

Thank you for the opportunity to provide my support for HB 591. While the current report card is very data rich and may in fact help drive the work of districts and schools, as a reporting mechanism for parents and the public it misses the mark in accurately depicting what schools and districts accomplish each year. In its current form, the Ohio Report Card is unfair to districts with high rates of poverty, large special education populations and significant numbers of English Learner students. By weighting the overall grade more heavily on student achievement and standardized tests, and less on student growth these districts are receiving grades of D or F that are not an accurate reflection of the progress their students are making.

My school's trend data shows that our students come to us in 6th grade at a 4th grade level in reading and math. This same trend data has shown us that these students grow more than one year each year that they are with us and on average our students leave 8th grade showing more than 4 years' growth over their 3 years in middle school. Our most significant growth is seen with our special education and English Learner students. While we are very proud of this growth, our effort and results are not reflected in the F we received in Gap Closing on our 2016-17 report card.

Research has shown over and over again that low socio-economic status impacts student achievement because students start school behind their peers. If you only examine the vocabulary of students living in poverty, studies have found that by age four, children in middle and upper class families hear 15 million more words than children in working-class families, and 30 million more words than children living in poverty. Districts serving high populations are doing amazing work in helping these students catch up with their peers, but this progress is not adequately reflected in our current Ohio Report Card.

In addition, the sheer volume of letter grades and complicated nature of the report card make it difficult for the public to read and interpret. Judgements are made based upon the overall grade without

a complete understanding of how each element is calculated or what it means. An item such as Value-Added often allows an urban school or district to shine, but becomes lost in the minutia of the overall grade and the 15 other letter grades found throughout the report card. To my knowledge, the report card is also not available in other languages for families who may require a translation in order to begin to understand the performance of their child's school.

In closing, the heavy weighting of achievement over growth heavily favors high wealth, low diversity districts whose students have privileges and experiences that students in low social-economic districts cannot often even imagine. I respectfully question whether the report card of an affluent district is a true reflection of the services provided by the district or more of a reflection of how affluence and experiences outside school impact achievement. In contrast, does a D or an F accurately depict the services provided in our large urban and rural low-socio-economic districts that, more often than not, demonstrate high growth with their students? I would assert that it does not. The development of a report card that shows comparisons to similar districts and provides data without an overall grade will not only provide a more accurate picture of what a district is accomplishing, it will also provide data that would allow our parents a better understanding in order to make more informed decisions about the schools that serve their children.