

Good Evening Committee Members,  
My name is Collin Climer and I am the proud principal of Colerain Elementary in the Northwest Local School District in Southwest Ohio. I have been involved in public education in the state of Ohio for the past 27 years. I want to thank you for the opportunity to stand before you and express my concern for our public schools in light of the EdChoice bill that takes badly needed monies from our public schools, and to share my support of Senate Bill 89 which will maintain school funds intended for our students and our schools as voted upon by our local taxpayers.

I have 3 talking points to share with you this evening:

1. Significant changes that have occurred over my 27 years in public education as both a teacher and administrator.
2. Ways in which I believe EdChoice will affect public schools moving forward.
3. Ways in which public education has affected me and my family on a personal level.

As a brand new public school teacher in 1993, I was responsible for the academic needs of 25 fifth grade students. Funding was merely adequate. State testing was not a priority at the time, but our local community held us to a high standard, knowing that we would ensure that our students were learning and would become positive contributors to our community.

Fast forward to the beginning stages of state assessments and the efforts by school districts to match instructional levels in order to meet the rigor of the initial Proficiency tests. Educators spent hours and hours devoted to Best

Practices, and teaching strategies to ensure students would have the best opportunity for academic success. The next phrase of State Testing required school districts to replace paper/pencil assessments with online versions directing critical funding to go towards the purchasing of technology and the all important teacher training to meet the needs of their students. **This while assuring our community that this is best for our students academic success in moving forward as contributing members of our community.**

First, I stand before you today extremely proud of the success and progress our school and the Northwest Local School District has made over the past 22 years. Our students currently have the opportunity to receive research based interventions, and high level enrichment opportunities to meet the differentiated needs of individual learners by teachers who have very specific credentials to serve their students while private schools do not require the same stringent credentials. As required, we have created opportunities for our *English Second Language* learners to receive the level of assistance they need to lessen the gap in their learning. Our district is in year two do all day Kindergarten and I am proud to say that we are seeing significant growth in our youngest learners' achievement. Through our taxpayer dollars as a public school district, we are now able to offer opportunities for STEAM topics to be covered in a Makerspace area in each of our elementary buildings. Through the support of our PTA we are able to offer various clubs including Book Club, Chess Club and Spanish Club as well as others. This says a great deal about our

PTA as Northwest is a very diverse community where many sacrifice for the betterment of their children's education.

My next point deals with my concern with how EdChoice will affect our students and our schools.

- Staffing will be greatly reduced with the EdChoice dollars going elsewhere resulting in an increase in our class sizes. It is my understanding that public school employees must evaluate and maintain IEP's for Peterson Scholarship students attending private schools, and public schools will now also be responsible for providing the state assessments for those EdChoice students attending private schools, adding an additional financial burden on public schools that are already making the most of every dollar received.

Finally, my daughters are products of public school education. My oldest daughter graduated from public schools and is currently in college working toward her degree while maintaining a 40 hour work week. As her parent, I was impressed with the quality of education she received, and the educational and extremely-curricular opportunities that were afforded her including her love of theater. These opportunities allowed her to be able to face adversity, learn to compromise, develop compassion and work as part of a team. These are the qualities that she will continue to use now as a 22 year old and throughout her life.

My youngest daughter is an 18 year old senior with special needs. The purposeful and varied opportunities that she has been exposed to in her time in a public school system have

been life-changing for her and quite frankly, for us as her parents. We knew as parents that private schools would not be able to provide her with the specially designed instruction that she would require. She has been able to participate in work study programs which have enabled her to build life skills and social interactions that will enable her to strengthen confidence in her ability to be a contributing member of our community.

**Public school education has assured me as a parent that my own daughters will be positive contributing members of our community.**

Again, I share my deep concern about the current EdChoice Bill being detrimental to public education, and encourage support of Senate Bill 89 which would halt the loss of taxpayer funding for our public schools.