 

**Senate Finance Committee**

**Am. Sub. House Bill 166 Testimony**

**Ohio School Boards Association**

**Buckeye Association of School Administrators**

**May 29, 2019**

Chairman Dolan, Vice Chair Burke, Ranking Member Sykes and members of the Senate Finance Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Am. Sub. House Bill (HB) 166. I am Jennifer Hogue with the Ohio School Boards Association (OSBA). Joining me today is Thomas Ash with the Buckeye Association of School Administrators (BASA). Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today regarding the education funding provisions in the bill.

Collectively, we represent public school district, career technical center, and educational service center board of education members and superintendents. Our members of course have a keen interest in the provisions included in Am. Sub. HB 166.

**Student Wellness & Success Funds (SWSF)**

We greatly appreciate the proposed investment in students through the student wellness and success fund. This proposed funding recognizes that all districts have students living in poverty and would distribute the funding to districts based on the concentration of students in poverty residing in the district. Our members have long expressed the lack of resources and support to meet the social and emotional needs of students for a number of years. We are extremely grateful that Governor DeWine and the Ohio House have listened, recognized the need, and deliberately chosen to invest the state’s resources to serve our students in this way. We believe these funds will go a long way to addressing the nonacademic barriers to student success.

The proposal to invest over $675 million over the biennium will be distributed directly to school districts and joint vocational school districts (JVSDs) based on the number of students the district educates and according to a sliding scale based on the federal poverty guidelines.

Under the proposal, schools are divided into five groups (quintiles) based on the percentage of the district’s students with a family income below 185% of federal poverty guidelines. The per-pupil amounts for each quintile range from $20 to $250 per pupil in FY20 and from $30 to $360 per pupil in FY21. The House also provided additional funding for districts that received supplemental targeted assistance in FY19 of at least $50 per student in FY20 and $75 per student in FY21.

The budget bill requires schools to use SWSF funds for certain services and initiatives that address the nonacademic barriers to student success, including mental health services, family engagement and support services and mentoring. ***Based on feedback we have received from our members, we request that the list be expanded to include services and personnel to address the social/emotional needs of students, including social workers and student supports.***

Districts are also required to coordinate with at least one community partner in using SWSF funds. Furthermore, schools must report annually on how the SWSF funds are spent.

We support the SWSF initiative for several reasons. First, it is linked to poverty data. We know that these nonacademic barriers to student success are more prevalent in areas of higher economic disadvantage.

Second, every district would be eligible for some funding under this proposal. No district would receive less than $25,000 in FY20 and $36,000 in FY21.

Third, there is no supplanting provision. If districts had been able to fund some of these services in the past, they could now use the SWSF money to redirect those previous expenditures to instruction and student supports.

I will now hand the testimony over to Tom Ash.

**Relief for fast growing districts**

A number of school districts in the state are experiencing rapid student enrollment growth. Because the school funding increases proposed in the current bill do not include any increase in the funds used in the day-to-day operations of districts, these growing districts will not see increases in funding to account for growth in enrollment.

***A proposal to provide some relief for these districts has been submitted to Sen. Hottinger. We support this proposal that would provide a modest amount of growth for these districts based on the number of students added to the district’s enrollment since FY17.***

**Education funding parity**

Each fiscal year, the state provides funding to nonpublic schools through auxiliary services and administrative cost reimbursement funds in the amount of roughly $1300 per pupil. At the same time, we have public school districts receiving as little as $­­­­­­556 per pupil in state aid. ***We are asking that the state provide education funding parity for these districts by providing a minimum per pupil amount that matches the amount provided to nonpublic schools.***

**Educational service centers**

ESCs provide essential shared services to districts and student across the state. ESCs serve as a vital link and partner in the educational process. ESCs provide a wide variety of direct and support services, including curriculum development, staff development, technology assistance, and special education services to the public school districts and students they serve. ESCs save the state of Ohio and school districts money through cost-effective, collaborative ventures that expand equitable access to resources and maximize operating and fiscal efficiencies. ***We would like to see the ESC per pupil operating subsidy increased to $42.52 over the next four years and then recalibrated every four years thereafter*.**

**Career-technical education centers**

The current version of the bill freezes weighted funding for career-technical education centers (CTEs). Without new funding for additional students, CTEs will not be able to offer new programming. ***We request that you amend the bill to allow weighted funding to grow with an increase in enrollment.***

Thank you for your attention and we would be happy to answer any questions you might have.