



Akron Public Schools

Chairman Dolan, Vice Chair Burke, Ranking Member Sykes, and members of the Senate Finance Committee. Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to testify today in favor of the Fair School Funding Plan and its recommendations for Senate Bill 376. My name is Ryan Pendleton and I am the CFO/Treasurer of Akron Public Schools, located in Summit County in Northeast Ohio. I have been honored to serve as co-chairperson of the Base Cost Subcommittee of the Cupp-Patterson School Funding Workgroup with Perrysburg Schools Superintendent Tom Hosler. Today, I am offering testimony in support of the proposed Fair Funding Plan for Ohio's Schools.

Background of the Fair School Funding Plan

In a few days' time we will mark three years since the very first meeting of the Cupp-Patterson Work Group, which was held in the Riffe Center on November 15, 2017. Today, we are excited to share with you the latest incarnation of the original product of the Cupp-Patterson work group. We are honored to be here and, more importantly, excited to share the results of this work as represented in the SB 376. It is the very best solution to providing Ohio with a fair plan for school funding.

We are blessed to have dedicated colleagues like those who you will be hearing from today and in the days ahead who have pushed and shaped this process all along the way. We also acknowledge a talented group of experts, staff and volunteers who are committed to supporting this effort, and legislators who prioritize the work towards a process that will ensure all students achieve their greatest potential. None of this would be possible without the continued support of our educational community, and for that we are very grateful.

Representatives Cupp and Patterson said it best when they stated:

“As Ohio legislators, we are committed and determined to find an education funding system for our state's pre-kindergarten through grade 12; one that is fair, rational and justifiable and in contrast to our current system that is often unfair and nearly always incomprehensible. For decades, Ohio leaders have tried but have come up short of finding an equitable way to fund the most fundamental service provided by state government.”

Three years ago, a diverse cross-section of practitioners from around the state assembled by Reps. Cupp and Patterson began their work. We enlisted the people who best know the educational needs of Ohio's children – educators and school financial officials – to collaborate in a comprehensive analysis of Ohio's funding of our public education system and to provide us with a set of practical, needs based recommendations that would be fair to all of Ohio's kids,

school districts and taxpayers. Today, we are witnessing the culmination of these collective efforts.

We arranged these Ohio school educators and financial officers into eight Subgroups, each with its own assigned subject areas and co-chaired by two actively engaged educators – one a superintendent, the other a treasurer or chief financial officer. Then, we asked them to come up with essential, objective, cost based, and justifiable proposals in their assigned subject areas.

SB 376 provides the elusive answer to the school funding challenge by focusing on the student in the classroom. In fact, 75% of the formula provides funds directly and indirectly to the classroom. Since its original introduction to this substitute bill, we continued to listen to feedback from a wide variety of stakeholders and remained committed to working with practitioners. This current bill has gone the furthest and creates Ohio's own unique funding formula that is based on a simple premise: what each student needs to be successful.

What does every student need to succeed?
What does every district need to operate?

The necessary components to answer these questions include (i) determining "base cost," (ii) deciphering the state and local shared responsibility, and (iii) calculating the additional categoricals. Each of these components are addressed below.

Base Cost Detail

The base cost amount includes the necessary components and adequate resources to prepare Ohio's typical child for success. The base cost amount allocates sufficient resources to provide a typical child – one with no disabilities, or special gifts, who does not live in poverty and is not an English learner – with the essential high quality educational opportunities necessary for success.

The result is a transparent, realistic funding model that addresses the whole child and his/her social and emotional needs, as well as academic needs. Moreover, it can be understood by the general public, as well as by professional practitioners. The new funding model is a method of appropriately calculating the amount of a district's base cost, but school districts retain local control over the spending and allocation of funds to meet the particular needs of the district's students.

While each district's base cost amount will be different based on student class size, the average across the state is approximately \$7,200 per pupil, which is spent in the following areas.

District Funding Model - Base Cost Example							
Direct Classroom Instruction 60% of Base Cost	Base Aid Teacher Funding						
		Grade Level	Pupil Teacher Ratio Per FTE	Headcount Enrollment	Funded Teachers		
		Kindergarten	20	57	2.9		
		1st Grade	23	64	2.8		
		2nd Grade	23	51	2.2		
		3rd Grade	23	52	2.3		
		4th Grade	25	60	2.4		
		5th Grade	25	79	3.2		
		6th Grade	25	60	2.4		
		7th Grade	25	77	3.1		
		8th Grade	25	58	2.3		
		9th Grade	27	62	2.3		
		10th Grade	27	66	2.4		
		11th Grade	27	42	1.6		
		12th Grade	27	40	1.5		
	Base Aid Teacher Funding			768	31.2		
	Other Direct Instruction						
	Specials Teachers (Art, Music, P/E)	1 per 150 students	6 Min	6.0			
	Substitute Teachers	5 Days per teacher per year					
	Professional Development	4 PD days per year					
	Other Direct Instruction						
	Total Direct Instruction						
Instructional & Student Supports 15% of Base Cost	Co-curriculars - Academic				Amount per pupil		
	Co-curriculars - Athletic (Inc. Athletic Director)				Amount per pupil		
	High School Guidance Support				1 Min	1.0	
	Safety & Security - Non-Personnel				Amount per pupil		
	Supplies & Academic Content				Amount per pupil		
	Library/Media Operations/Support				1 per 1,000 students	0.8	
	Social/Emotional/Security/Life Support				1 per 250 students	5 Min	5.0
	Instructional Technology				Amount per pupil		
	Total Student Support Instruction						
	Total Instructional Costs						
Building Leadership & Operations 20% of Base Cost	Building Leadership				1 per 450 students	1.7	
	Building Operations and Support				Amount per pupil		
	Building Leadership Support				1 per 400 students	3 Max	1.9
	Total Building Leadership & Operations						
	Total Building Leadership & Operations Costs						
District Leadership & Accountability 5% of Base Cost	Superintendent				1 Min	1	
	Treasurer				1 Min	1	
	District Leadership				1 per 750 students	2 Min	2.0
	Fiscal Support				1 per 850 students	2 Min	2.0
	EMIS Support				1 per 5,000 students	1 Min	1.0
	ITC Support, Technology Infrastructure Maintenance				Amount per pupil		
	District Leadership Support				1 per 3 administrators	1 Min	1.0
	Total District Leadership & Accountability Data						
Total District Leadership & Accountability Costs							

In closing, we ask our legislators to consider SB 376 in its entirety, as an essential roadmap to guide school funding decisions. Together, we strive to ensure that Ohio's children will have the quality educational opportunities they need to succeed in a rapidly changing world. And together, we can adopt a comprehensive, fair school funding plan that meets the needs of Ohio's children, future workforce, and economy.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today. I am happy to answer any questions.