



Ohio Association of Independent Schools  
P.O. Box 400, Hebron, OH 43025  
Phone: (740) 928-0595 Fax: (740) 527-2082  
Dan Dodd, Executive Director  
dandodd@oais.org • www.oais.org

- Agnon School
- Andrews Osborne Academy
- Birchwood School
- Canton Country Day
- Cincinnati Country Day
- Cincinnati Hills Christian Academy
- Columbus Academy
- Columbus Jewish Day School
- Columbus School for Girls
- Columbus Torah Academy
- Gilmour Academy
- Grand River Academy
- Hathaway Brown School
- Hawken School
- Hershey Montessori School
- Hudson Montessori School
- Lake Ridge Academy
- Laurel School
- Lawrence School
- Linden Grove School
- Lippman Day School
- Mansion Day School
- Marburn Academy
- Maumee Valley Country Day
- McGuffey Foundation School
- Miami Valley School
- The New School
- Old Trail School
- Olney Friends School
- Ratner School
- Ridgewood School
- Ruffing Montessori School - Cleveland Heights
- Ruffing Montessori School - Rocky River
- Schilling School for Gifted Children
- Seven Hills School
- Spring Garden Waldorf School
- Springer School and Center
- Summit Country Day
- University School
- Village Academy Schools
- Wellington School
- Welsh Hills School
- Western Reserve Academy

April 11, 2019

## House Finance Committee Subcommittee on Primary and Secondary Education

### Ohio Association of Independent Schools Dan Dodd – Executive Director

Chairman Cupp, Chairman Patterson, and members of the subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony on behalf of the Ohio Association of Independent Schools regarding House Bill 166. OAIS consists of 44 member schools throughout the state, the majority of which are accredited by the Independent Schools Association of the Central States (ISACS).

#### Levels of Auxiliary Services and Administrative Cost Reimbursement Funding

Our state has a history spanning decades of supporting private schools, and Ohio can and should be proud of its commitment to private education and school choice. With that history in mind, OAIS does not object to freezing the line item amounts for auxiliary services funding and administrative cost reimbursement. Given the changes being considered for a new school funding plan, we believe the state's history of increasing those line items can be put on hold for this budget while the General Assembly considers this new way of funding schools.

#### College Credit Plus – Mandatory Participation

Since the creation of the College Credit Plus program, our schools have opposed the requirement of private schools to accept classes taken through the College Credit Plus program as credit at their respective schools. The lack of oversight for our schools requires them to forfeit their curricular independence and professional judgment in order to achieve the former governor's goal of having more students take college classes for free.

As we have maintained since the origin of College Credit Plus and the operation of the prior program (the Post-Secondary Enrollment Options Program), if the state wants to provide these options to private school students, we certainly do not object, but the state should recognize that there are legitimate reasons why a school would not want to participate. In that case, the free market should decide. Parents, with notice and knowledge of a school's non-participation, can elect to send their children to a participating school if access to CCP is that important to them. If enough parents "vote with their feet" and remove their children from attending non-participating schools, the free market will force the schools into participation. This, rather than forced participation of private schools by the government, is the appropriate way to address private school involvement in the program.

### **Transportation Proposals**

OAIS opposes the items in the new school funding proposal that would largely eliminate transportation options for private school students. The State of Ohio has, for over five decades, provided safe pupil transportation for students when practical. Even during the bleakest of economic conditions, the state has maintained that commitment. Now there is a proposal to walk away from that commitment, even though for many families, this is the only way in which the property taxes they pay for public schools are used for their child's benefit. While we would not disagree with public school representatives that the amount of funding provided by the state for transportation is inadequate, we disagree that fellow Ohioans exercising choice in education should bear the brunt of that disparity. We would encourage the General Assembly to find other alternatives for repairing any existing transportation funding shortfall without punishing private school families.

Thank you again for the opportunity to present the perspective of the Ohio Association of Independent Schools regarding HB 166.