

Senate Finance Committee—Monday, May 17, 10:00 AM
Substitute House Bill 110—Fair School Funding Plan
Proponent

Chair Dolan, Vice Chair Gavarone, Ranking Member Sykes, and members of the Senate Finance Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony. I come to you as a strong proponent of the Fair School Funding Plan. I am asking you to pass and fully fund the Fair School Funding Plan as written in Sub. HB 110.

My name is Sandra Laurenson. I am a retired family and consumer sciences educator having taught in high school, junior high school, community college and four-year college settings. I retired after 13 years with the Ohio Department of Education—the last seven as the family and consumer sciences consultant in the Career-Technical Education division.

As you know, Ohio's current school funding system is completely broken. Not even one school district is actually funded using the current formula; funding for every one of Ohio's 600+ districts is either capped or guaranteed. The losers in this situation are Ohio's children.

You now have the opportunity and the responsibility to finally fix school funding. The bipartisan Fair School Funding Plan is the carefully crafted product of a diverse group of education and school finance experts and legislators working together for years.

- Unlike the current system, the Fair School Funding Plan is based on the actual cost of preparing Ohio's children for success and meeting their varied needs.
- Unlike the current system, the Fair School Funding Plan reduces reliance on property taxes.
- Unlike the current system, the Fair School Funding Plan provides a separate funding stream for charter schools and vouchers removing the confusing and unpredictable entanglement of funds with the traditional public school districts.
- Unlike the current system, the Fair School Funding Plan creates a system that is adequate, equitable, flexible, and predictable.

No amount of tinkering will fix the current system. Our children cannot wait any longer. The Fair School Funding Plan may not be perfect, but, unlike the current system, it does provide a strong reasoned foundation along with a six-year phase-in with opportunities to make future adjustments. The current system is unexplainable and indefensible.

Show Ohio's children that you truly value them. Prove it by recognizing the infrastructure for a quality education that the Fair School Funding Plan will provide. Prove it by ensuring that Ohio's public education system is adequately and equitably funded.

I urge you to support the Fair School Funding Plan as written. Vote for it. And make the bold commitment to fund it. Ohio's children and Ohio's future depend on you.

Thank you.

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