



Teach the Arts for a Well-Rounded Education!

**77 South High Street, 2nd Floor
Columbus, Ohio 43215-6108
614.224.1060 <http://www.oaae.net>**

**Testimony Before the House Education and Career Readiness Committee
House Bill 591 (M. Duffey)
Tim Katz, Executive Director
May 22, 2018**

Chairman Brenner, Vice Chair Slaby, Ranking Member Fedor, and members of the Senate Education Committee:

The Ohio Alliance for Arts Education (OAAE) appreciates this opportunity to present our comments and concerns regarding House Bill 591 (Duffey), which would revise Ohio's state report card.

The OAAE supports the purpose of this bill to create a state report card that is transparent, understandable, useful, and trusted by school districts, parents, and legislators.

We support eliminating the use of letter grades and the composite grade; accurately reflecting students with special needs in the graduation rate; measuring student growth through a formula that is understandable and replicable; revising the K-3 Literacy component to measure student achievement; and including measures for identifying and appropriately serving gifted students.

The OAAE appreciates that the substitute bill addresses one of our concerns. Under the new enrichment and support measure (Section 3302.03 (B)(7)(b)) the bill, as introduced, allowed school districts to report art and music teachers. The substitute bill expands this provision to include (f) fine arts teachers, and (g) music teachers. This amendment ensures that all arts teachers, including dance, drama/theater, music, and visual arts teachers, would be reported.

We recommend, however, that school districts be required, rather than allowed, to report the number of specialists under the enrichment and support measure. For comparison purposes, the information included in this measure would be more helpful to parents or the public, if all school districts report the same type of information.

The OAAE also opposes repealing Section 3302.034. This section requires the Ohio Department of Education to report annually on the report card the availability of courses in the fine arts (Section 3302.034 (A)(6)). This measure provides different information than the new enrichment and support measure, which focuses on the number of arts teachers. Current Section 3302.034 identifies the range and depth of arts education opportunities offered to students, and allows parents and the public to compare course offerings in the arts among school buildings in a district.

The OAAE is also concerned that the bill maintains the current letter grades and ratings for implementing other provisions of law. These include determining eligibility for students to participate in the Educational Choice voucher program; opening and closing community schools; providing state academic interventions; and establishing an academic distress commission.

The OAAE agrees with other education organizations that the current report card is flawed, and its grades and ratings should not be used as a basis to impose sanctions on school districts or schools. We recommend that safe harbor provisions enacted for the previous three school years be extended until the state can transition to the new report card and a new accountability system is developed.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.