



Thank you, Chair Brenner, Vice Chair Blessing, Ranking Member Fedor, and Senate Primary and Secondary Education Committee members for giving me the opportunity to provide proponent testimony today on Substitute House Bill 82.

My name is Chad Aldis, and I am the Vice President for Ohio Policy at the Thomas B. Fordham Institute. The Fordham Institute is an education-focused nonprofit that conducts research, analysis, and policy advocacy with offices in Columbus, Dayton, and Washington, D.C.

I'd like to start by acknowledging the work of the many groups that have been working for a long time to improve Ohio's state report card. Substitute House Bill 82 reflects positively on all of their efforts. That being said, most of the credit belongs to Chair Brenner and Representatives Jones and Robinson. While multiple groups—all with good intentions—worked on report card reform for years, in many areas the groups remained very far apart. It was the leadership, commitment, and unwillingness to give up by Senator Brenner, and Reps. Jones and Robinson that produced the bill before you.

As is often the case in the legislative process, no one got everything they wanted. Compromises were made on both sides. The most important thing is—if this bill becomes law—Ohio parents and communities will have a much improved report card.

I stood in front of this committee more than a month ago and in testimony on SB 145 implored you to adopt report card changes that adhered to four key principles. To restate, Ohio's report cards must:

1. Support equity and ensure high expectations for all students
2. Advance transparency and offer parents and communities clear, simple, honest information about school performance
3. Promote fairness by giving every school the opportunity to demonstrate growth and improvement
4. Be accurate and ensure components are measuring what is intended

I'm pleased to say that Substitute HB 82 is well aligned with each of these principles.

Here are a few important changes that the sub bill makes:

- **Streamlines the simplifies the state report card:** Reduces from 15 to 6 the number of graded measures.
- **Switches from an A to F to a star rating system:** A 5-star rating system is simple and maintains transparency.
- **Keeps—but improves—the overall rating:** Increases the weight given to student growth to be fairer to high poverty schools and uses half-stars to provide for greater differentiation in the overall ratings.

- **Adds context to graded measures:** Includes text descriptions to supplement rather than supplant the star system, colors to add clarity so that a 3-star rating will be shaded green helping to ensure communities understand it represents acceptable performance and doesn't come with a negative connotation, and trend arrows to show within a component if a school's performance is improving or declining.
- **Streamlines the achievement measure:** The bill eliminates the indicators met component and bases the rating solely on performance index. It also ensures districts and schools are evaluated against an attainable standard by curving off the average of the highest 2 percent of district and school PIs.
- **Changes value-added (student growth):** The value-added rating is shifted to a 3-year weighted average when calculating growth which ensures that one bad year won't sink a school's rating. It also eliminates the current demotion when one individual student group doesn't perform well.
- **Strengthens gap closing:** The gap closing is modified to track both the achievement and growth of every student group in a school. It also maintains the n-size of 15 for student group sizes that Ohio adopted in its ESSA plan.
- **Restructures the Early Literacy measure:** The sub bill utilizes proficiency rates, promotion rates, and the ability to move off-track students to on-track to get a more complete and accurate picture of every school's literacy efforts.
- **Creates a new component analyzing post high school readiness:** The bill reworks the former Prepared for Success component and gives students a wide variety of ways to show preparedness for college and/or the workforce. It also includes a provision that ensures schools that make progress improving student readiness receive recognition for those efforts. This measure will not be rated for at least three years.

Unfortunately, no bill is ever perfect. It's hard to argue though that substitute House Bill 82 won't greatly improve Ohio's state report card framework in a variety of ways—both big and small. This compromise legislation was a long time coming, and I urge you to support it.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. I'm happy to answer any questions that you may have.