

Teacher-discipline reform: Another fiasco in Sacramento

By U-T San Diego Editorial Board

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In 2011, Californians were revolted by revelations that veteran Los Angeles Unified elementary-school teacher Mark Berndt used his classroom to feed semen to his students. To make matters worse, Berndt's job protections were so strong that school district officials concluded they not only couldn't fire Berndt, they had to pay him \$40,000 to resign.

But instead of leading to basic reforms, the Berndt fallout gave the California Teachers Association and the California Federation of Teachers another chance to demonstrate they own the Legislature. In 2012, a bill that would have streamlined teacher discipline was killed in an Assembly committee. This year, the Legislature passed a fake reform — AB 375 — that would have made it even more difficult to fire teachers.

Last week, Gov. Jerry Brown vetoed the measure. He called on the Legislature to try for a third time to protect students by fixing the teacher-discipline process.

Good luck with that. Democrats in the Legislature — including local Assemblywomen Toni Atkins, Lorena Gonzalez and Shirley Weber and Senators Marty Block and Ben Hueso — all voted for AB 375. Instead of being horrified by a pervert teacher feeding semen to children, they saw it as an occasion to make it even more difficult to fire pervert teachers. This is amazing, and not in a positive way.

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