



OHIO HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

HB 572 – Preparing Teachers for Future Success Representative Andrea White

Chair Young, Vice Chair Manning, Ranking Member Miller and members of the House Higher Education Committee, thank you for allowing me to come and testify on House Bill 572 which will require the Chancellor of Higher Education to conduct an audit of educator preparation programs to determine what instruction they are providing to students on behavior management, classroom management and mental and behavioral health.

As we all know, across the state and nation we are seeing a workforce crisis unfold and the teaching profession is no exception. In fact, the State of Ohio has seen a reported 80% decrease in students going to college to study this profession. In 2013, the number of newly licensed teachers in the state was 7,634; in 2022, we were down to 5,000 newly licensed teachers. Within the past year, the Ohio Department of Education has reported that teacher attrition is up in schools statewide. Additionally, there is also an increase of teachers moving to other school districts or private schools. Attrition in more urban Northeast Ohio Districts in 2021 was 10.5%, which was 2.4% higher than the average in previous five years. The highest rate of teachers not returning was in urban districts in Southwest Ohio, where 14.5% of teachers did not return which was only a 0.6% increase compared to the previous five-year averages. Nationwide, up to 30% of teachers are predicted to quit their jobs within five years.

The questions we need to answer definitively and very quickly are simple and no doubt you have your own immediate answers – and that is why are students no longer going into this line of work at the same rate they used to...and how can we get them to enter teaching and stay?

A recent national study showed that 44% of teachers report often or always feeling burned out. One major factor leading to this burnout is the increasing rise in behavioral and mental health issues our kids are dealing with on a day-to-day basis. Many of our teachers are reporting they are simply not equipped to deal with these very challenging needs, while maintaining order and learning for the rest of their classroom.

A recent query of teachers who have remained in schools highlighted their views on why their counterparts are quitting. Among reasons reported: feeling unsafe at school due to kids fighting, increasing responsibilities and not enough time to fulfill them, student behavior in the classroom, demands that students do well on tests, and losing the joy they once had for the profession. Anecdotally, I hear frequently about these new challenges from teachers and administrators in my community, especially in the post-pandemic era. We need to be giving teachers the tools they need to manage their students and classrooms so that both children and teachers can thrive.

HB 572 is designed to help Ohio's educator preparation programs, the Department of Higher Education, the Department of Education and Workforce, and the General Assembly gain a better understanding on what is currently happening in our colleges and universities to prepare teachers in the areas of classroom and behavior management, and mental and behavioral health. It will also help to

create best practices and recommendations for how we can ensure we are preparing our future teachers for the student challenges they will soon face.

Specifically, this legislation directs the Chancellor of Higher Education to do the following:

- Conduct a program audit of each educator preparation program offered by an institution to higher education to determine what instructions they are providing to students in mental and behavioral health, behavior management, and classroom management, including how they are incorporating education on adverse childhood experiences and trauma.
- In conjunction with the Department of Education and Workforce, develop a summary of the instructional strategies, practices, and content of audited educator preparation programs, including institution-level summaries.
- In conjunction with the Department of Education and Workforce, develop a report that analyzes the audit's summary and findings to make recommendations for evidence informed strategies, practices, and content to address identified needs and equip educators to support students from early childhood education through the twelfth grade.

This legislation will take a small first step in addressing the teacher shortages we are experiencing in Ohio, while helping to create a better environment for the teachers who are the backbone and lifeblood of our education system. HB 572 will help us do better supporting our teachers by identifying what works and ensuring our educators graduate ready with the tools they need to be effective and successful in today's environment of heightened student needs.

Chair Young, Vice Chair Manning, Ranking Member Miller and members of the House Higher Education Committee, thank you again for allowing me to testify and I am happy to answer any additional questions you may have.