



**Ohio Alliance for Arts Education  
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**House Finance Committee  
Testimony on Sub. HB305 (Patterson/Scherer)  
Create a School Financing System  
November 17, 2020**

Co-Chair Oelslager, Co-Chair Callender, Vice-Chair Scherer, Ranking Member Cera, and Members of the Committee:

The Ohio Alliance for Arts Education (OAAE) represents a variety of individuals and organizations in Ohio working to ensure that the arts, which include dance, drama/theater, media arts, music, and visual art, are an integral part of Ohio's education system. Our members include over 8000 teachers, artists, administrators, parents, students, and arts education organizations, including the Ohio Music Education Association, the Ohio Art Education Association, OhioDance, and the Ohio Educational Theatre Association/Ohio Thespian Society.

We appreciate the work of the *Fair School Funding Workgroup* over the past three years to create a fair, transparent, and comprehensive school-funding plan that is based on the actual costs of educating a typical student in a typical Ohio classroom.

The OAAE believes that the proposed school funding plan could be a "game changer" for the students, educators, and taxpayers of Ohio, ending the current irrational and unstable system of funding schools, and addressing the orders of the Ohio Supreme Court in the DeRolph school funding decisions.

That being said, the OAAE offers the following amendments that we believe will strengthen and clarify the base cost component in Sub. HB305:

**1) Amend Section 3317.011 (D)(2) by defining the term "special teachers" as "teachers**

**providing instruction in dance, drama/theater, music, visual art, and physical education” in district aggregate base cost.**

Section 3317.011 (D)(2) Special teachers are defined as teachers providing instruction in dance, drama/theater, music, visual art, and physical education. Calculate the district's special teacher cost for that fiscal year as follows: .....

**Rationale:** According to the Workgroup's testimony on the *Fair School Funding Plan* on May 29, 2019 in the Senate Finance Committee, chaired by Senator Dolan, special teachers include art, music, and physical education teachers at a ratio of one special teacher for every 150 students enrolled, with a guaranteed minimum of six teachers for any district.

However, the term “special teachers” is not defined or included in the Ohio Revised Code, and could be confused with “special education teachers.” Consequently, there is no specific reference to teachers of dance, drama/theater, music, or visual art in Sub. HB305.

There is a reference to “health and physical education” teachers in Section 3317.012 (D)(2) of the bill, but that is in reference to determining the base cost for joint vocational school districts.

According to the *Ohio Arts Data Project*, in 2018-19 there were 36 dance teachers; 224 drama/theater teachers; 4,061 music teachers, and 4,431 visual art teachers in Ohio's schools. (See <https://oaae.net/ohio-arts-education-data-project-introduction/>)

The OAAE believes that this amendment will clarify how the new school financing system recognizes the cost of teachers of all the arts disciplines and physical education in base cost.

The amendment also demonstrates how the new financing system supports educating the “whole child”, which is a goal of the *Each Child Our Future, Ohio's Strategic Plan for Education*.

**2) Amend Section 3317.012 (D)(2) to include teachers providing instruction in dance, drama/theater, music, and visual art in the calculation of aggregate base cost for joint vocational school districts.**

“Section 3317.012 (D)(2) Calculate the district's cost for that fiscal year for teachers providing instruction in dance, drama/theater, music, visual art, health and physical education, instruction regarding employability and soft skills, development and coordination of internships and job placements, career-technical student organization activities, pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship coordination, and any assessment related to career-technical education, including any nationally recognized job skills or end-of-course assessment, as follows:”

**Rationale:** The OAAE believes that the amendment more accurately represents the types of teachers that could be employed at a joint vocational school or career technical education centers to teach courses in **Arts and Communication**, and should be recognized in the calculation of aggregate base cost.

A quick review of the programs and courses offered at joint vocational and career technical education centers found several that could be taught by teachers of dance, drama/theater, music, and visual art. These courses include Visual and Communication & Design; Print and Graphics; performing arts (available at Eastland-Fairfield Career Technical Center through Reynoldsburg High School); Digital and Media Arts Color and Design Theory; Digital Imaging; Photography; Lighting; CG Special Effects; Computer Animation; Video, Film, and Audio Production; Illustrator; Web Designer; Graphic Commercial Art; and more.

The OAAE appreciates the inclusion of “special teachers” in the *Fair School Funding Plan*, and hopes that our proposed amendments will clarify that the cost of teachers of dance, drama/theater, music, visual art and physical education are indeed included in base cost for school districts and joint vocational school districts.

The OAAE works to ensure that all Ohio students are prepared with the knowledge and skills to pursue careers in the arts; higher education in the arts; and participate in the arts throughout their lives.

The OAAE supports the work of the *Fair School Funding Plan*, because we believe that this is an opportunity to secure an adequate, equitable, and constitutional school funding system, which will increase student access to a complete curriculum, and access to instruction in the arts.

Thank you for this opportunity to share our proposed amendments for Sub. HB305.

Sincerely,

Jarrod Hartzler  
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