



# BATAVIA LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

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December 12, 2022

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 an opponent of Senate Bill (SB)178. I am Keith Millard, Superintendent of Batavia Local Schools.

It is important to begin my written testimony with an acknowledgement that there are foundational concerns regarding the current operation of the State Board of Education and the functioning of the Department of Education that I am in agreement with and share with the sponsors of the Bill. However, rushing through a wholesale change of the apparatuses that govern education in the state during lame duck is not the responsible thing to do.

A change of this magnitude must be thoughtfully and carefully crafted, with significant opportunities for input afforded to all stakeholders impacted by the State Board and the Department of Education. Given the complexities of educational policy and the significant convergence of both State and Federal educational laws, I am deeply concerned for the unintended consequences that could arise should this legislation be pushed through without the proper time to fully understand the ramifications of such a drastic shift in governance structures.

Furthermore, the changes that are being proposed potentially circumvent the current ability of stakeholders to provide meaningful feedback on a variety of educational issues that are of direct importance to the citizens of Ohio, including learning standards, graduation requirements, and educational rules. While imperfect, the State Board of Education does serve as an accountable body through whom members of the public may bring feedback, concerns, and input on a variety of educational issues.

Any dramatic movement of responsibilities to the executive branch must be carefully weighed and considered; because once such a transfer has taken place, balances of power are irrevocably shifted. Furthermore, this legislation would effectively curtail the functions and duties of a currently elected body, thus depriving voters access to accountable representatives in an area of significant public interest.

Given the magnitude of changes that SB 178 would bring, and the limited time for full vetting of impact of this bill during lame duck, I urge members of the House Primary and Secondary Education Committee to vote no on advancing SB 178 to the full House, and recommend that this bill be given a full and complete examination during the 135th General Assembly. Thank you for the opportunity to offer written testimony in opposition to SB 178.

Respectfully,

Keith Millard

Superintendent