

WITNESS INFORMATION FORM

Please complete the Witness Information Form before testifying:

Date: 02/17/2020

Name: Kim Richards

Are you representing: Yourself Organization

Organization (If Applicable): Cardinal Local School District

Position/Title: Visual Art Teacher Cardinal High School

Address: 14730 sleepy hollow

City: novelty State: ohio Zip: 44072

Best Contact Telephone: (440)823-7204 Email: kim.richards@cardinalschools.org

Do you wish to be added to the committee notice email distribution list? Yes No

Business before the committee

Legislation (Bill/Resolution Number): HB 9

Specific Issue: Ed choice program

Are you testifying as a: Proponent Opponent Interested Party

Will you have a written statement, visual aids, or other material to distribute? Yes No

(If yes, please send an electronic version of the documents, if possible, to the Chair's office prior to committee. You may also submit hard copies to the Chair's staff prior to committee.)

How much time will your testimony require? 4 min

Please provide a brief statement on your position:

Opponent of ed choice program. I want to speak to the impact it will have on my small rural school district, the community, and the students we/l serve.

Please be advised that this form and any materials (written or otherwise) submitted or presented to this committee are records that may be requested by the public and may be published online.

**CARDINAL LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF EDUCATION
Middlefield, Ohio**

**RESOLUTION OPPOSING THE STATE OF OHIO EdCHOICE SCHOLARSHIP (VOUCHER)
PROGRAM**

WHEREAS, the Ohio legislature has recently made amendments which greatly increase the number and availability of vouchers for students to attend private/parochial schools at public tax expense, and

WHEREAS, such vouchers will be available to numerous families and students who have never attended Cardinal or any other public schools and for whom state funding has never been provided to Cardinal or any other public schools, and

WHEREAS, Cardinal's state funding will be unjustly decreased by the amount of the vouchers provided to such families and students who have not and will not attend public schools and others who transfer to private/parochial schools, and

WHEREAS, the estimated loss of revenue to the Cardinal Local School District over the next four (4) years is \$456,000 which would devastate the District's finances, and

WHEREAS, private/parochial schools accepted students with public tax vouchers would not be required to accept to all students but would be permitted to retain their selective admission policies without enforcement of other laws applicable to public schools, and

WHEREAS, private/parochial subsidized with public tax dollars are not held to the same accountability standards as public schools, and

WHEREAS, the State of Ohio has the constitutional responsibility to secure a thorough and efficient system of common schools, and

WHEREAS, the EdChoice voucher program will have exactly the opposite effect by providing funding to private/parochial schools at the expense and to the detriment of public schools and their students.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by this Cardinal Local School District Board of Education that this Board reaffirms its commitment to free accessible public schools which are adequately and equitably funded to guarantee a comparable education for ALL children and therefore opposes and respectfully requests the repeal of the ill-conceived EdChoice voucher program of the State of Ohio

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Board opposes any direct funding programs that have the effect of diverting public tax dollars from public schools to private/parochial schools.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Treasurer is hereby authorized and directed to forward copies of this Resolution to all Ohio state legislators, the Superintendent of Public Instruction and Governor of the State of Ohio.

Date of Resolution: 2/12/2020

Kenneth J. Klima
President of the Board of Education (print)

Kenneth J. Klima
Signature

A. William Kermavner
Superintendent (print)

A. William Kermavner
Signature

Merry Lou Knuckles
Treasurer (print)

Merry Lou Knuckles
Signature

Cardinal Local Schools
 School Choice Resolution
 Potential Loss of Revenues

2/7/20

Qualified School Building - Jorkak		No. of Students	Stipend	Yearly Potential Loss of Revenues	No. Of Years Eligible	Potential Loss of Revenues
Grade						
Current number of students in elementary attending a parochial school:						
Notre Dame	Kindergarten	1	6,000	6,000	12	72,000
	Second Grade	1	6,000	6,000	10	60,000
St. Helen's	Kindergarten	5	6,000	30,000	12	360,000
	First Grade	2	6,000	12,000	11	132,000
	Second Grade	3	6,000	18,000	10	180,000
	Third Grade	2	6,000	12,000	9	108,000
Fourth Grade	5	6,000	30,000	8	240,000	
				<u>114,000</u>		<u>1,152,000</u>
				<u>19</u>		

This does not account for any new students who decide to take advantage of the vouchers.

