

Chairwoman Manning, Vice Chairman Bird, Ranking Member Robinson, fellow Members of the House Primary and Secondary Education Committee, thank you for listening to input from your constituents regarding House Bill 497.

I definitely agree that this legislation to positively change Ohio's Third Grade Reading Guarantee Law by removing the consequence of grade level retention, as well as eliminating the fall administration of the Ohio State Test in English Language Arts for third grade students is essential, important, and long overdue.

As a long-standing Ohio educator, I have witnessed firsthand the hard work of our teachers, students, and families as they collaborate to support the reading needs and resulting achievement of our youngest students. Standardized testing for these 8 and 9 year olds, who understand that the failure of which will result in being demoralized and retained in school has led to excessive stress. I have witnessed the tears from even some of the best students. It is unwarranted and unacceptable to purposely set this up for students so young.

Children want to learn to read, and educators want to teach, reteach, and employ remediation techniques to help them achieve. Please trust Ohio's schools and their teachers to do the job they are passionate about. Educational "best practices" are being uniformly utilized throughout our schools and we understand our students' needs.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of HB 497; these changes will positively affect the reading progress and ultimate achievement of Ohio's third grade students.

Sincerely and professionally yours,

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