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Brent May
Superintendent

Brian Matthews
Assistant Superintendent

Tom Brabson
Business Manager

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February 15, 2021

Chair Manning, Vice Chair Bird, Ranking Member Robinson, and members of the House Primary and Secondary Education Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony as a proponent of House Bill (HB) 67. I am Brent May, Superintendent of the Plain Local School District in Stark County.

Plain Local is a large school district located in Canton, Ohio serving multiple cities and townships. The district serves 6000 students from urban, suburban, and rural environments. Almost half of our students qualify for free and reduced lunch.

We have been serving the community since the beginning of Covid-19 in multiple ways. The district has provided food each day for almost a year in our community to any family in need. In addition, we have delivered food to homes and created a food pantry at our high school to serve all families. I have seen families overcome with emotion as the Plain Local School District provided food for their family for weeks and months. Most of us in Plain Local will never forget the smiles and tears of joy as families had daily positive interactions with the staff in my school district.

Also, we have created an online school for any student who chooses not to attend in person. Currently we have 1500 students learning online. Our students have their own device, but we provided many hot spots so our families could access the curriculum. Finally, there has been a 33% increase in referrals to our mental health facility on the campus of our high school. The entire staff has been focused on children and families and the district has come together to ensure all families have their basic needs met. We have been innovative and flexible during this health crisis and the wellness of our students, staff, and families has been our focus. Students and staff have handled quarantines, isolation, positive cases, and individual stress due to the pandemic on a daily basis with grace and professionalism. Finally, Plain Local has been in school, face to face, since August and have not closed one day for Covid-19. This accomplishment has been possible because of the dedicated and amazing staff in Plain Local.

Passing HB 67 is important for any school district, but especially Plain Local. Educators have done amazing work within our community and administering a standardized test to students in this environment will not be productive. Social and emotional wellness should continue to be our focus as we enter spring. Families are still in crisis and our ability to serve and help them meet the most basic need is critical. The Plain Local community has come together to ensure 6000 students have food, safety, and caring adults in their life each day. Now is not the time to place additional stress on the students and families in Plain Local. My hope is that you will hear our voices and support educators in the Plain Local School District.



PLAIN
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I would like to thank Representatives Koehler and Bird for supporting the bill.
Thank you for the opportunity to offer written testimony in support of HB 67.

Respectfully,

Brent May
Superintendent
Plain Local Schools

WITNESS INFORMATION FORM

Please complete the Witness Information Form before testifying:

Date: Monday, February 15

Name: Brent May

Are you representing: Yourself Organization

Organization (If Applicable): Plain Local Schools

Position/Title: Superintendent

Address: 901 44th Street NW

City: Canton State: Ohio Zip: 44709

Best Contact Telephone: 330-492-3500 Email: maybeplainlocal.org

Do you wish to be added to the committee notice email distribution list? Yes No

Business before the committee

Legislation (Bill/Resolution Number): House Bill 67

Specific Issue: State Testing

Are you testifying as a: Proponent Opponent Interested Party

Will you have a written statement, visual aids, or other material to distribute? Yes No

(If yes, please send an electronic version of the documents, if possible, to the Chair's office prior to committee. You may also submit hard copies to the Chair's staff prior to committee.)

How much time will your testimony require? 3 MINUTES

Please provide a brief statement on your position:

Postpone/cancel Ohio Standardized Testing /
End of Course exams for students
during 2020-2021 School Year.

Please be advised that this form and any materials (written or otherwise) submitted or presented to this committee are records that may be requested by the public and may be published online.