Prepared by:
 Merry Lou Knuckles, Treasurer

Kim Testify – Statement

Under the current Ohio Ed Choice Program, a student is eligible for a voucher if her/his school building is considered a failing school based on the state's report card system.

We could argue that the state's report card system is flawed and delivers an inaccurate portrayal of a school's performance, but that's a debate for another day.

We could talk about the financial implications for now already financially strapped school districts, but that reality isn't really the central issue in a quite rightly student-centered discussion.

However, Ed Choice does pose some hardship to Ohio public students, a situation assuredly one of unintended consequences, but consequences, nonetheless.

Approximately 9 out of 10 Ohio K-12 students attend public schools. Siphoning away students in turn siphons funding – the financial implication piece we are not here to talk about. However, let's take a quick look at how the cash drain affects the actual students who remain in the public schools that have already been deemed "failing."

First the resources used to address interventions and remediation efforts to assist the remaining students who do not opt out will be cut back.

Crucial but non-core classes, such as Art, will be gutted or eliminated

In many districts, such as my own, poverty quite typically is found hand-in-hand with

underachievement.

- My district is a high poverty district; 44% of my students are on free and reduced lunches.

The children who remain in these districts will be increasingly less well served as some

of their peers leave.

- With less money will come less resources.

The financial impact on my district will result in devastating *educational* losses for the students that remain. (financial loss number from Merry Lou)

There has been much discussion on the impact for students receiving vouchers. I would like to paint the picture for you of what it looks like for a student who remains in the district, my district in particular.

We – the Cardinal Local School District – are located in Middlefield Ohio, a small rural district in eastern Geauga county. We have 76 miracle workers better known as teachers and educational support staff. They are dedicated to the 900 students district-wide and the community in which they work.

Here is an overview of the programs and services that are available right now our students:

All day every day Kindergarten – a needed resource in closing the achievement gap that

our most vulnerable students bring with them when they first enter school.

Title reading programs
Full compliment of k-4 art, music phys. Ed. and a full-functioning library (yes, in the age

of electronics we still have a library, with books, in our elementary school.

There are school services on every level to ensure our families and our students receive

the social and emotional support needed.

As mentioned already, as students depart via EdChoice vouchers, there will inevitably be constriction of these offerings to our community.

Allow me to give a couple of telling examples of how such constriction can affect individual students in our community.....

A student Jon entered our school district in as a Kindergartner. Because of the title services and reading support services and all-day K, Jon was able to master writing and limited reading despite not having an address because he and his siblings lived in a trailer that was parked in the local WalMart parking lot. He and his siblings were able to attend public school because our busses picked him up at his door (so to speak). Jon was fortunate to have an elementary art teacher that recognized his unique talent and aptitude for art at an early age.

As Jon progressed through the school years, his teachers, and art teachers in particular, were the ones who helped him through difficult times along the way. Art was his passion and his achievements in the arts informed and enhanced his capability to cope with the core courses he found less interesting and more difficult. This is Jon, this is his work. Jon's work speaks for itself. (show artwork). This young man will be attending The Cleveland institute of art this coming fall.

As other young children enter our doors, they will not have programs, staff, overall educational opportunities that Jon – and many others – have been able to utilize to become academic successes. Our district and our teachers are dedicated to our children and our community. There are many success stories like Jon's at Cardinal LSD – and at other similar districts throughout the state of Ohio.

EdChoice vouchers will ultimately mean less opportunities for success for the children who remain in our public school districts – students like Jon. People often speak of the EdChoice program as an opportunity for some students but loss of revenue for districts. Let's reframe that statement to say that the opportunity some may utilize is ultimately at the expense of our most vulnerable students. This truly would be a case of children "left behind." Choice and opportunity are good, but strong public schools are a necessity for our communities. Voucher programs

actively harm our public school systems and with them, all the students who remain. No matter how successful voucher programs may be, they are ultimately a short term solution. Private schools will never have enough seats to educate every child. Taking money out of public school systems to allow a relative few to attend a private school is harmful in the long run for public school students; students like Jon.

Our district our teachers are dedicated to our children and our community. We have many success stories. With the ed choice vouchers we stand to lose

Elementary fine arts program

Support services for at risk and fragile students

Bussing services

All day K that is so important to the success of our impoverished students.

We must not try to close the achievement gap at the expense of our vulnerable students. We must not take from one to give to another

I strongly urge this committee to review what the impact to the over 400 small and rural districts is, not only financially but educationally

We must not have a few students succeed at the cost of many others failing. When comes to our students and their, success that price is just too high.