

Good afternoon Chairman Terhar and other members of the House of Representatives Finance Subcommittee for Primary and Secondary Education. My name is Jacob King and I am the Board of Education President for Bethel Local Schools in Miami County. Thank you for this opportunity to speak on behalf of my school district. Currently we are faced with exponential growth, this growth exceeds funding streams and current funding models for our district. Bethel Local Schools is experiencing growth of 125-130 students per year over the last 6 years and is forecasted to continue at this rate for another 10 years. In 2013-2014, Bethel Local Schools had an enrollment of 900+ students, currently, our enrollment is 1543! . Our current projections anticipate our district having an enrollment of almost 3,500 students by 2029. Due to the formula for foundation revenue, our growth exceeds funding streams and current funding models for our district. For FY19 Bethel Local Schools is losing approx. \$4.1 million in funding due to being a capped district. The reduced funding due to the CAP has placed us in an underfunded, undersized facilities that we are busting at the seams, while placing a significant strain on our local taxpayers..

With the current state budget being prepared, we forecast the same or similar funding that will place our district in a significant hardship. This takes the focus away from educating our kids, the academic programs that we can offer, limits school safety and security measures, overcrowds our classrooms while providing limited funding to hire additional teachers and staff, and limits mental health and social emotional learning opportunities that we can offer in our district.

The OFCC was a viable option until this year, when the program got behind in funding, currently we can not even apply. Currently, we have 100 schools in front of our school before consideration into the program. We are looking at greater than 6 years for this assistance, therefore; with our growth we will fail our students, our parents and our community.

Our community and taxpayers have supported us in passing a \$22.0 million bond for a new high school, an income tax levy and operating levy to help support us from the money not received from foundation for day to day operations, and a 2 mill permanent improvement levy to help us maintain our bus fleet and old facilities.

I do not come to you without a solution, though. Representatives Bob Cupp (R) and John Patterson (D) have introduced the bipartisan Fair School Funding plan for inclusion in the biennium budget. The Fair School Funding Plan is based on the actual cost of educating students, and would be applied consistently to all Ohio schools. Most importantly, the Fair School Funding Plan begins the process of eliminating the gain caps that have negatively impacted our district for the last several years. We know we are 1 of 612 school districts and the committee has to look at everything as a whole. However, we wanted the committee to be aware of our unique situation when determining the funding for schools for the next biennial budget.

Thank you for your time and service to the State of Ohio. Your efforts in these complex but important issues are not lost on people like me who are loyal voters of Ohio. Thank you for the opportunity to share this testimony and I would be happy to answer any questions.