

**HB 517 Proponent Testimony**  
**House Education and Career Readiness Committee**  
**Ohio Association of Elementary School Administrators**  
**Ohio Association of Secondary School Administrators**  
**May 15, 2018**

Good afternoon Chairman Brenner, Vice Chair Slaby, Ranking Minority Member Fedor, and members of the House Education and Career Readiness Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today in support of House Bill (HB) 517, a bill that would permanently designate October as Ohio Principals Month. My name is Dustin Miller, Principal at Jerome High School in the Dublin City School District and Past President for the Ohio Association of Secondary School Administrators (OASSA). With me today to co-present this testimony is Olympia Della Flora, Principal at the Ohio Avenue Elementary School in the Columbus Public School District and representing the Ohio Association of Elementary School Administrators (OAESA).

We begin by thanking Representatives Schaffer and Leland, and the other co-sponsors of HB 517. We are grateful for the recognition of the public service performed by Ohio's school principals on a daily basis. Ohio Principals Month would serve to recognize the essential role principals play in making a school great. HB 517 seeks to honor our colleagues, the unsung heroes in education, for their tireless efforts in pursuit of excellence in education.

Having been a middle school principal and now a high school principal, my experiences have taught me how vital it is for schools to have strong leaders in order to support the hard work of our students and teachers. I don't know of a principal that would refer to themselves as a hero, but I do know principal after principal that feels their work is a calling and it is their high charge to clear the way so teachers can do what they do best for students. Watching this in action is truly the most rewarding part of our jobs and again, it means the world to us that you value our work.

As you are about to consider the passage of HB 517, we are pleased to have this opportunity to share a perspective from the field and to urge your support.

I will now turn the testimony over to Olympia.

Thank you, Dustin. I want to add my thanks to Representatives Schaffer and Leland and the bill's co-sponsors. As school principals, we don't think of ourselves as heroes; we are simply immersed in the many unique circumstances we encounter every day in our buildings. It is really nice to know that our service is appreciated and valued by state policy leaders.

Like Dustin, as an elementary principal, I understand first-hand how this job is incredibly draining, exuberating, and rewarding. The role of a principal is fluid in nature as one moment we are observing a teacher and providing feedback and the next we are dealing with a student who is having a rough day. As the educational leader in the

building, it is our job to ensure the safety and security of all students and staff while wearing many different hats depending on the day and situation.

Though student populations vary across the state, the challenges remain similar as we all try to better manage our time to tackle our never-ending to-do lists and feel like we have done all that we can do for the students in our care. We can never “punch out” as the problems of our students become our heartache and we long to make it better for them. Nothing can compare, though, to a smile, kind word, or hug from a student as it melts all of the stress of the job away and brings you back to why all of our countless hours and tireless efforts matter.

The experiences we have shared with you today are similar to those you can find in school buildings across the state. We urge you to favorably report HB 517 to the full House in support of the 3000+ Ohio school principals.

This concludes our testimony. We will be happy to address your questions.

#ThankAPrincipal