

Members of the Committee:

I am the father of four children, a tax payer, and a firm believer in access to quality education for all of Ohio's youths. Through the years my children have been educated through public schools, private schools, and homeschooling.

My wife and I currently have our youngest two children enrolled in a private school. We currently pay tuition for our children's school, and although this decision comes at a great financial sacrifice; we feel this is the best option for our children. Our children will continue to attend a private school regardless of the future of the Ed Choice program.

My children are fortunate to be able to attend the school that best fits the needs of our family. We feel the sacrifices which we have made to enable this to happen are well worth the benefits. My greater concern is for the families we know that would greatly benefit from a nonpublic education, but are not able to afford it.

I believe the majority of Ohioans would have to agree that doubling the number of failing schools in the state is indicative of a flawed method of evaluation. I would implore the legislature to increase the income limit for a full award of an Ed Choice expansion scholarship to 300% of FPL, reduce or eliminate the failing school list, and begin to formulate a future plan for a small portion of the tax money paid by parents to follow the student.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration.

Matt Smith

Xenia, Ohio

937-470-4297