

Testimony of Allysson Vallieu

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Members of the State Board of Education:

I was an English teacher at a Gulen-affiliated charter school in Dayton from 2008 until 2013. I was a popular, well regarded teacher and one of the highest-paid American teachers my final year. But I was among four teachers dismissed via email the last month of the school year. All four of us were talking about trying to unionize the school and I think that is why we were let go.

This past school year, I worked at a dropout recovery school. This fall, I will be working for a traditional public school.

Only after I left the Concept school did I realize what a total mess it had been and how much different—and better—things can be.

The week before my second school year was to start, the teachers came in for a meeting and found no chairs and desks in the classrooms. We were told they arrived and we had to assemble our chairs but all of the instructions were in Turkish. The instructions came with a large picture of what the assembled chairs should look like assembled so we worked together to figure out how to get one finished, then did the rest.

That sort of thing was common. There was no planning.

The students were the ones who really suffered. Even though I taught at the Horizon Science Academy it never had functional lab. And the chemistry teacher would show Man v. Wild videos all week long. He was the head of the math and science department so he should have known better. When I spoke with the school's director, Mr. Zen, he said the teacher realized the students lacked the math and science skills needed to comprehend physics so he opted to have them watch videos instead of try and teach them.

Most of the Turkish teachers were not licensed. The director would tell us they were "volunteers" but they'd come in every day and clock in and clock out. My first two years, the Dean of Students was not licensed. He had no background check. He came from Kentucky where he was a PE teacher.

Females in the school – students and teachers – were viewed as second-class citizens. While I never witnessed it, I heard of at least one classroom where the teacher allowed a "game" to be played that included boys in class touching the girls' behinds and if the girls gave the nod the boys' hands would move higher. It had a name. They called it something like "uneasy."

When I was visibly pregnant, I received a written reprimand for doing my job. I was trying to calm down a student with an emotional disability. He had escalated and I was trying to talk him down. He was acting out by punching the locker but I was making progress. Mr. Zen came by and grabbed the student by the arm and tried to pull him out the side door and the student erupted. I said, "Mr. Zen, don't touch

him. That will set him off.” Later, when he was giving me a written reprimand, he rubbed his stomach and said I was being defiant and endangering myself and my fetus by putting myself in that kind of situation. I did a quick check of the law and wrote a rebuttal. I think the reprimand was removed from my file.

Black and Turkish students would get different levels of punishment for the same offense. There was a fight in the school one day between a black male and a Turkish male. The black male was suspended for 10 days but the Turkish guy got 3 to 5 days off.

Part of the problem was racism and part was the school’s lack of any consistent policies. There was lots of lying and policy changes that made no sense. If a parent came in and complained, they would get whatever they wanted -- including changing a student’s grades. I had been approached several times about a student of mine who had a B+ in my class. The student approached me, her mother followed-up with me and the assistant director got involved. We all sat down and I explained how the B+ was determined. She ended up the valedictorian so I guess somebody changed her grade.

If I can be of further assistance, please contact me at this email [a\\_vallieu@yahoo.com](mailto:a_vallieu@yahoo.com).