

Good Morning Primary and Secondary Education Committee-

I am writing because I can not make it down to Columbus to testify on behalf of the EdChoice House Bill 9. There are so many emotions attached to this bill on all sides. I have two points I would like to make and that should be considered while making your decisions on what is best for all the students in our State of Ohio. The EdChoice Scholarship is important for the success of students.

EdChoice and the school rating system was established for a reason years ago. Due to the number of schools being deemed failing is the only reason this bill has been put on hold. The public school systems have been aware of EdChoice for years and also the rating system. Changing the situation now is basically giving in to a child that should be held accountable for an action and because they are "throwing a fit" you are giving in to them. While I do understand the number of schools deemed failing seems tremendous, the schools had over 18 months to fight and decided to wait until the last minute to get their way. This is putting many families in limbo on moving forward with deciding their child's future schooling. The public schools' systems are making it seem that they will need to close down due to the amount of money they are losing from EdChoice. Please look at the history of the percentage of families that take advantage of EdChoice and the amount of money used for EdChoice versus the amount of money available to public school systems. One of the arguments from the public school system is the private schools are not held accountable but changing something that has been established is not holding our public school accountable either.

I have a son who is a Junior in our local public high school and the Medina Career Center. He has had a successful high school career. My middle son is an 8th-grader currently. When we spoke with the local high school regarding classes that would challenge and continue the schooling he is currently receiving they told us to look into Tri-C or CCP classes for him. My 8th-grader is excelling in computer programming provided to him by his current school. The future public high school does not even offer any type of computer programming class. We feel many of the classes provided would not be challenging enough for him. Because our school system is deemed a "failing" school with a D rating, we would be able to utilize EdChoice to give our son an education that would challenge him. Each student deserves an education that benefits their individual needs. If a public school can not do that another option should be made available to families. We pay and support our public school systems but when they are not providing a proper education for students, something needs to be done.

Without the EdChoice scholarship, our son will not be able to get an appropriate education in our local school system. The EdChoice Scholarship program is a valuable asset in the educational process. Making changes to the program will be detrimental to the existing process and for the success of all students in the State of Ohio.

Please keep EdChoice to benefit ALL students.

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