

Good afternoon. Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you. I also want to thank you for ensuring that we are heard before any new law is put into place. We have gone through significant change—some good and some bad—but we want to make sure whatever is decided is in the best interest of our community, not just the few voices that have broadcasted that they are the “community” or the “village” because they are not—we are the ones who are raising our children.

I also have paid close attention to the house bill that was recently passed. I feel extremely discouraged. Not only is it not paying attention to the real problem it is ignoring many of the real issues in our school system. Yes, we have work to do, and I don't think any person including the CEO himself would say that he is perfect or what they are doing has always been right. But what they have been is honest. They don't hold back anything that is going wrong or right. They only want to get it right for kids. The idea of HB 154 taking us back to days of lies, untruths, hidden agendas, financial trouble, dishonest politicians, and dysfunction deeply worries me. I don't want our community to feel that again. This house bill does nothing and can do nothing other than give authority to individuals who are accountable to the state and will follow through with its expectations. Our local officials are so far in bed with each other, unions, powerbrokers, and others that have nothing to do with educating our kids, there is no way they can actually turnaround the school system. I guarantee if you ask our school board how the state report card grade is calculated, they couldn't even tell you with any reasonable explanation. They don't have a clue.

I also read more about HB 154 and there are some terrible things that it ignores and that it's the academic accountability for our children's education. I mean, if they really cared about our kids and not the politics or the need to quiet the loud voices, then they would have focused on improving HB 70 for some of its vague definitions, not its content and purpose. HB 154 is a slap in the face to educators. It is a slap in the face to community members like me

who expect our state to provide a quality education because this bill isn't about education it is about power. Specifically, HB 154 does four things wrong for our kids and ultimately for our future:

- Doesn't provide additional intervention for schools that fail to improve after four years of local control.
- Fails to establish clear, objective exit criteria for schools operating under an improvement plan.
- Ignores student achievement and growth as benchmarks for districts to include in their improvement plans
- Rather than providing important fixes for ADC implementation issues, HB 154 dismantles any sort of accountability.

DO you really care about us? If so, talk to our CEO, talk to the leadership team of the district, read the Lorain Promise, look at the System of Excellent Schools (the priority for the school district next year), talk to some of the leaders in Lorain who support the schools, talk to people who really know what is going on and you find that HB 154 completely tears apart what our school system is finally realizing is important. Educating our kids. Don't take that away from us and if you care you won't. Let's take the time to put something together than makes sense, not something that makes people silent. The house, if I remember correctly complained that HB 70 was shoved down their throat, and HB 154 doesn't feel much different. It is rushed. It is uninformed. It doesn't address the real problems. It just makes local officials and politicians who didn't do their job in the past 15 years a chance to continue to do wrong by kids for another 15 years until another Governor decides enough is enough. Please be different and take the time and energy necessary to see something through and if changes need to be made take a year or more to really understand what needs to happen. It will make a world of difference for Lorain and ultimately a world of difference for Ohio and its future workforce.