

# Teacher Tenure - Sometimes A Good Thing, Sometimes Not

Part Four in a Series on  
Bush Schools

By MARY MOSES

Teacher tenure law is a recurring issue in each year's

legislature. Each year the legislature wants to change it. The teacher organizations don't want it changed. Usually, nothing happens.

Under the present law, teachers are hired for one year at a time the first two years. The administrator does not need a really strong reason not to rehire a teacher then. If the teacher really isn't needed, the beginning teacher is the first laid off, even if he is very good.

After two years of working for the same school system, the teacher acquires tenure rights. That means he is automatically

rehired each year, unless he is fired for some strong reason. Usually, the only reason a teacher may be fired is to do something really morally wrong. Often failure to do a good job in the classroom cannot be proven, and can't be used as a reason to fire.

Because it is hard to get rid of a teacher who is not really good at teaching, many people want to change the tenure law. They want contracts issued each year for all teachers just the same. The best teachers would then get the jobs. The ones who do not teach as well would be

the first fired.

Teachers usually do not like this, because it leaves too many things open. A teacher could get fired just for disagreeing with the principal even if the principal were wrong. Teachers with many years of experience

and many years of college training might be laid off first, because they get the highest pay. Schools could try to hire only new, inexperienced teachers because they cost the school less wages.

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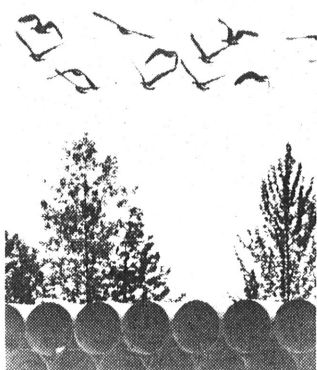
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