Please submit the following as testimony. It was part of our collaborative effort to answer questions regarding the state's ESSA plan at a community meeting with Rep Fedor and State School Board Member Meryl Johnson at Max Hayes High School in Cleveland, Ohio on May 22nd, 2017.

1. Thoughts on standardized testing

We would like the elimination of all high stakes standardized testing that has done nothing to help teaching or learning in our state. It is punitive and harms our most vulnerable students the most. The state continuously moves the MAP (NWEA) scores around without reason or cause, which makes the “target” numbers for the third grade reading guarantee chimerical and meaningless unless you are someone who hates children and seeks to punish, humiliate, and discourage them from reading for the rest of their lives.

2. Improvements we’d like to see in schools

We would like more teacher autonomy, less meaningless paperwork for educators to submit to the state (TBTs, RESA paperwork, OTES, etc.), and we would like a return to developmentally appropriate education activities in elementary school (less screen time), mandatory recess, small class sizes, healthy lunches, mandatory specials every day (music, art, physical education, libraries), after school activities and enrichment programs, and large-scale vocational training for upper grades.

3. Support Services

School nurses on site, vision care access on site, mental health services on site, related service providers (physical/occupational services), sensory rooms for all, job training for families on site, lead screening on site, safe water, after school programs

4. Supports for educators and students (academic)

We need clearly articulated standards with cohesion among grade levels that are culturally and developmentally appropriate, and not packed with excessive content, but instead include avenues for creativity, collaboration among students, critical thinking, and is more relevant and life-skill based. Educators need choice among professional development without paid vendors just looking to exploit us and our school district’s money. We need individualized professional development the way that we are expected to provide students with various learning opportunities through various modalities. We need time to truly collaborate with each other because the mandated TBTs the state wants are forced, inauthentic, and just a bunch of busy work on top of educators’ already HUGE workload. OTES does not truly represent a teacher’s value, and integrating student test scores with teacher evaluations is not only mathematically and statistically invalid, but if the state really wants to know how students will do on tests, all they have to do is look at a district’s economic standing. Student test scores directly correlate with family income across the state. That is an irrefutable fact. Finally, include REAL educators at the table when deciding upon policy and legislation - not pseudo educators from charter schools or someone like our US Secretary of Education.

**Melissa Marini Švigelj-Smith**

**Jackie Conrad**

**Annette Chase**

**Errol Savage**