

WITNESS INFORMATION FORM

Please complete the Witness Information Form before testifying:

Date: April 10, 2019

Name: Rick Brooks

Are you representing: Yourself _____ Organization Vinton County Schools

Organization (If Applicable): _____

Position/Title: Superintendent

Address: 307 West High St.

City: McArthur State: Ohio Zip: 45627

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Do you wish to be added to the committee notice email distribution list? Yes _____

No _____

Business before the committee

Legislation (Bill/Resolution Number): _____

Specific Issue: Fair School Funding Plan

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? 2-4 minutes

Please provide a brief statement on your position:

Consider revising the distribution formula

* Requesting April 11 at 10:00 a.m.

**Finance Subcommittee on Primary and Secondary Education
Fair School Funding Plan
Rick Brooks, Superintendent, Vinton Co. Local School District
April 10, 2019**

Good Morning Mr. Chairman, Vice Chairman and Members of the Committee,

State Representative Robert Cupp and John Patterson, along with Frontline Educators, and Finance Leaders have been working hard to revamp the Ohio school funding formula. Let me take a moment to thank you for considering the methodology that considers the elements that are necessary for teachers to teach and children to learn.

I am Rick Brooks, Superintendent of the Vinton County Local School District. Thank you for providing this opportunity for me to speak to you about the impact the fair school-funding plan will have on our district.

Characteristics of Vinton County school community:

- 3 elementaries, 1 middle school, 1 high school, 2,064 students
- 416 square miles
- Transportation is a challenge due to low density population
- We only have 2 handicapped buses for the entire district
- 52% free and reduced
- 20% special needs students
- Median household income \$42,000
- 20% poverty rate
- We live in an area with very low economic development, very high unemployment rate
- In FY '19 we lost \$654,383 in open enrollment
- Excess costs for special education was \$87,954.
- Our per pupil expenditure is \$8,821 (State/\$9,353)
- Our overall report card grade was C, with 2 schools receiving recognition as ODE High Progress Schools of Honor

Our community has been hit hard by the opioid epidemic. The effect of parents struggling with addiction continues to be devastating for Vinton County kids. Grandparents and great grandparents are trying to raise the kids because mom and dad are in jail, rehab, or on the run. Family support personnel are being asked to clothe and comfort these kids, while teachers try to educate students struggling with emotional and physical deficiencies.

As education costs continue to increase, the challenge of meeting academic, social, and emotional needs of our students are also increasing. Socioeconomic disparity, transportation costs, excess costs, open enrollment, the opioid epidemic, and the state funding guarantee continue to create challenges and barriers.

This funding model is certainly a step in the right direction because 85% of Ohio districts would be funded with this model. However, with additional dollars provided for educational funding, Vinton County will receive a "zero" increase in state funding and we will continue to be on the funding guarantee from the state.

Even though 85% of our districts will be funded by this model, 15% of the districts in our state will not. More importantly, we are leaving the children in this 15% behind. We cannot continue to function on limited materials and supplies. We are continually asked to do more with less. Money matters in the educational process. This is coming from someone who truly knows because we have been limited for a very long time.

We have great students, a hard working staff, and a supportive community. At the conclusion of every school year, we compliment our staff for pulling off another academic miracle. It's getting more and more difficult to pour from an empty cup.

On behalf of Vinton County School District, please consider revising the distribution formula so that our students in Vinton County will have the best opportunity to compete in the 21st century.