educator, there is no work history to review. I am working with the Department of Education to close the gap on this alarming discovery. As you know, many districts are desperate for substitutes; however, we cannot allow this to open a door and provide access to our children.

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In closing, I am sharing this letter with the others who I have engaged in the discussion. I hope you understand there are no guarantees to what we can achieve in the Legislature; however, there is a desire and commitment on our part to create legislation.

We all hope you can find some closure and healing in this process.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ruth Briggs King". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

*Ruth Briggs King
State Representative
37th District*

*CC: The Honorable Brian Pettyjohn, Senator, Delaware General Assembly
The Honorable Bryant Richardson, Senator, Delaware General Assembly
The Honorable Timothy Dukes, Representative, Delaware General Assembly
The Honorable Steve Smyk, Representative, Delaware General Assembly
Lauren Vella, Delaware Department of Justice
Eric Zubrow, Delaware Department of Justice*