

To Whom it May Concern,

My name is Sarah An Teems. I am a 36 year old married mother of four children. Three of my children are enrolled in an elementary school here in the State of Ohio. My youngest child will begin preschool next school year. Our family does not receive the Ed Choice Scholarship however, my husband and I choose to make financial sacrifices in order to send our children to a Christian school. Our family lives in the City of Perrysburg which is currently, one of the highest ranking school public school districts in the Toledo area. Our school district recently increased our taxes to accommodate a new school levy. The increase will be an additional \$400.00 per year for our family. My husband and I as residents of Perrysburg chose to support our local school district and vote for this new school levy regardless of the fact that our children to not attend a Perrysburg public school. Our CHOICE to send our children to a local parochial school has come at a high financial cost which we are blessed to be able to handle. This written testimony, from myself, is to be a voice for the families who have a CHOICE but, are unable to see that CHOICE through due to lack of financial means.

I understand that many of the public schools that are on the "failing" school list are not actually failing. They are under performing. Those are two very different classifications when referencing anything let alone the quality and status of a school. This testimony is by no means an attach on our public schools. Do some of the public schools in the State of Ohio have some improving that needs done? Yes. Are there parochial, private, and charter schools that also have improving that needs done? Yes. The Ed CHOICE scholarship should be a way for families to access a portion of the funds set aside for their children, for educational purposes. Those funds which ultimately come from their tax money.

My plea is to find a solution that works best for the children of the State of Ohio. If the Traditional Ed Choice Scholarship is eliminated, all renewal families should be grandfathered into the scholarship as long as they maintain the proper qualifications dictated by the original scholarship. Incoming Kindergarten families and future families should be able to apply for the Ed Choice Expansion Scholarship with a income requirement increase from 200% gross annual to 300% gross annual based on the household size. By eliminating the Traditional scholarship, the status of the neighborhood public school becomes irrelevant. Increasing the gross annual percentage broadens the range of families who could qualify based on income. Both sides of this fight, which should be over education, would have a positive outlook going forward.

No school is perfect. No teacher is perfect. No student is perfect. No parent is perfect. This should not be about percentages, grades, publicity, religion, money..... **IT SHOULD BE ABOUT EDUCATING AS MANY YOUNG MINDS AS POSSIBLE!** They are our future! I would rather see a student go to ANY SCHOOL than NOT go to school at all. Please do not infringe the most basic freedoms of the citizens of the State of Ohio. Please find a solution.

Thank you,

Sarah An Teems
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