New Research: No Negative Classroom Impact from PA Teacher Strikes

Saucon, PA - Teachers in Saucon are on the picket line this week over pay and health coverage. While many argue that strikes are detrimental to students, new research shows there's no connection between strikes and student performance. Comments from Dr. Harris Zwerling, assistant director of research at the Pennsylvania State Education Association.

Intro: As some teachers in Northampton County go on strike this week, new research (from the Pennsylvania State Education Association) counters the old argument that teachers' strikes have a negative effect on children. Dr. Harris Zwerling crunched some numbers and found no such connection. He says parents might be concerned about teachers' strikes for any number of reasons, but the data shows there's no need to worry about the effect on student performance.

:09 "It does not seem to have a negative academic impact. As a matter of fact, it's not just my study, there are other studies that have come to the same conclusion."

Tag: Opponents of teachers strikes say they often disrupt the learning process. Zwerling says strikes are a tool to ensure fair compensation for teachers and he points out the relation between high teacher pay and high student achievement. Zwerling says his research was published in the peer-reviewed journal "Collective Negotiations." A summary version is at psea.org.

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Second Cut: Zwerling says if teachers can't strike, what's the alternative?

:12 "What kind of substitute procedure are they going to have in place that will result in higher teacher salaries, which my research showed pretty strongly relate to positive student outcomes?"

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OPTIONAL REPORTER WRAP: uses first soundbite(s)

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:41 Outcue...p-s-e-a-dot-org.

Note to Editors: Zwerling is at 717-255-7030. More online at psea.org.