

Committees:
Higher Education, *Ranking*
Member
Primary & Secondary Education
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Development



Statehouse:
Office: (614) 466-1645
Rep32@OhioHouse.gov

CATHERINE D. INGRAM

State Representative
32nd House District November 30, 2020

Sponsor Testimony - House Bill 111 Senate Education Committee December 01, 2020

Chairwoman Lehner, Vice Chair Brenner, Ranking Member Fedor, and my esteemed colleagues of the Senate Education Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony on House Bill 111.

House Bill 111, is a bill that clarifies and codifies a requirement for the timely transfer of a K-12 student's records between schools when a student transfers from one school to another. Under this legislation, that timeframe would be within five school days.

There are currently over 1.7 million students enrolled in public schools in Ohio, and over half of those students are classified as economically disadvantaged and are more likely to be highly mobile students. Many of these students, are in situations far out of their control such as, experiencing homelessness, recently placed in foster care, and even facing food insecurity. The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated Ohio's housing issues, meaning an even greater number of people are struggling to pay their rent and mortgages, causing many families to relocate to areas with more affordable housing. This means that many students will be changing school districts and it is key that their records follow them in a timely manner.

Under current Ohio law, there is no timeframe for a primary or secondary school to follow when a request is made – usually by the parent of a student – to transfer that student's records from the school the student is departing to the school in which the student is enrolling.

When school records are not transferred in a timely manner, Students may spend weeks in an inappropriate classroom setting and is especially detrimental to students with Individualized Education Plans (IEP), the teacher and the class as a whole. It is critically important to know where the students had been previously enrolled and as much about them that can possibly be learned through their school records. Obtaining school records within five school days, will allow the new school district to properly identify students, who have special education plans in place, taken advanced classes, participated in extracurricular activities, or those who need certain immunizations. This will ensure a schedule is created that allows for the smoothest transition and the best academic outcome possible. Not having a student's records is frustrating for parents as well as educators but ultimately, the student is the one who suffers the most and has to deal with the consequences. Even though tuition may not have been paid or equipment was not returned, delaying the transfer of school records is not the answer and other measures should be used in place whenever possible.

This is commonsense, nonpartisan legislation that impacts and treats all schools – public, private, or charter – equally.

I'm encouraged by the outpouring of bi-partisan support this bill received in the House Primary & Secondary Education Committee as well as on the House Floor.

Chairwoman Lehner, Vice Chair Brenner, Ranking Member Fedor, and members of the Senate Education Committee, I thank you for your time, and I will be happy to answer any questions at this time.