

CRESTVIEW LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

MATTHEW T. MANLEY, Superintendent
Administrative Office
44100 Crestview Road - Suite A
Columbiana, Ohio 44408
Phone (330) 482-5526
Fax (330) 482-5367
www.crestviewrebels.org

BOARD OF EDUCATION
Dr. Edward Miller, President
Melissa Wellman, Vice President
Douglas Dattilio
Joel Hively
Jon Preston Straney
Charlene Mercure, Treasurer



LAURA NAPPI, Principal
Crestview High School
44100 Crestview Road - Suite B
Columbiana, Ohio 44408
Phone (330) 482-4744 Fax (330) 482-5369

ALLISON LEMASTER, Principal
Crestview Middle School
44100 Crestview Road - Suite C
Columbiana, Ohio 44408
Phone (330) 482-4648 Fax (330) 482-5374

MARIAN DANGERFIELD, Principal
Crestview Elementary School
3407 Middleton Road
Columbiana, Ohio 44408
Phone (330) 482-5370 Fax (330) 482-5373

We are Crestview Local Schools, *the heart of our community*,
dedicated to educating and empowering every student with the knowledge and skills for success in an ever changing world.

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Crestview Local Schools: Champions Attend Here!

Chairman Jones and members of House Bill 9, thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today regarding the ED Choice Voucher program. I am Matthew Manley, Superintendent of the Crestview Local Schools in Columbiana, Ohio. On behalf of our board, staff, students, and community, we thank you for this opportunity for dialogue

Our district has the potential to lose thousands of dollars through ED Choice Vouchers. The decision for moving dollars is based on a flawed system of accountability. This past year our district earned its highest grade ever, a B, on the state report card, one of our schools that earned an overall grade of a C is now considered ED Choice under current Ohio Law. That building and the district had only 1 report card category as a D, yet by definition of state law we failed. All of us have experience in school and know that a grade of a B or a D is not a failure. Imagine this system being applied to your days as students. For example, you are now a student in Crestview Schools. During the 2nd nine weeks you earned a B in your math class, but the teacher took your B, crossed it off, and wrote F instead. If we apply the state formula, one is graded by its overall lowest grade on any assessment. You earned a B, but you had one quiz that was a D, however under the state formula you would not even receive a D overall. Your grade in math is now an F because the school board passed a rule that any grade lower than a C converts the overall grade to an F. Does this sound reasonable? NO, it does NOT! This is the scenario that our school is facing. Crestview is the student and you are the school board that makes this rule. I rhetorically ask What is the purpose? We did not fail, but we are perceived as a failure by a flawed scoring system.

I know in front of me we have reasonable, intelligent, dedicated people. If your child earned an F when their overall grade was a B, wouldn't you, too, advocate for them to be judged on their overall work? The determination of ED Choice is a faulty process that defines schools as failures when districts, like ours, are actually thriving. In addition after years of state testing, research data demonstrate the higher the income of the community, the stronger the score on the state report card. So we ask, why are we spending millions of dollars in

money and an enormous amount of time debating what we already know? Schools and government must work together to strengthen the community. Therefore, if an area lacks jobs, then many times, an area struggles on state report cards. Isn't it the job of government to grow the state economy? So in essence if schools and communities fail, isn't government failing too? If government fails, does that mean we get a voucher to go to another state that has jobs? The only way out of poverty is through education. Therefore, it is essential that we continue to support all Ohio Public Schools. We will not point fingers but instead work together to build a stronger Ohio.

If one still insists that the Report Card stay in place, then Crestview Local Schools would be successful. It is one of only seven schools in three counties that had a B. There were no A's. How, then, can money be pulled away from schools and communities that are excelling? Our schools have been funded flatly and continually are being asked to do more with less. In addition, in the current system, we just showed that the system does not represent the total body of work, but focuses on the lowest entity. It also fails to recognize love and kindness in the development of the outstanding community of Crestview. On a day to day basis you would see staff clothing, feeding, and caring for our students. For example, On March 12 we have a benefit dinner for a family that is affected by cancer. Our principal put out a request to the community for volunteers, and within one hour we had fifty! If all of these successes are considered failure, then sign me up! For I am the biggest loser and I am so proud to be a Crestview Rebel!!! We invite you for a visit to see that truly "kindness matter." In addition, we invite you to come to our plays that draw 900 per night and watch our kids excel. We invite you to come and see our music department perform at Disney World. How about our robotics teams? How about our state qualifiers in speech?

The voucher issue is a distraction brings many more complicated issues that are interfering with educational and economic progress. A private school can choose who to accept and who not to accept. In addition, its students are not subject to a state accountability system. We do not have that option, nor do we want it. We will be measured by the challenges we face in teaching. However, by writing a check and draining finances, what accountability does the new school have? Is it fair to compare two unlike entities? In addition, if those schools are religious based, the Supreme Court has been clear on separation of church and state. If a voucher can go to a religious school, does that mean we can pray in public school? Do you want these issues to consume us? The answer is no! We want to work together to make Ohio lead the nation in job creation and retention.

Finally, I have included a video that summarizes some of the work that our school does in STEM, where our students combine their school objectives and work on solving a real life problem in a business or industry. The video is just one small facet that demonstrates the daily excellence and creativity of our staff, students, and community. Our students work

with Humtown Products, Silver Apple Corporation, and Kent State University to develop real-life connected learning. Mr. Mark Lamoncha is Humtown's owner and also a state school board member appointed by Governor DeWine. His mother volunteered at our school for decades and bragged about the strengths of our district until her passing last spring.

Let's work together on job growth instead of complicated litigation as to the legality of the voucher system. Let us now watch a short video that demonstrates true success. Chairman Jones and Members of HB9 conference committee, thank you for this opportunity to provide input regarding Ohio's Ed Choice Voucher Program. I am happy to address your questions and show our video. On behalf of the Rebel Nation, Thank you!

[VIDEO](#)

Sincerely yours,

Matthew T. Manley

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