

Stephany Wireko

Chair Manning, Vice Chair Fowler Arthur, Ranking Member Robinson and members of the House Primary and Secondary Education Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on House Bill 445. My name is Stephany Wireko and I am from Licking County.

I am the mother of four children and I care deeply about their education and instilling character, empathy, grit, and morality in them. My oldest daughter was in kindergarten this past school year. Originally, I had her enrolled in Upper Arlington but ended up moving to Reynoldsburg School district right before school started. One of my greatest disappointments about moving districts was that a program called LifeWise, was not available in Reynoldsburg as it was in Upper Arlington. I found out the only reason it was not available in Reynoldsburg was because the school board voted against having it, despite all the evidence on the benefits of having this program available to students. Improvements in behavior, academics and mental health have all been studied and evidenced for students who have attended this program.

I am very passionate about the importance of all parents having the opportunity to choose released time for religious instruction. I love this program because it will not cost my school any additional funding and it is another way for our students to gain important educational skills. I would love this opportunity for our school to help support our parents and students.

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to advocate for House Bill 445.

Sincerely,

Stephany Wireko