

Dear Primary & Secondary Education Committee Members,

First let me thank you for providing me with the opportunity to add my opinion to the record and for your consideration.

I am submitting this written testimony as a proud Ohio resident and parent of school age children. While my children currently attend private schools, they have also been educated in our local public schools. As a parent and community member my goal is to help develop and contribute to high quality communities:

- Strong and stable neighborhoods, growing property values, responsible use of school tax dollars
- Strong educational options (both public and private) to provide parents with the best educational choice to meet their individual student's needs
- Employment and educational opportunities that attract today's students to remain local to grow their families and careers
- A well educated work force

As can be observed in our current communities, successful public school districts are supported by their communities with necessary funding, raise community property values, and encourage stable communities where families stay because they provide strong educational foundations which compete with private school options. The opposite is observed in a poor to failing school districts which cause families to relocate for better educational options, hurt property values, discourage funding due to poor performance and fail to provide a competitive educational option to their students.

Vouchers, such as the Ohio EdChoice Scholarships, offer families the ability to direct their tax dollars toward the educational options that best fit the needs of their child. Vouchers also help maintain community diversity and stability which helps to also stabilize a community's tax base by allowing families an alternative option to relocating to a better school district. Vouchers are a check on the public schools which should alert them that changes are needed and that they are not meeting the needs of their students/community.

It is my view that vouchers such as the Ohio EdChoice should be continued and supported regardless of family income. In addition to what I stated above, I feel that vouchers increase the opportunity for families to choose the best educational option for their children which helps to create a more competitive educational environment. Private schools compete with public schools for students, public schools should also feel that they should need to compete to keep their students...vouchers support this competition and this competition should drive improvement across the educational landscape.

While public schools claim that private schools lack accountability, I would counter that statement by the fact that private school's tuition cost on top of public school taxes are a higher bar to justify the product private schools are providing. Instead, public schools need to ask what best practices we can learn from the private schools to help improve the education we can provide...

EdChoice vouchers encourage competition and thus improve education, increase educational options (financially) for families and help maintain stable diverse communities.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey Krotine Jr