

February 19, 2020

Ashley Harding
940 North Henry Street
Crestline, OH 44827

To Whom It May Concern,

When our family moved to Crestline it wasn't because that was where we wanted our children to go to school. In all actuality we had heard nothing but bad things about the school. At the time we found our house, it was either we go with a not so nice house in an area that we prefer, or we get the house we do like in the area we don't particularly love. Luckily Saint Joseph Catholic School is only a 15-minute drive from our house and happens to give our children the education that we want for them. An Education that all children deserve.

Last year, our oldest was in preschool and we heard about EdChoice. Already knowing that we did not want to send our children to Crestline Exempted Village, it could be an excellent opportunity to send our children to a great school and have the money that should be "attached" to our child follow them to the school that we choose. Unfortunately, the more we investigated the program, we learned that Crestline Exempted Village was not on the list of underperforming schools. Which was shocking as they had preformed poorly on their report cards with the state. When I questioned how a school that was rated at a "D" was not considered failing I was told that since they had not received a "D or F" on the 2012-2013 or the 2013-2014 but had received one in 2017-2018 they were not considered. How does this make rational sense? The school is showing a downward trend, but because it did not receive a failing grade 4 and 5 years ago, that keeps the school district from being included in the EdChoice program.

Perhaps instead of getting rid of the program, maybe the criteria should be re-evaluated for either the schools that are included in the program, or for the income amount included in the voucher program. While our income level prevents us from being included in the income-based scholarship program, that doesn't mean we can easily send our children to Saint Joseph Catholic School. In order to afford for them to go, I have had to pick up a second job on the weekends, which means less family time with my children. While it is worth it to see that they get a better education than they would if they went to school in the district where we live. Should it be this way?

Sincerely,

Ashley Harding