SB1677 (Belt) – Restricting Artificial Intelligence (AI) Use in Teacher Evaluations

SUPPORT

Background

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is a field of computer science and technology that focuses on creating software programs capable of performing tasks that typically require human intelligence. Unvetted AI tools are now being used as part of the teacher evaluation process.

Issue

There are several well-known limitations to the use of AI tools in education. First, privacy and security of information cannot be guaranteed. AI tools require large amounts of educator and student data. This introduces data privacy and security risks. Second, AI tools are only as useful as the data that has trained them. If the data an AI tools draws from is inaccurate or biased, then the information it creates will be inaccurate or biased. Using an AI tool would most likely increase bias rather than reduce bias since these tools pull unvetted information from the internet. Third, the use of AI tools reduce transparency. AI algorithms obscure the decision-making process. For example, if an administrator's notes are entered in an AI tool and the AI tool is asked to assign a rating, how do we know that rating is accurate?

Teacher evaluation asks administrators to think critically about what they see and hear in the classroom to help educators improve their performance. Teacher evaluation is not simply about summarizing or categorizing data. If an administrator does not know exactly why an AI tool rated a teacher in a particular way, how are they supposed to have a meaningful conversation about how that teacher can improve? If administrators are unsure whether the AI tool produces biased results, how do we know teachers of color are not being discriminated against?

Rationale for Support

One day AI Tools may be an integral part of the teacher evaluation process. That day is not today. There is no evidence to support the use of AI tools as part of the teacher evaluation process. School administrators are attempting to use unvetted AI tools that have documented limitations.