

# Students Matter

Defending students' rights through impact litigation

## AB 934: Before and After Asm. Bonilla's Bad Deal for California Students

Originally, AB 934 sought to support effective teachers and prioritize quality in California's public education system. On June 21, 2016, Assemblymember Bonilla decided to abandon students and hard-working teachers across California who were counting on her, and instead cut a deal with special interest groups working tirelessly to defend the harmful status quo.

Here is an outline of the original version and its updated and unrecognizable counterpart:

<i>Before (May 17)</i>	<i>After (June 21)</i>
<b>Teacher Tenure (Permanent Employment)</b> AB 934 would have updated California's permanent employment statute to make teacher tenure a more professional, earned benchmark based on demonstrated quality of instruction, not just time spent in the classroom. The bill would have extended the probationary period to allow for fair and accurate evaluation of teachers to take place from the current timeframe of just 18 months to a minimum of three years.	<b>Teacher Tenure (Permanent Employment)</b> Instead of making teacher tenure an earned benchmark based on demonstrated quality of instruction, AB 934 would double down on an unconstitutional tenure timeline that deprives administrators of the time needed to fairly and accurately evaluate probationary teachers.
<b>Teacher Dismissal</b> AB 934 would have explicitly made teacher ineffectiveness grounds for dismissal, only after educators have been given an opportunity to improve through participation in one year of a professional development program. If teachers who received an unsatisfactory evaluation did not improve after a year of professional development, the bill would have created a streamlined dismissal process that still respects teachers' rights to due process.	<b>Teacher Dismissal</b> AB 934 would do nothing to streamline California's arduous dismissal process that allows grossly ineffective teachers to remain in classrooms and deprive students of learning time. The bill would now allow administrators to attempt to negotiate an alternative to the current process, adding to bureaucratic red tape that handcuffs schools from doing what's best for kids, rather than removing it.
<b>Teacher Layoffs/"Last In, First Out"</b> AB 934 would have respected hard-working and talented teachers by creating a new layoff system that generally prioritizes quality of instruction over years spent in the classroom, while still protecting effective senior teachers from layoffs.	<b>Teacher Layoffs/"Last In, First Out"</b> AB 934 leaves in place the state's quality-blind layoff system, a system that values seniority over performance in the classroom and which results in the layoffs of award-winning educators based on their hire date.
<b>Teacher Evaluations</b> AB 934 would have required districts to use a four-tier evaluation system that explicitly incorporates student learning — as required by the state's current teacher evaluation law — in order to recognize great teaching and base employment decisions on quality of instruction.	<b>Teacher Evaluations</b> AB 934 would not require districts to use any evaluation system when making employment decisions, failing to ensure recognition for great teaching and ignoring whether or not educators are actually helping their students succeed.