



Chair Brenner, Ranking Member Fedor, and members of the Senate Primary and Secondary Education Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide interested party testimony regarding H.B.110.

I am David Nichols, and I am finishing my ninth year as principal at St. Joseph Catholic School in Maumee, Ohio. My wife and three children reside in Waterville, Ohio. We have been residents of Northwest Ohio our entire lives and are blessed to live in this great state.

The history of the Jon Peterson Scholarship at Saint Joseph started eight years ago with a first grade student transferring from Toledo Public Schools. She was born deaf and at three years old had cochlear implants. Having missed learning English as a developmental process, she was learning English the same way a person would learn a foreign language.

Mom's reason for the transfer was not due to any services we provided, but it was due to her daughter having cousins already attending Saint Joseph. Mom was divorced and her ex-husband lived in Florida. She needed strong family support from her sister and her nieces to help raise her daughter with special needs.

After the transfer, it was clear the school would have to provide accommodations for the first grader to help with her education. Because she registered after the first half deadline for Jon Peterson, the school could not apply to become a provider until the second semester. However, the school did help by providing a tutor, speech therapist and a microphone for the teacher that broadcasts into her cochlear implants.

This student will be graduating from Saint Joseph this year and the Jon Peterson scholarship helped the school provide all of the services she needed throughout the years. However, it did something more important, it allowed a family to come together and help each other in the same school. Without the scholarship, I do not know if this student could have remained until graduation.

Since being approved as a provider, our intervention team has an intervention specialist, two paraprofessionals, a speech therapist and an occupational therapist. We have grown from one student receiving the Jon Peterson Scholarship to 25 students for the 2020/2021 school year. All of these students receive the services necessary to attend school. If Saint Joseph did not provide these services, these students would be in their public schools. The Jon Peterson scholarship helps the public districts by spreading out the number of students with IEP's to other schools. The other excellent benefit is the very healthy relationship we have developed with our public school districts. In my opinion, Saint Joseph School has a strong relationship with Maumee City Schools. We work together for the benefit of the students who require more assistance.

Thank you for your time and the opportunity to help share our story of the development of our intervention team at Saint Joseph Catholic School in Maumee.

Guided by the Holy Spirit, St. Joseph Catholic School and Preparatory provides a supportive learning environment to promote academic excellence and formation of moral character. Teachers and parents model and share Christ's teachings to assist students to best utilize their God-given talents in their learning and service to God, family, and community.

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