



April 10, 2019

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**Rep. Robert R. Cupp, co-chair
Rep. John Patterson, co-chair
Reps. Louis W. Blessing III, Erica C. Crawley, & Stephen D. Hambley, committee
members
House Finance Subcommittee on Primary and Secondary Education
Ohio House of Representatives**

Re: Fair School Funding Plan

Co-Chairs Cupp and Patterson, and members of the subcommittee:

Thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony about the Fair School Funding Plan proposed by the School Funding Workgroup.

The Ohio Alliance for Arts Education (OAAE) represents arts and arts education organizations and thousands of arts educators in Ohio. Since 1974 the OAAE has brought together more than twenty arts and arts education organizations to create a stronger voice for arts education in Ohio. Our members include students, teachers, parents, and organizations, including the Ohio Music Education Association, the Ohio Art Education Association, OhioDance, the Ohio Educational Theatre Association and more.

OAAE's statewide Board of Directors wish to thank co-chairs Cupp and Patterson and the members of the Fair School Funding Workgroup for their efforts over the past 15 months to create a fair, transparent, and comprehensive school funding plan that is based on the actual costs of educating the average student in Ohio.

The OAAE believes that the proposed school funding plan could be a "game changer" for students, educators, and taxpayers in Ohio, ending the current irrational and unstable system of

funding schools, and addressing the orders of the Ohio Supreme Court regarding the DeRolph school funding lawsuit.

That being said, we anxiously await the language to implement the Fair School Funding Plan in HB166 (Oelslager) Biennial Budget, so that we can better understand how the components will actually work.

In the meantime, we offer these additional comments about the Fair Schools Funding Plan:

-We understand that the Base Cost components of the plan represent the costs for a typical average school district, and so funding for art, music, and physical education teachers is included at a ratio of one teacher for 150 students.

However, we recommend that the term “fine arts, including music” be used in order to make clear that in addition to visual art and music, there are also the disciplines of dance and drama/theater. In 2016-17, for example, there were 53 dance teachers; 231 drama/theater teachers; 3,796 music teachers, and 3,887 visual arts teachers teaching in Ohio’s schools. The term “fine arts, including music” is the wording found in Section 3313.60(7) ORC describing the prescribed curriculum.

-We also support a periodic review of the ratios used to determine Base Cost, especially the ratio of one to 150 students for art, music, and physical education teachers. We have been reviewing the data for the number of arts teachers in Ohio school districts, and have found that in some cases there are more arts teachers than would be accounted for in the Base Cost before adding physical education teachers.

This data is available through the *Arts Education Data Project*, a partnership between the Ohio Arts Council, the Ohio Department of Education, and the Ohio Alliance for Arts Education to provide information to the public about the arts education offerings at the building, district, county, and state levels, and is based on EMIS data. (see <https://oae.net/ohio-arts-education-data-project-introduction/>)

We truly appreciate the inclusion of the arts in the Fair School Funding Plan. The knowledge and skills that students learn through the arts are unique and essential, and not necessarily taught as directly through other disciplines as they are through the arts.

- The arts teach students to use acquired knowledge and skills to respond to works of art (describe, analyze, and interpret), perform existing works in the arts, and create original works in the arts.
- The arts express unique ways of thinking, understanding, and participating in the world through cognitive and sensory experiences.

•Arts learning provides multi-disciplinary, project-based opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate “Key Attributes” and 21st century skills that employers seek in today’s job market, including,

- collaboration & cooperation
- critical thinking/problem identifying
- problem solving/decision making
- design thinking
- articulation/effective communication
- leadership
- cultural literacy

There are other benefits of an education in the arts. Researchers have found that the arts promote cognitive and creative abilities that are essential for improving academic achievement, motivate students to learn and stay in school, and promote positive social development and a healthy school environment.

The OAAE supports the Fair School Funding Plan, because it will help us reach our goal that all students, by the end of 12th grade, will have experienced the fine arts, including music; studied at least one art form in depth; graduated with at least one high school credit in the arts; and been prepared with the knowledge and skills to pursue careers in the arts or higher education in the arts, if that is their choice. Ultimately the OAAE goal is that all people participate in the arts throughout their lifetime.

Thank you again for this opportunity to testify. Attached to my testimony is additional information about the value of an arts education.

APPENDIX

WHAT IS THE VALUE ADDED FOR ARTS EDUCATION?

Economic Value

Academic Value

Personal /Community Value

ECONOMIC VALUE

In 2018 in Ohio, the creative industries supported 289,000 jobs, contributed \$41.4 billion to the state’s economy, and generated approximately \$4.6 billion in tax revenue (federal, state and local).

According to the Center for Regional Development at Bowling Green State University, the

creative industries have become a significant economic driver of regional economies in Ohio. Individual artists and performers increased output by 60 percent since 2015, along with increased output for architecture, performing arts companies, media production and museums.

(Source: Center for Regional Development, "Ohio's Creative Economy: Economic Impact of the Arts and Creative Industries", Bowling Green State University, 2018 at:

<https://www.gcac.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/OCAEconomicImpactStudy.pdf>)

WHAT KIND OF JOBS ARE AVAILABLE IN THE ARTS?

The creative industries include jobs in the communication, entertainment, design, and technology industries. Students trained in the arts pursue careers as musicians, visual artists, dancers, actors, directors, choreographers, videographers, graphic designers, architects, photographers, designers, film makers, arts administrators, educators, and other professions. The growth of the visual technologies industries alone, from computer graphics to digital video, has had a tremendous impact on our nation's economy and the global economy.

ACADEMIC VALUE

The academic benefits of arts education programs for students is documented in hundreds of studies conducted by researchers at Stanford, Harvard, UCLA, Oregon State, Johns Hopkins, etc.

These studies have found that an education in the arts....

- fosters and expresses creativity,
- improves cognitive development,
- increases student achievement,
- helps close achievement gaps,
- builds 21st century workplace skills, and
- expresses different ways of thinking, knowing, understanding, and participating in the world.

PERSONAL/COMMUNITY VALUE

An education in the arts....

- keeps students in school;
- builds 21st century skills, such as teamwork, problem solving, and completing work;
- inspires lifelong learners; and
- inspires lifelong supporters of the arts.

(From the Ohio Arts Council's SOAR Study)

Arts advocates often promote the arts as a strategy for engaging and motivating students who have poor attendance or are at-risk of dropping out of school. Researchers have identified certain factors related to arts education that may help keep students in school. For example, some students have reported that courses in the arts provide environments where they feel safe and accepted, and are personally guided. The social environment in arts classes allows

students to take risks, but also learn to accept constructive criticism. All students are able to express their creativity in arts classes as they develop knowledge and skills about the arts. Students report being satisfied with their accomplishments, and feel that they are contributing.

Observers of arts classes have also noted that teachers of the arts use strategies that engage and motivate students, such as using hands on involvement to promote on task behavior; providing individualized instruction and positive reinforcement; recognizing student accomplishments and creativity; providing genuine interest in the students; and maintaining high standards and expectations.

(Source: Barry, N.J. Taylor and K. Walls "The Role of the Fine and Performing Arts in High School Dropout Prevention". In R. Deasy (Ed.), *Critical Links: Learning in the Arts and Student Academic and Social Development*, Arts Education Partnership, Washington, D.C., June 2002.)