

Springfield City School District  
H.B. 9  
Written Testimony  
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Chairman Jones and the members of the House Bill Conference Committee, I appreciate the opportunity to provide written testimony regarding Ohio's EdChoice Voucher program. I am James Townsend, president of the Springfield Education Association.

As a music educator in Springfield City School District, I have been able to see the unintended effects of the EdChoice Voucher program in our large urban district. My Master's thesis researched for a correlation between student achievement and the number of schools attended. At that time there were few, to no vouchers and the data clearly showed a direct correlation. To put it succinctly, the more schools attended the worse the student achievement on state tests.

Now, with the voucher program there are families and students in Springfield literally "school shopping". The students come and go at will, searching for that "right school", but finding none in the area that are the best fit. With my thesis in mind, this definitely affects their achievement, when within a single school year they have attended multiple schools, including charters and parochial schools.

Let me make this point more clearly. Recently, as the building was reviewing student data. We noticed that a student's reading data demonstrated a marked drop in achievement. Literally, the student had been near or projected to be on grade-level in the preceding year. The student attended two (2) different voucher schools before returning to our building. The student achievement was well below the standard that had been demonstrated in the previous year.

It is my personal belief that if the voucher program is to be expanded that ALL schools be held to the same standard. The flawed report card system only grades the public schools. Furthermore, it is my belief that should the "voucher/charter" schools be graded to the same scrutiny as the public schools, the data would reveal either further flaws in the report card system or true inadequacies in the education of those schools.

On a daily basis, the educators in Springfield City School District work diligently to provide a quality education to students who are struggling with food insecurity and childhood traumatic experiences that impact their overall well-being. Yet, as we review our data our students are demonstrating gains in student achievement, many making more than one (1) year's growth. Sadly, this is not visible on the flawed state report cards. Yet our teachers continue to do what is best for our students and provide the best education possible.

Chairman Jones and the members of the House Bill 9 conference committee, thank you for this opportunity to share my insights regarding the EdChoice voucher program.

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