

Dear Primary & Secondary Education Committee Members:

As you are aware, over the past several weeks, both the Ohio House and Senate have negotiated to revise the Educational Choice Scholarship Program (EdChoice). To date, neither chamber can agree on a solution. Facing the prospect of 70% of the state's districts having a voucher-eligible school on April 1 and under the cloud of a lawsuit filed by school choice groups, the General Assembly must act now to address the program. The House last week unveiled its plan in Senate Bill (SB) 89, which passed the House by a vote of 88-7. The bill includes the following:

- Phase out district-paid EdChoice vouchers
- Increase income-based voucher eligibility from 200% to 250% of the federal poverty level and require the state to pay the voucher if a student is both income-eligible and building-eligible beginning in the 2021-2022 school year
- Dissolve the three academic distress commissions (ADCs)
- Establish a moratorium until 2024 for new ADCs
- Sunset the school district territory transfer law on September 1, 2020

While the bill does not address all of our concerns and has room for improvement, it is the best solution thus far. Suggested improvements to the legislation are as follows:

- Set the eligibility level at 200% of the federal poverty level
- Provide funding to offset losses due to exponential voucher growth
- Establish meaningful accountability measures for private schools that accept vouchers
- Immediately repeal the territory transfer law

Please note that I have copied various interested parties and other legislators to this email for informational purposes.

I appreciate your consideration in this matter and hope that you can support SB 89.

Sincerely,

Karen Boch